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University of Alberta

Indoctrination and Business Ethics

by

Kathleen Elizabeth Byrne

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

in

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September 3, 1997 K. Byrne

9223 - 81 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6C 2W2

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled **Indoctrination and Business Ethics** submitted by Kathleen Elizabeth Byrne in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Philosophy of Education.

Dr. Eamonn Callan, Supervisor

Dr. David Wangler

Dr. James B. Parsons

Date June 16, 1997

Abstract

At the heart of this thesis is the question of whether teaching ethics will make a difference—for the better. The teaching of business ethics, in particular, is fraught with difficulty. Nevertheless, I argue that the subject deserves a more central place in business curricula.

In this century moral education has been pushed to the margins of curricula by objections to its teaching; the most serious is a charge that teaching ethics is tantamount to indoctrination. Given that indoctrination is considered a morally reprehensible form of teaching, the claim, if true, would discourage conscientious teachers from pursuing ethical questions.

I examine the concept of indoctrination in detail and find its offensive nature to be the imposition of a closed mind that constrains rational capacity, improperly. Indoctrination encloses deeply held attitudes and beliefs in an impervious set. The indoctrinated mind is difficult to recognize; philosophers of education describe it, however, as the unwillingness and the inability to examine beliefs critically, and revise them, in spite of reasonable counterargument. Consequently, teaching ethics is not indoctrination per se.

I contend that educators ought to foster moral sensitivity and nurture the rational capacity needed to think precisely about moral questions inevitable to business practice. The responsibility is both proper and onerous. To do less reduces professional education to a technical education. Finally, educators have a duty to scrutinize their teaching to ensure that it fosters an open and critical mind.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful for guidance and friendship from many people who sustained me during this project. First, to my supervisor, Eamonn Callan, who demanded patient scholarship and a standard of philosophical rigor that I would not have accomplished without his steady hand. David Wangler and Jim Parsons raised provocative questions at my oral examination and provided comments that are incorporated into this final draft.

I am indebted to my employer, Northwestern Utilities Limited. In this decade the opportunity to earn an advanced degree has fallen beyond the reach of some Albertans—in particular, mothers who are alone with their children, many living with poverty. I am a privileged and grateful exception. I earn a living and work in a community of business people, managers, and executives who exemplify the ethical business professional. They have shown me that the questions and issues pursued in this study are more than merely academic questions.

This thesis was written over two years in the intervals between work, motherhood, and the laundry. I garnered confidence and energy for the task from these distinguished women:

Ann Chinnery, Danielle Dalton, and Donna Hoopfer, fellow graduate students who share the passion for inquiry and meaning; they walked with me and tempered my loneliness and isolation. My life, and this work, is much better because I know them.

Marianne Hobden, an intuitive philosopher of education who provided insightful comments on an early draft, released me from a troublesome writer's block; Linda Pasmore, who imposed precision on my writing, improved the text beyond my expectations.

Lillian Campbell, Dawn Reed, and Deanna Lemmon, who offered me unwavering friendship, did not abandon me even though they did not fully understand my drive.

The same is true of my sons, Ryan and Corey, who demonstrated maturity and patience beyond their years. It has taken four years to complete the requirements of this degree. I remember an occasion, months ago, when Corey asked without recrimination but with a measure of longing intonation, "Mom, will you be finished soon?" "Soon," was the limit of my reply as I barely reverted my attention from the computer page.

Perhaps one's children are the only persons capable of this sort of loving acceptance.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A flurry of recent writing about the ethical issues confronting business people indicates that the moral content of business practice is important. Curiously, there is no genuine sense of urgency to engage ethical questions rigorously in the business school. Very few people would disagree, I think, with the following two ideas: First, questions of ethics have a place in higher education; and second, the professional school ought to provide its students with an education that is substantially more than technical education (Hastings Center Project, 1980). In reality, opportunities to pursue moral questions are sparse in the business curriculum, and the treatment of ethical questions may be inadequate. This situation is untenable given what is at stake—a future generation of moral agents inadequately prepared to think with precision and insight about the most important questions they will have to answer.

The personal, organizational, and social consequences of immoral or amoral business practice are too numerous, too pervasive, and too staggering to be ignored. Yet indifference, wrong ideas, and weakness of will in educators, program advisors, and learners prevent students from developing the capacity for rational ethical deliberation, a capacity that is of central importance to responsibility in business life. Therefore, my primary concern in this thesis is to argue for a more central role for the teaching of ethics in business education. I will have opponents, to be sure. It is my contention, however, that one need only take note of the plethora of research, publishing, and general discussion around questions of ethical

conduct to support my claim that the moral content of business practice is important. Consequently, a professional school that does not foster the ability to examine the moral life will fail in its own purposes. Also, the school fails in its service to society; it fails as well in its service to those who want to become genuinely well-educated persons.

I believe that there is a discrepancy between a traditional aim of higher education to foster and support the full flourishing of human-being and the current reality with its overemphasis on the technical preparedness of graduates. This perceived discrepancy is, in part, the motivation for this project. In the case of the business school curriculum, evidence of limited treatment afforded to ethics education is documented in several curriculum studies (Hoffman & Moore, 1982; Hosmer, 1985; Schoenfeldt, McDonald, & Youngblood, 1991; Singh, 1989).

Finding a balance between disciplinary knowledge and skills development is a delicate maneuver, certainly, and in this century the teaching of philosophy, morality, and ethics at the college and university has declined in importance. As Callahan (1980) claims, "Any discussion of . . . the teaching of ethics must begin by facing a number of formidable difficulties" (p. 61). My goal is to understand these difficulties. Through this study I have come to realize that Callahan is speaking about difficulties that are more systemic than philosophical. However, it is necessary to ensure that the philosophical questions, if any, that discourage the teaching of business ethics are explicitly stated and well scrutinized.

From a review of the literature on teaching ethics and applied business ethics, I find the strongest objection to be the claim that it is the same as indoctrination. As I define indoctrination herein to be the antithesis of education, the charge, if true, would be a formidable philosophical argument against the teaching of ethics in higher education. I attempt to show that the charge is false and that, consequently, no philosophical barrier exists. Therefore, with proponents of ethics education such as Callahan (1980), Castro (1989), Macklin (1980), Hoffman (1984), Michalos (1991), and French (1988) who are concerned with moral agency and the moral responsibilities of people engaged in competitive enterprise, I make a case for a more central place for ethics teaching in business education. This is an important task because I believe that well-educated business people deserve to be equipped with ethical sensitivity and the capacity for reasoned action necessary to the resolution of inevitable and difficult ethical questions.

In Chapter II I make the case for teaching business ethics, beginning with the factors relevant to the current context. A brief historical perspective of the teaching of ethics in higher education sets the stage. Sloan (1980) and Rossouw (1994) describe historical influences that pressed the university to view moral philosophy as a specialized area of study so that eventually the subject declined in importance and became an elective to many programs. This change has resulted in a cluster of persistent and irritating problems that pose barriers to the revitalization of ethics education.

Different conceptions of ethics education prevail, and, as Callahan (1980) notes, teaching ethics has various meanings, including the following:

"instructing people not to break the law, or to abide by some legal or professional code; for others, it means an attempt to improve moral character or to instill certain virtues" (p. 61). Some argue that ethical theory is the most appropriate focus for course content. Regardless of the possible alternatives, the question of content is a moot point for many people who consider the whole subject irrelevant. Though each view is worthy of due consideration, these differing opinions have caused intellectual paralysis, and educators have a responsibility to free up the immobility. Also, indifference, interdisciplinary rivalry, and disrespect among faculties is all too common, and these attitudes have taken a toll. As a consequence, we are left without enough qualified teachers and without the resources needed to revive ethics teaching adequately.

It is obvious that we lack common ground within which good teaching and learning might flourish. Callahan (1980) has concluded that these are formidable barriers. Perhaps so. However, I suggest that finding solutions to these problems is the ordinary work of curriculum planners and educational administrators. Therefore, the barriers are formidable only if educators allow them to be so. Academic writing strongly favors the inclusion of business ethics in the professional education of business people. Scholars, business leaders and professors rate the subject as important therefore the case for teaching business ethics is not difficult to make. Nevertheless, compared to occupations such as accounting, nursing, or teaching, the subject is not adequately integrated into educational programs. What I see in the current situation are systemic problems and mistaken ideas that thwart a commitment to ethics education.

In Chapter III I examine philosophical objections to teaching ethics. They are:

1. The role of business is essentially nonmoral; thus moral education is irrelevant.

2. The basis of morality lies in religious teaching; and, in a religiously pluralistic society, teaching religion is inappropriate in public education.

3. Studying ethics causes confusion.

4. Moral education, including ethics education, is tantamount to indoctrination, which is a morally reprehensible form of teaching.

Objection 1 rests on a functionalist view of business that limits its purpose to making profit, thus rendering questions of ethics irrelevant. I argue that this view is an impoverished conception of business and that ethics is an essential companion to business practice. I rely on Hoffman's (1984) summary of counterarguments that acknowledge profit as a necessary condition of business but not a sufficient condition.

Objection 2 is based on the mistaken idea that all ethics teaching is a version of religious teaching; consequently, a logical objection follows that, in a religiously pluralistic society, it is improper to impose a religious foundation. I reply, however, that the effort and need to define common values are not the same as imposing a certain religious view. It is possible to establish common values among groups of people who share a society while holding to different religious beliefs. Further, there is a secular foundation for moral knowledge, as Macklin (1980) emphasizes. She argues

that taking a secular position does not necessarily deny religions' contribution to morality and ethics, nor does it show disrespect for religion.

Objection 3 arises out of a concern that questions of morality rarely have one right answer. According to the objector, such questions are too difficult and intractable to be studied seriously. Surely, institutions of higher education are the best locations for reasoned and scholarly discussion of the difficult questions in life.

Objection 4 demands serious examination. This objection rests on the claim that ethics teaching is a form of mis-education called *indoctrination.* Macklin (1980) attempts to reply to the charge, but her discussion seems incomplete. First, she fails to examine thoroughly the criteria that define the phenomenon; nevertheless she claims that indoctrination is both revealed and avoided by teaching methods. Thus, for Macklin ethics teaching is not indoctrination when the teaching method emphasizes rational argument and justification. With Snook (1972) and Kleinig (1982), I am unconvinced. Methods do not adequately reveal the moral issue at stake in the case of indoctrination. Furthermore, Macklin's view reduces the professional educator to the status of a technician who merely chooses the right tool from the teacher's tool kit to avoid indoctrinative teaching.

In Chapter IV I consider the objection in depth. The term indoctrination is used to identify a morally reprehensible form of teaching, and the charge is a damning one worthy of investigation. However, to understand the charge properly, one needs to study educational philosophical writing to make the mis-educative nature of indoctrination

explicit. With Kleinig (1982), I argue that indoctrination is revealed by a closed-minded attitude held by the learner. Thus, indoctrination is not so much about method as it is about the outcome or the effect that a certain form of teaching has on the learner.

There is considerable consensus among writers that an indoctrinated person suffers a serious constraint to rational capacity. One can observe this limited rationality when a learner is unable to revise a belief given reasonable argument and evidence. When teaching closes the rational mind to new attitudes and beliefs it becomes a morally objectionable act called indoctrination. At the core of our moral antipathy to indoctrination is the educator's commitment to the human capacity for open-mindedness—an attitude that I argue is essential to the educated person. Open-minded and closed-minded persons are contrasted through the ideas of Hare (1979), who claims that to be open-minded is an ideal of the educated person.

Thus, we come full circle to the idea that one of the true aims of higher education is to foster rational consideration of moral questions in an open-minded way. Regardless of occupation, concern for the moral content of practice is a condition of the fully flourishing professional life. Therefore, ethics education itself is not indoctrination, although ethics teaching could become indoctrination. To conclude this work, I dedicate the final chapter to the construction of a case study that contrasts indoctrinative ethics teaching with nonindoctrinative ethics teaching.

For me, the interests of moral philosophers and business people ought to converge in the ethics classroom so that learners can make a commitment

to ethical practice. Today, business people are well-educated and becoming increasingly professional. As they take on the mantle of professionalism, it is reasonable to demand high standards of conduct. Ethics education is, therefore, essential.

Twenty years ago, *Change* magazine published an article by Bok (1976), president of Harvard University. In the article he speaks to both the education and the business communities about his concern for teaching ethics to future business leaders: "There has rarely been a time when we have been so dissatisfied with our moral behavior or so beset by ethical dilemmas of every kind" (p. 26). He identifies two indicators of the lack of moral direction in business: first, a seemingly endless wave of scandals occurring in the most influential public and private arenas—in politics, business, social services, and religion; and second, "many new groups pressing claims of a distinctly moral nature—racial minorities, women, patients, consumers, environmentalists, and many more" (p. 26). Bok appeals to educators, pointing out that other social institutions are declining as sources of ethical values; therefore,

> educators have a responsibility to contribute in any way they can to the moral development of their students. Unfortunately, most colleges and universities are doing very little to meet this challenge. In several respects they have done even less in recent decades than they did a hundred years ago. (pp. 26-27)

To realize the goal of developing sophisticated ethical reasoning and good judgment in business people, he asks institutes of higher learning to examine their role. He holds an optimistic view of higher education, saying that it is

> important to look to our colleges and universities and consider what role they can play. . . . [The teaching of ethics] should not be ignored if only because higher education occupies such strategic ground from which to make a contribution. Every businessman and lawyer . . . will pass through our colleges and most will attend our professional schools as well. (p. 26)

In the literature since 1976, scholars of business ethics often cite Bok's article. It serves as a starting point for many discussions about business ethics education. Even though the essay is more of an appeal than a philosophical argument, Bok's words are a catalyst for change. Two decades have passed, and the need for sophisticated moral thinking and judgment remains high. New and increasingly complex issues abound. Public skepticism and dissatisfaction with business people as moral agents is persistent. The popular joke is that *business ethics* is an oxymoron. Business people are expected to act, at best, without consideration of the moral dimension of a business decision and, at worst, in an openly *un*ethical manner. Conscientious educators ought not to endorse these expectations.

If business educators ignore the inherent value of ethics education for the next generation, then we are likely to lead our graduates toward a life of moral naiveté or worse, toward a life of moral bankruptcy. Business people ought to conduct themselves ethically, and education ought to contribute by preparing graduates to be able thinkers with a mind open to the complexities of the moral content in business practice. To give substance to these claims, I now turn to the contextual issues giving rise to the claim that ethics teaching deserves a more central place in the curriculum.

CHAPTER II

THE CASE FOR TEACHING BUSINESS ETHICS

Is there a central place for ethics in business? To proponents of business ethics, the answer is certain. Economic activity in general, and enterprise in particular, have a profound impact on people, so it follows that a concern for the "values and rules of conduct by which we live" (Solomon, 1993, p. 3) in the business world is essential. Perhaps it is obvious that business people, like all other persons, grapple with a plethora of ethical issues while acting on the ordinary and extraordinary demands of private enterprise. Therefore, ethics in business is essential in the same way that ethics is essential to any other social activity.

To do the right thing is difficult, however. According to Solomon (1993), right conduct demands decisions and actions based on the following: thoughtfulness and reason; the ability to defend decisions and actions; the capacity to reflect on conduct and attitudes; and, finally, the ability to revise knowledge, conduct, and attitudes (pp. 2-5). These sophisticated cognitive and emotional abilities allow a person to flourish in business life.

The ability to perceive the moral issues resident in the particulars of business practice is a complex intellectual and emotional capacity that can and ought to be nurtured through proper teaching. The nurture of rational moral capacity begins in the earliest years of life; and our ethical conduct and attitudes form and develop through experience, attention to role models, formal and informal instruction, and reflective deliberation. Over a lifetime

we learn the specialized language of morality and the reasons for taking, or declining to take, certain actions.

Currently, interest in ethics education is on the rise. At the same time a great deal of skepticism about ethics in business education exists. Indifference to the teaching of philosophy, including moral philosophy, reached a low point in the early decades of this century; and, as one might expect, the indifference has caused a corresponding decline in educational resources, including qualified teachers, necessary to maintain high educational standards. If the discipline of philosophy is like a grand house and recent decades are like hard times, then the grand house is dilapidated. One can see evidence of hard times in the field of moral philosophy: inadequate ethical thinking and misunderstandings about the human capacity for reflective morality and ethical decision making. It should not be surprising then that hard times have fallen on the schoolhouse and that misunderstandings prevail about the purpose and function of ethics education.

Opponents of ethics teaching raise objections worthy of rational assessment. The most serious educational charge is that such teaching is tantamount to indoctrination. If we assume for the moment that indoctrination is a highly undesirable form of miseducation, then teaching ethics would be objectionable. The aim in this thesis is to comprehend properly the charge of indoctrination and consider the relationship between indoctrination and ethics teaching. As such, I explore the concept of indoctrination in detail in Chapters III and IV.

However, before addressing the problem of indoctrination, I would like to consider, briefly, reasons why moral philosophy has declined as a subject of importance in higher education. In the following historical overview, I rely on authors concerned about the history of teaching moral philosophy in American universities. The scholarship is fairly extensive, and clearly, Canadian universities have been subject to similar influences (Axelrod & Reid, 1989).

The Historical Setting

According to Bok (1976), Powers and Vogel (1980), Sloan (1980), and Rossouw (1994), the teaching of moral philosophy once held an important and distinguished place in the higher education curriculum in the USA.

> In the nineteenth century, it was commonplace for [American] college presidents to present a series of lectures to the senior class expounding the accepted moral principles of the time. . . . Partly because of their positions of authority, and partly because of the force of their personalities many presidents seem to have left a deep impression on the minds and characters of their student. (Bok, 1976, p. 27)

Sloan rates the required course in moral philosophy as the most important course in the 19th-century college curriculum—a capstone of the curriculum: "It aimed to pull together, to integrate, and to give meaning and purpose to the students' entire college experience and course of study" (p. 2).

Although it is possible to trace back to ancient times a tradition of respect for the academic discipline of moral philosophy, the early 1800s is a suitable starting point for this brief review. Sloan (1980) marks the early

19th century as an important period in American higher education when, as he notes, moral philosophy began "to appear to be the central point in the college curriculum" (p. 3). He suggests that this time period is significant because social leaders and ordinary citizens in the United States assumed that, to survive and prosper, a set of social and moral values common to all members of the nation was necessary. Furthermore, it was a widely held social view that moral education had the power to instill a sense of national community and provide a social mechanism to create shared social values. Thus, in higher education the course in moral philosophy took on a special status.

According to Sloan (1980), "Moral philosophy also served to promote intellectual harmony by introducing into the curriculum a wide range of new subject matter and attempting to exhibit for the student its ethical dimensions" (p. 6). Also, the study of moral philosophy helped form the moral character and disposition of the individual student. This required the moral philosophy teacher to attempt to awaken the learner's ethical sensitivity and to provide theoretical ground from which the graduate would be able to continue his or her own development through life experience. Finally, the moral philosophy teacher provided concrete examples of the ethical concerns of society and the conduct expected of social leaders.

Many topics central to the present-day areas of social science specialization were discussed in the 19th-century moral philosophy class. At the time also the high value placed on 'scientific method' demanded "increased precision in argument and greater delineation of related fields of study" (Sloan, 1980, p. 6). Through the century subjects such as political

science, economics, and psychology began to split out of moral philosophy, and, in so doing, they took along the moral and ethical imperatives connected to them. Both Sloan and Rossouw (1994) agree that the preeminence of moral philosophy in undergraduate instruction did not survive the 19th century. Sloan attributes the decline of moral philosophy, in part, to an internal weakness as a discipline in that "philosophy had cast a false patina of unity over the curriculum, which it was powerless to maintain" (p. 8). Knowledge was expanding rapidly, and the discipline of moral philosophy became increasingly fragmented. The consequence of fragmentation would be, as philosophers predicted, increasing neglect of the ethical foundations of the pursuit of knowledge.

The organizational structures of universities were changing too in response to the enormous increase in knowledge and improvement in scholarly methods and standards.

> The vision of a unified curriculum and culture of learning was being abandoned, and the ethical, social, and character concerns once central to higher education were giving way to an emphasis on research and specialized training as the primary purpose of the university. (Sloan, 1980, pp. 11-12)

Many new social science scholars were influenced by the senior course in moral philosophy. They were committed to a combination of both the ethical and scientific orientation of moral philosophy. They established learned societies so that new social-sciences would help resolve pressing social problems. But the new breed of social scientist-scholar-ethicist-activist became embroiled in disputes with administration and boards of trustees in ways that threatened academic careers. Colleagues also charged

that the image of 'social activists' called into question the scholars' standing as objective-minded scientists.

A conception of scholarship and reason that favored the study of empirically verifiable truth claims, dispassionate methods of reasoning, and the goal of finding a single coherent response to a 'scientifically' examined question was emerging. The scientific approach was not, however, easily applied to moral questions. Questions of morality and ethics seemed to present unresolvable conflicts. Indeed, as this conception of rationality evolved, questions of a moral nature fell further outside the strict definition of intellectual rational investigation and analytic thought.

In the early decades of the 20th century the discussion about the relationship between ethics, on the one hand, and scientific research, technology, and social organization, on the other, continued with some rigor (Sloan, 1980, pp. 14-15). However, knowledge of moral philosophy and its concern for ethical questions was evolving, like other areas of knowledge, into an area of specialized knowledge. "By World War I, not only had social scientists disengaged themselves from direct social action, but their fields were becoming increasingly dominated by a stress on scientific method as ethically neutral" (p. 15). Perhaps it is not surprising, therefore, that moral education continued to decline throughout the 20th century.

The required senior course was replaced by experimental versions of the survey course in moral philosophy. In the early decades of this century instruction in moral philosophy shifted toward ethical theory, away from normative ethics, and even further away from applied ethics. Sloan (1980,

p. 37) notes that in the 1940s and 1950s the trend continued toward curriculum isolation, with departments of philosophy specializing in ethical theory and questions of meta-ethics. At the same time, in the areas of professional and occupational education, demand for more room in the curriculum for technical subject matter steadily eroded the portion allotted for general education in literature, languages, mathematics, and the social sciences.

Because truth claims in ethics came to be regarded as not readily adjudicated in a way that provided one right answer to specific problems, the idea that the study of ethics was noncognitive and meaningless gained momentum and became orthodox. Moral knowledge and moral statements were denied the status of truth claims and assigned the status of opinion, with one moral opinion seen as being as valid or invalid as the next. This ambiguity suggested that the subject matter be judged as nice to know, but not essential. Professional schools not only shied away from teaching about moral issues and ethical theory, but they also came to ignore moral education.

It is popular to describe the 1960s as the turbulent decade, and it certainly was the time of an unprecedented knowledge explosion during which the rate of change accelerated and the number of occupations expanded. Professional specialization became the norm. Powers and Vogel (1980, pp. 21-25) mark the late 1960s, however, as the contemporary turning point in the decline of moral philosophy. They claim that the social movements of the 1960s brought back demand for the teaching of ethics in the business school. The changing tide was influenced by reports on

business education commissioned, in the late 1950s, by the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation in response to criticism that business and management education had become excessively vocational or technical (p. 23). The reports recommended that both undergraduate and graduate curricula require social-policy course work. At first, reaction to the recommendation was mixed. Then, in 1967 the official governing body of American business schools, the American Assembly of Colleague Schools of Business (AACSB), declared an official standard for members' programs that required all schools to "include in their course of instruction the equivalent of at least one year of work" (p. 25) in the discipline of ethics, making it relevant to business decision making.

Thus, for the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation a case in favor of teaching business ethics rests on the claim that business is a social activity with moral content. However, business schools have been slow to move in the direction of required business ethics education. The reasons are perhaps understandable. As a complex subject matter, no one definition provides educators with precise guidelines for introductory, intermediate, and advanced studies in ethics. The subject has a hybrid nature. It combines academic disciplines, and it is an applied subject in the business context, thus making odd bedfellows of scholars and practitioners from philosophy, theology, sociology, psychology, and business—scholars who otherwise seem to have little in common.

In the 1970s and 1980s attempts to find a more central and significant place for ethics in the curriculum met either indifference or hostility by administrators, faculty, and students. For the most part, ethics education

remains an elective today (Hoffman & Moore, 1982; Schoenfeldt et al., 1991; Singh, 1989). This status is the usual recommendation of program advisory groups who tend to regard ethics as unessential knowledge. In times of scarce educational resources, ethics education loses out to competing subjects. Given the historical points of interest, we can understand why ethics education resides at the margin of curricula.

Present-Day Barriers to Teaching Business Ethics

In this second part of Chapter II, I would like to examine contemporary barriers to teaching business ethics; namely, a shortage of competent teachers and indifference and disrespect among scholars. These barriers account, in part, for the deteriorated condition of curriculum and instruction in business ethics education.

The Qualifications of Business Ethics Teachers

Bok (1976), Callahan (1980), Powers and Vogel (1980), Hoffman (1984), De George (1987), Castro (1989), and Pamental (1989) discuss the need for qualified ethics teachers. Powers and Vogel rate the lack of competent teachers as the "most critical obstacle to the teaching of ethics at business schools and elsewhere" (p. 58), and all these authors generally agree. However, to declare that there is a shortage of "competent" teachers presupposes defined criteria from which to judge qualifications and competency.

Undoubtedly, philosophers and moral educators are highly qualified to teach ethics, and these scholars are well able to transfer the methods, ideas, and processes of teaching and scholarship of ethics to the business context. But the professor of philosophy will face his or her limits when class discussion turns to the specifics of the business world. On the other hand, Callahan (1980) explains that business professors are trained in one or more technical subject areas (accounting, marketing, human resources, and such), and their own education lacks the wider moral and social context necessary to discuss the moral content of the occupation. He claims, and I concur, that no matter how much real-world professional experience business professors accumulate, it is unlikely that they will develop well-honed skills in ethical analysis without specific formal education. Gandz and Hayes (1988) agree that "the first barrier [to teaching ethics] is that most faculty members have little or no background in ethical analysis; . . . they must develop new skills in a complex area" (p. 664). De George (1987) explains the dilemma accurately:

> Philosophers, who typically teach business ethics courses, really know so little about business that they should not teach MBA level courses. But management professors frequently are neither competent to teach ethics nor interested in doing so. Hence . . . business ethics is not taught. (p. 507)

Powers and Vogel (1980) describe the situation as a chicken-and-egg problem and compare business ethics to the field of bioethics, where a similar dilemma occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. They argue, correctly, that "pedagogical excellence requires good teachers; good teachers require for their development good materials and exemplary pedagogues" (p. 57). The authors find that successful efforts in the field of bioethics were made

initially by ethicists who devoted many hours to clinical work that exposed them directly to the ethical problems confronting the medical profession. As concepts and reasoning emerged, medical practitioners became more skilled in applying this learning to specific situations. Consequently, a larger pool of able ethics teachers has formed in both arenas—ethics and medicine—growing out of the need for collaboration between disciplines. The authors suggest that a similar situation exists in the field of business ethics and business ethics education. It calls for not only this type of collaboration, but also the will to proceed.

Toward a remedy. A few schools have attempted to redress the problem by bridging the two disciplines with promising results. Both Mai-Dalton (1987) and De George (1987) describe a successful two-week professional development seminar sponsored by the Exxon Foundation and conducted by the University of Kansas Graduate School of Business. Led by a team of three members of the Kansas Department of Philosophy and attended by 12 faculty of the University of Kansas Graduate School of Business, the seminar brought philosophy and business professors together.

> No one believed that a crash mini-course in ethical theory would turn professors of business into professors of philosophy, or make them expert in moral theory. Yet the Seminar gave the participants familiarity with the technical language of ethics and so the confidence that comes with such familiarity. (De George, 1987, pp. 507-508)

Other benefits were also evident, most notably that the seminar brought ethics into the open; colleagues were surprised to discover a common interest in the idea that the subject matter could be integrated into a professional school curriculum. The initiative legitimized the discussion of

ethics among business faculty and encouraged issues and topics for consideration in curriculum planning meetings.

Powers and Vogel (1980) suggested this approach in the early 1980s: "Progress could be made more quickly if universities provided senior scholars, in either ethics or business, encouragement and opportunity to immerse themselves as students (or even practitioners) in the 'other discipline'" (p. 58). But as these authors point out, shortages of financial resources in postsecondary education are a barrier to growth in interdisciplinary practices, and it is unlikely that a faculty of business would be persuaded to hire faculty members whose formal training and experience are solely in philosophy and moral education, "particularly since philosophy is very remote from the traditional intellectual center of gravity of business education" (p. 59). Given the current funding crisis in higher education, shrinking budgets continue to dampen the movement toward new directions.

Further, Callahan (1980) is concerned about teachers being inadequately prepared in philosophy or theology, anticipating the possibility of indoctrination or some other detrimental consequence to the learner that may occur when ethics is taught badly. Although noting that excellent courses have been and continue to be taught by those who do not have graduate training in the field of ethics, he insists that a firm grounding in the subject matter of ethics is essential. Both Bok (1976) and Callahan propose qualifications criteria for teachers. Both authors agree substantially that the teacher must combine adequate knowledge of both moral knowledge and business with pedagogical skills (see Appendix I). Callahan adds one other

point; that is, to supplement academic business knowledge with practical or "clinical" experience in the business world.

Callahan (1980) believes that a person "trained exclusively in ethics will not be fully qualified to teach [ethics]; . . . other knowledge will have to be acquired" (p. 77). At the same time, educators from a professional discipline will have to attain additional qualifications to teach ethics in their professional field by taking further education in philosophy and ethics. According to Callahan:

> A traditional distinction should make the point perfectly clear: when the teaching of ethics requires the knowledge of two or more fields, it is a necessary but not sufficient condition that there be a full grounding in one of the fields; a sufficient condition will be some degree of grounding in the other field as well. (p. 77)

The competent amateur. Callahan (1980) defines a *competent amateur* as a person able to teach to a satisfactory standard of proficiency in an interdisciplinary subject. The competent amateur has achieved a degree of training and sophistication in a field other than the one in which he or she was originally educated. For example, a person with an advanced degree in moral philosophy and an interest in teaching business ethics could become a competent amateur in the field of business. According to Callahan, this person has a "broad familiarity with the language, concepts and characteristic modes of thinking of another discipline. To this familiarity should be added an understanding of the modes of analysis and the methodology of the other discipline" (p. 78). No less important, Callahan emphasizes the importance of possessing a strong sense of the internal dynamics and folkways of the other discipline.

The idea has merit and offers potential as a partial solution. Callahan (1980) prescribes a program to achieve status as a competent amateur. Based on the experience of developing competent educators in the field of bioethics, he recommends that at least one year of formal study in the other discipline be undertaken, complemented by participation in informal learning such as self-teaching through reading and attendance at scholarly conferences, institutes, and so forth. Additionally, collegial relationships with experts in the other field ought to be developed and a network for informal advice, discussion, and guidance established. Callahan suggests that, although it may be ideal to hold advanced degrees in both philosophy and the applied field, "it is not often a practical solution and it is usually not necessary" (p. 77). He asks, however, that the field of ethics hold a privileged place in the background preparation of any teacher: "By 'privileged place,' I mean simply that one can claim no competence whatever to teach ethics without some familiarity with the history, the modes of reasoning, and the concepts of moral philosophy and moral theology" (p. 79). Achieving competent amateur status is not easy. Callahan (1980) contends, and I concur, that educators coming to ethics education from other disciplines must wrestle with the writings of the moral philosophers, which are both intellectually challenging and difficult to grasp.

The Issues of Indifference and Disrespect

In my experience, there is an observable lack of respect and a climate of indifference between university faculties, and faculties of philosophy and business are not exempt. Interdisciplinary disrespect is not limited to the business professor's attitude toward philosophers and ethicists; the tarnished image of business in society is mirrored in the educational institute. Castro (1989), Professor of Management at Grand Valley State University in Michigan, notes that the university's business faculty are aware "that our Arts and Humanities colleagues often regard us as over-privileged and undereducated money changers who have set up shop in their temple" (p. 480). I have noticed that business students receive a cool reception from faculty and students in the humanities and arts. Even though the cold shoulder is a relatively mild rebuke, the message of indifference discourages a serious attitude toward the knowledge contained in the humanities.

These attitudes foster a correspondingly poor attitude in undergraduate students toward courses taken outside the professional faculty. Interdisciplinary courses are judged less important and are studied less seriously than "core" faculty subjects (Hoffman, 1984). In part, this occurs because students lack sufficient experience and perspective to assign interdisciplinary subjects high value. In the years that I served as a curriculum developer to the business programs at a community college, I observed faculty members and student advisors contributing to indifferent attitudes by diminishing the value of such courses through either direct or subtle messages of disrespect. I agree with Hoffman (1984) that, for undergraduate students to benefit from instruction by moral philosophers

and other experts who reside outside the business faculty, there needs to be a reciprocal attitude of esteem and respect among faculty groups. Value labels and professional respect or disrespect are easily "read" by adult students and woven subtly into the norms of students and a professional body.

Given this regrettable set of tensions, it is difficult to study ethics in a meaningful and rigorous way during the formative years in higher education. To remedy the situation, faculties of business and arts must first acknowledge the interdisciplinary nature of the subject. Students may then be more inclined to recognize and value the interdisciplinary nature of ethics education. Once a positive tone is set, students may come to realize that philosophical inquiry and moral content are both interesting and important. As students advance through senior undergraduate study and then on to graduate work, they will most certainly benefit from studying ethics in an integrated fashion. To combat skepticism, senior business professors committed to the development of specific skills in ethical reasoning, analysis, and argument are sorely needed. Indeed, this is an important qualifier to ensure quality instruction presented in an open manner. Team-teaching with representatives from both disciplines has been suggested as a helpful approach, particularly in the early stages of curriculum development and teacher professional development:

> However, substantial effort must be exerted by the [team] teachers to obtain a real integration of their perspectives; otherwise, students will be left with the impression that they can premise their choices on either ethical or good management principles, but not both. (Powers & Vogel, 1980, p. 59)

One is compelled to ask whether business ethics should be taught until these barriers are diminished and a reasonable quality of teaching is ensured. I believe the fear of failure and the reluctance to venture into the unfamiliar cause paralysis and impede genuine advancement toward the goal of quality ethics education. However, one might gain confidence when the following three ideas are considered: (a) that interdisciplinary fields never emerge fully grown. They develop slowly through the efforts of conscientious scholars who study, research, teach, and realize that today's knowledge is barely adequate; (b) that rigorous and thoughtful effort, in small measures, is how a full body of knowledge eventually emerges; and (c) that in the case of business ethics, excellence in method, analysis, and discussion, as well as an open attitude, can give rise to effective instruction.

Moreover, ethics is a "well-established discipline, and the difficulty that business ethics presents is the integration of the methods of ethics with a rapidly changing institutional context" (Powers & Vogel, 1980, p. 60). Therefore, business educators who may be struggling to add a whole new dimension to their academic qualifications and who are worried about their less-than-perfect trials can be reassured that learners are reasonably tolerant of the imperfect—so long as they are kept apprised of the situation. Further, educators can be encouraged by the increased interest in the field and by the efforts of people working on educational materials such as texts, case studies, and conferences that will advance professional development.

Whereas it is not overly controversial to claim that business people and students of business need, and in many cases want, to know how to examine the moral content of business, the teaching of business ethics

remains a controversial process. In the 20th century we have been slowly emerging from a long period of uncertainty about the proper place for moral philosophy on the higher education agenda. Uncertainty, controversy, objections, and unresolved differences in opinion have left higher education without the resources, especially qualified teachers, to respond to the current increasing demand for moral knowledge and ethics education.

The problems I have addressed so far are not insuperable. Other objections, however, may be more formidable. I have in mind philosophical objections leveled against the very idea of teaching business ethics, regardless of institutional contingencies. I now turn my attention to these objections.

CHAPTER III

OBJECTIONS TO TEACHING BUSINESS ETHICS

Few would disagree that higher education in general ought to be committed to the nurture of rational moral thought. Indeed, this is a time-honored idea and a traditional aim of higher education. Despite this positive disposition, the form and content of moral education, especially in professional schools, has been controversial. As Canada and the United States become more and more ethically pluralistic, the controversy becomes more strident (Callahan & Bok, 1980, p. xiii). Central to this thesis is the question whether there are reasonable objections to teaching business ethics that provide sufficient ground for omitting the moral content of business from the business school curriculum. Objections to the teaching of ethics are voiced by both the business and the education communities; in this chapter I examine four of the strongest objections discussed by business educators and philosophers.

I reserve discussion of the most forceful objection to the last because it raises the charge of indoctrination, a term laden with moral criticism. As such, indoctrination is a concept of considerable importance to educators. I argue that all four objections raise noteworthy "red flags" for the ethics teacher, but no objection is substantial enough to justify either indifference or hostility toward the subject matter.

Objection 1

The role of business in society is essentially nonmoral; thus moral education is irrelevant in business education.

With Hoffman (1984), I refer to the view that business practice is essentially nonmoral as the functionalist conception of business (pp. 260-262). This view is well known to business people who will likely read the work of Friedman (1991), an outspoken functionalist. His essays are frequently published in business textbooks, and he is well known for a controversial view of the doctrine of social responsibility. For Friedman the primary goal of business is to maximize profit, and the primary role of a manager is as a fiduciary in relation to stockholders (Hoffman, 1984, p. 260). Accordingly, the functionalist views a manager as an agent who must relinquish his or her status as an autonomous moral agent to strive to satisfy the goal of the shareholders; that is, to maximize profit.

When one subscribes to the notion that business practice is nonmoral, it is logical to say that teaching ethics is irrelevant. This line of argument underscores the popular joke that business ethics is an oxymoron. More importantly however, it raises a fundamental question: Are business and ethics compatible? With Hoffman (1984), Callahan (1980), Mulligan (1991), and others, I contend that they are compatible, unequivocally. Indeed, they are more than compatible; they are essential. At the same time, it is appropriate to take the functionalist argument seriously and understand its limitations and flaws.

According to Friedman (1991), the claim that business ought to be responsible is a serious mistake. He writes that "only people have responsibilities; a corporation is an artificial person, and in this sense may have artificial responsibilities, but 'business' as a whole cannot be said to have responsibilities" (p. 41). Discussion around this claim focuses on Friedman's central idea that "the only one social responsibility of business [is] to use its resources . . . to increase its profits" (p. 45).

Although it is not controversial to say that businesses must be profitable, it is contentious to claim profit making as the only consideration of a business. Friedman (1991) engages in overkill by choosing rhetorical strategies intended to misdirect the reader's attention, and in the process he is less than persuasive. Friedman labels the social responsibility doctrine as subversive. This emotionally charged word is used intentionally to chafe the reader. Indeed, I concur with Mulligan (1991), who points us toward Friedman's often overlooked concluding statement, which "contain[s] a moral exhortation to business people. Business, he [Friedman] says, should engage in 'open and free competition without deception or fraud'" (p. 50). Although the social responsibility doctrine is a subversive doctrine, Friedman instructs executives to make as much money as possible "while conforming to the basic rules of the society, both those embodied in law and those embodied in ethical custom" (p. 42). Mulligan's conclusion is both accurate and insightful:

> If Friedman does not recognize that even these restrained words lay open a broad range of moral obligation and social responsibility for business, which is after all one of the largest areas of human interaction in our society, then the oversight is his. (p. 50)

In short, Friedman's argument suffers an internal contradiction.

Since the late 1970s there has been a remarkable surge of scholarly research and publishing on the subject of ethics and business practice. For example, in 1982 a scholarly publication, the *Journal of Business Ethics,* was founded. It aims to "provide a public forum for discussion and debate of ethical issues related to business" (Michalos, 1982, n.p.). Journal content spans a variety of topics relevant to business ethics, including topics of concern to business ethics education.

In addition to specialty journals, the study of business ethics enjoys a fair share of advocates and critics, textbooks, courses, scholars, and benefactors. We might conclude, therefore, that attention to the moral content of business practice is as important today as it has been at any other time. Perhaps questions about business ethics are more pressing today, and difficult, given the increasingly complex nature of modern life. Business activity has a profound impact on individuals and on the whole of society, with consequences of an unprecedented magnitude. Therefore, it is not very controversial to claim here that business and ethics are compatible. Indeed, it is an eccentric notion, at best, to suggest that business people do not recognize moral issues or hold ethical standards.

It is more likely that all people, regardless of occupation or profession, from either the public or private sector, are concerned to some degree with the ethical standards of a business and the ethical decisions taken by employees, executives, and directors of that business. To recognize compatibility between ethics and business does not deny that ethical issues

cause conflict or that they are difficult to grasp, emotionally charged, and at times without a satisfying resolution. Furthermore, the abstract nature of the subject, as well as competing moral views and conceptions of ethical standards, make its subject matter intellectually demanding in the extreme.

Hoffman (1984) finds the functionalist view fundamentally mistaken. He argues, and I concur, that this view is founded on a *mis*conception of business as a nonmoral activity. In Hoffman's words, "One does not have to and ought not to conceive the nature of business and its corporate organizational units in this [functionalist] way" (p. 260). Without a doubt, the functionalist perspective must be discussed seriously because it is pivotal to the question of whether or not teaching ethics is appropriate and justified. I rely on Hoffman for a concise reply to the functionalist's argument:

> Even if it were true that the sole goal of business traditionally has been profit, a claim that is in and of itself debatable, this does not make profit-making a morally neutral activity. Everyone would agree that certain basic moral standards underlie business practice, such as honoring agreements, truth-telling, etc., but more importantly we have encouraged business to pursue profits because we believed—rightly or wrongly—that its doing so violated no right and would be best for society as a whole. (p. 262)

Moreover, a profit-making business—small or large—is not a machine. A business is owned and operated by a person or a group of persons who are moral agents. This is so for all members of the business, especially the shareholder group. When human beings attempt to separate and differentiate their character and behavior into segregated compartments, one for the private person and another for the public person, and these different

roles demand conflicting attitudes and values, the psychological ill-effects of lived incongruity can be devastating. Poor health, stress, absenteeism, strained relationships, emotional outbursts, confused thinking, and poor productivity are evidence of inner personal conflict. Different standards for the personal life and the professional life simply do not work.

Hoffman (1984, p. 261) criticizes another aspect of the functionalist view; that is, that economic progress does not always lead to social progress as Friedman suggests. He points to innumerable examples of business activities undertaken for the purpose of profit making that impose heavy costs on society: unsafe working conditions for employees, hazardous industrial products, exploitation of the environment, psychological burnout, harassment, alienation and exploitation of workers, unemployment, and so forth.

Business is not isolated from society as the functionalist believes; it is an integral part of society. It has been thus since the first exchange of services and goods for barter that occurred before recorded history. Hoffman (1984) refers to contemporary writers from both business and philosophy who have argued against the functionalist perspective. A theme among the many counterarguments is the argument that the pursuit of profit as the sole goal of individual business people and corporations does not lead to the best for society today. Whereas profit is a necessary condition of business enterprise, it may not be the sufficient condition of business enterprise. Individuals and corporations have personal and societal obligations as well. According to Hoffman, corrupt business practices are

> intolerable to a healthy society, primarily because of their violation of ethical rights and values of this and future generations. Society is demanding, recently more than ever, that corporations find a harmony and working reciprocity between economic and social concerns, and this in turn demands the infusion of [or return of] moral rules and goals into the corporation itself. (p. 262)

It is not radical to claim that the obligations of corporate managers and employees go far beyond seeking profit for the shareholders. "The corporation must assume responsibilities which go beyond those of efficiency and legality and adopt ethical obligations toward employees, consumers, and society as a whole" (Hoffman, 1984, p. 261). Although certain standards of practice with ethical content are imbedded in laws and regulations that intend to constrain and guide business practice according to the interests of society, true ethical business practice goes beyond that which is legally imposed. A corporation ought to perceive itself as a moral agency if it is to develop and institutionalize ethical goals. Indeed, whereas formal social rules—laws and regulations—are necessary to avoid abuse or to guide business enterprise toward appropriate social standards, ideally corporations ought to act consciously to integrate business and ethics. The law can assume only a limited role in shaping the ethical behavior of organizations.

The following example will serve to illustrate. Today there is a growing trend toward industry self-regulation. Government is becoming less inclined to act as an advisor assisting companies toward regulatory compliance (*Regulatory Reform,* 1995). Paternalistic and often lame government bureaucrats are being replaced by enforcement of tough regulations and stiff penalties for offenders. Industries are expected to behave as mature agents

with the following abilities: (a) to educate themselves about social issues, (b) to educate themselves about legislative and regulatory requirements, and (c) to establish corporate policies and standards based on the intent of legislation.

This trend shifts the burden of responsibility for the social impact of business activity onto corporate management. This disallows business people shelter in the functionalist argument that, as corporate agents, they have no social responsibility. The trend is evident, for example, in the area of environmental responsibility (*Canada's National Action Program on Climate Change,* 1995). Public demand for greater social responsibility has encouraged lawmakers to define penalties for noncompliance, including fines and jail terms for employees and executives, that are harsh enough to deter noncompliant activity (*Regulatory Reform,* 1995). Responsibility is assigned to people as moral agents rather than to nameless, faceless corporate entities.

To reiterate, a corporation is not a machine; rather, it is a group of people. A corporation is as ethical as the persons who together own, manage, and operate the enterprise. During the normal undertakings of job duties and tasks, employees, managers, and executives are exposed to enormous pressures from superiors and co-workers to compromise personal ethics. The usual claim is that an ethical trade-off is necessary and appropriate to reach corporate goals; to think otherwise is naive or overly scrupulous. Such pressure can be combated only if all persons in the business are encouraged to function as responsible moral agents.

Objection 2

Teaching ethics is the same as teaching a religion; and, in a religiously pluralistic society, teaching religion is inappropriate.

This objection is important given that most professional education is publicly funded and that people holding to different religions, or no religion, will be in attendance. According to Macklin (1980), to consider the validity of this objection, it is necessary to examine its basic premise. The objection rests on the notion that the "basis of all morality resides within religious teaching" (p. 87). Macklin replies to the objection with the argument that, although it is easy to understand why this idea is held by many people, it is fundamentally flawed. The error occurs when ethics and religion are linked in an essential way.

Without doubt, ethics and religion are historically connected. As Macklin (1980) observes, it is correct to say that

> even if it is true that much of our contemporary Western system of morality had its origins in Judeo-Christian teachings, it is an instance of the genetic fallacy to assert that, because things started that way, there must still remain a religious basis to morality. (p. 87)

Although a number of the precepts of religious ethics and secular ethics are similar, it does not follow that the rational basis of all morality requires religious teaching. Consequently, the objection loses its force as we recognize that it is grounded on a mistaken belief about the nature of ethics.

An associated argument claims that teaching secular ethics undercuts the religious foundations of ethics and infringes on the democratic principle of freedom of religion. The concern herein is, as Macklin (1980) describes,

that "ethics does not necessarily rest on a religious foundation, [but] that is precisely the problem with teaching ethics in educational institutions. It undercuts the religious foundations of ethics by teaching morality as a secular enterprise" (p. 90). To teach morality as a secular enterprise in no way denies or disrespects its religious foundations. Macklin asserts that

> one of the marks of a good general course in ethics is that it points out the different emphases, theories, and concepts of various historical and contemporary approaches to ethics. . . . It would be just as dishonest for a teacher of ethics to deny the historical foundations in religion of some modern ethical precepts as it would be for religious ethicists to deny the numerous and influential secular contributions to the field of ethics. Some less than scrupulous *teachers* of ethics may attempt to undercut the religious foundation of ethics in one way or another. But the teaching of ethics as a secular pedagogical enterprise could not by itself yield that result. (p. 91)

Although we are a religiously pluralistic society, shared concepts of morality and ethical conduct exist. Seeking clarification of the nature of ethics serves to stimulate the discussion between those who possess different, and potentially conflicting, moral knowledge. In an open climate one is not compelled to avoid or ignore the moral dimension, and higher education is a social venue well suited to rational discourse.

Consequently, this objection to teaching ethics can be countered by ensuring that the nature of ethics is understood and acknowledging that the task is challenging. The outcome of rational discourse between persons holding differing conceptions of morality (religious or secular) may be a rethinking of some fundamentally held beliefs. Traditionally, academe was the place in which people of a certain sophistication engaged themselves in such a discourse.

Although there is interest in the more altruistic possibilities of professional business education, in fact the opportunities to examine moral purposes and moral traditions in the business world are scant. In most instances, if the study of business ethics occurs at all, it is outside the core of the curriculum (Hoffman & Moore, 1982; Hosmer, 1985; Schoenfeldt et al., 1991; Singh, 1989). Thus, avenues for students to transcend the merely technical aspects of business are limited. The discrepancy between espoused goals of professional education and the reality of a too-technical curriculum is the source of discomfort for both scholars and the well-informed public. These stakeholders want education to assume a measure of responsibility for fostering moral thought in future leaders and citizens.

Consistent with Bok (1976), Callahan (1980), and the other contributors to the Hastings Center Project (1980), I maintain that college and university can provide a unique place in which to foster an examination of the moral life, in either secular or religious contexts. These authors go so far as to claim that to do less in higher education is to fail in its purposes. The two most important recommendations of the Hastings Center Project are (a) to make the examination of the moral claims and moral purposes of a profession formal and explicit, and (b) to invest sufficient "imagination, energy, and resources . . . in the teaching of ethics [so] that its importance will become manifest, both within and outside of the university" (p. 300).

To close the question of whether teaching business ethics is the same as teaching a particular religious morality, Callahan (1980) offers these cogent remarks:

> Courses in ethics should be taught because morality is part of any reflective personal life, and because ethical perspectives and specific moral rules are part of any cultural and civic life. That is only to say that ethical problems are inescapable. . . . Ethical problems arise at all stages of life, and are part of all professions, disciplines, and jobs. A consideration of them is as appropriate and necessary at the advanced graduate and professional level as it is at the undergraduate level. (p. 62)

Hoffman (1984) concurs by saying that in order for educated managers to integrate ethical values with business practice "business ethics education is indispensable" (p. 262). In a final word, the objection is not substantive.

Objection 3

Teaching ethics causes confusion.

Bok (1976) notes that some business people and business faculty might object to teaching ethics because it is impossible to reach a final moral conclusion. Thus, the teaching of ethics will leave students confused and even more unable to make reasonable judgments. In my view, the claim that higher-education students are unable to cope with the intricacies of moral thought is a patently paternalistic position to take toward adult learners.

The subject matter of moral education is complex and difficult, but that is not a persuasive reason to abandon the effort, especially in higher education. Ignorance is not a reasonable alternative to confusion. Rather, educators ought to search for how best to encourage learners to grasp perplexing subject matter. Indeed, a distinguishing objective of philosophical inquiry is to bring clarity and precision to complex issues. Thus, the

methods and tools of a philosophical approach may be the necessary antidote to confusion and uncertainty.

The objector may be suggesting that there is no purpose or value in pursuing imperfect answers or solutions. This view reveals, I think, a lack of understanding about the role and function of teaching and learning in higher education. I share Bok's (1976) reaction to the objection, which he describes as puzzling:

> It is surely better for students to be aware of the nuance and complexity of important human problems than to act on simplistic generalizations or unexamined premises. Moreover, many ethical problems are not all that complicated if students can only be taught to recognize them and reason about them carefully. (p. 29)

In the optimum learning situation, ideas and attitudes held by students can be submitted by the learner for scrutiny, with guidance from a skilled educator who will encourage reflective deliberation on his or her attitudes and beliefs. Bok provides a few examples, one of which I have chosen to summarize here to illustrate the point.

According to Bok (1976), Harvard business students found it proper for a government official to lie to an elected official to stall a regressive piece of legislation. The students tended to view the case in a cost-benefit paradigm, justifying any means to serve a desired end. When studying the dilemma, they asked, will the lie serve a good policy? What are the chances of being caught? If caught, would the consequences be significant? Bok points out that the cost-benefit paradigm is a narrow view of the issue of deception and should be challenged from a moral perspective.

With an abundance of real-life business scandals that reveal deception, lying, theft, fraud, exploitation, paternalism, inequity, injustice, and so on, it is irresponsible to deny attention to the moral dimension of business. Indeed, the many examples of unethical behavior are reason enough for the public to be contemptuous of business leaders who are in favored social and economic positions, expecting most of them to be immoral agents. However, even though public skepticism is warranted in many cases, I am concerned with immorality that may stem from ignorance or poor reasoning rather than sheer indifference to the rights and needs of others. I have observed a number of situations in which people are merely confused about what is and is not a moral issue in the particular circumstance. It is not reasonable to expect either ordinary citizens or business people to grasp the moral question imbedded in business practice or to have a honed capacity for ethical deliberation without specific moral education. Many business people simply do not know enough to act as mature moral agents.

Educated business people ought to be able to grapple with difficult ideas because they have obligations and responsibilities that will be demanding and controversial. Higher education could better prepare its students for the task of resolving the difficult questions. To do less is to fail as an social institution of higher learning. The aims of ethics education are to foster clarity of thought and reduce confusion.

Objection 4

Moral education and the teaching of ethics are tantamount to indoctrination and therefore should not have a place in higher or professional education.

This is the most important philosophical objection to teaching business ethics. To give this objection due consideration, it is necessary to understand what indoctrination is and then to compare it to educationally responsible teaching. Macklin (1980) attempts a reply that is, in my view, too limited. Among the limitations of her discussion is insufficient attention to the substantial scholarly literature existing at that time. Therefore, I attempt a comprehensive discussion in Chapter IV.

Macklin (1980) acknowledges that the concept of indoctrination is difficult to define, and she compares selected competing views. To retire the objection she relies on the argument that indoctrination is recognizable as a particular method of teaching (pp. 85-86). Macklin rests her argument on the assertion that "one of the chief characteristics of philosophical inquiry is its emphasis on justification and reasoning. . . . In contrast to the emphasis on reasoning and justification, . . . the process of indoctrination tends to avoid critical analysis and the use of rational methods" (p. 84).

For Macklin (1980), the way to maneuver along the slippery slope between authentic teaching and indoctrination is to focus on the teaching of ethics as a pedagogical activity. It requires analytic tools and techniques of reasoning that avoid the possibility of indoctrination, if applied properly by the teacher and the learner. Given analytical tools by which to examine

beliefs and values, people are able to advance their intellectual capacity and to come to possess a lifelong safeguard against indoctrination.

Intuitively, I find this conclusion too simplistic. It reduces the professional educator to a technician who is responsible for choosing the right tool from a tool kit to teach well. The situation of teaching ethics without giving way to indoctrination is much more complex and interesting than Macklin makes it out to be. Her reply to the charge fails to recognize the complex interplay of emotion and intellect that is necessary in a case of indoctrination and the profound grip that it may have on its victims. For educators, there is a greater responsibility to understand, recognize, and avoid indoctrinative teaching than Macklin apparently asserts.

The Charge of Indoctrination in Ethics Teaching

Many teachers and scholars are concerned—correctly—that ethics education will be labeled indoctrination. This would be a damaging charge indeed, given, as Snook (1972) and Thiessen (1993) explain, that the charge of indoctrination is one of moral condemnation. When applied to teaching, the label describes the antithesis of true education (Thiessen, 1993, p. 204). The very possibility of indoctrination in moral education raises an urgent moral red flag for teachers. Thus, it is essential that we understand indoctrination fully and know what is at stake given that we will encourage our students to think seriously about the moral tension that occurs, inevitably, in the conduct of professional life.

Currently, four ideas about indoctrination dominate the literature—content, method, intentions of the teacher, and consequences to the learner—with the scholars contending that one or another is the significant key to distinguishing indoctrination from education. Though there is some agreement that the four ideas are relevant to indoctrination, philosophers of education disagree as to which is the defining characteristic. In a recent book Thiessen (1993) points out that conceptual analysis has not provided a neat and clear-cut accounting of a difficult concept.

Even though extensive conceptual analysis has provided insight into the phenomenon, we should expect uncertainty and disagreement in particular alleged cases of indoctrination, rendering adjudication difficult. This is so precisely because indoctrination is a profoundly human phenomenon. Nevertheless, this is not reason enough to discourage educators from a sincere attempt to grasp the concept firmly. It is reasonable to allow a degree of uncertainty; analysis of a complex concept cannot be expected to yield the accuracy of a litmus test. Notwithstanding a degree of uncertainty, an analysis of indoctrination must give rise to a plausible explanation of the substantial moral issue that gives the term its derogatory meaning.

To understand the negative charge attached to indoctrination, one must consider the underlying moral issue. To call a person an indoctrinator is to condemn him or her in the strongest terms. When the term is applied to a particular teacher or to a set of teachings, it expresses moral criticism and implies a deplorable outcome as a result of teaching. Clearly, there is a moral issue at the foundation of the concept. Thus a key question is, What

will distinguish morally responsible teaching from morally irresponsible teaching?

Authorities hold different views about what is morally relevant in the conception of indoctrination. With Kleinig (1982), I argue in Chapter IV that educators ought to focus on the learner and the outcomes of teaching. Some people may not agree with this conclusion on the grounds that the nature of indoctrination is so morally objectionable that it demands accountability and that it is necessary to ascribe blame for wrongdoing. I argue that a focus on the teacher distracts us from the moral consequences of indoctrination borne by the more important stakeholder in education—namely, the learner. Among the professional responsibilities of an educator is the obligation to respect a person's right to become an educated person. It follows therefore that teachers have a special obligation to avoid teaching in a way that thwarts the rational capacities characteristic of an educated person. According to Thiessen (1993, p. 233), when indoctrination occurs, a teacher has curtailed a learner's growth toward rational autonomy. Thus, indoctrination is a morally objectionable act, and this is the source of the negative charge.

One way to identify the indoctrinated person is by identifying the opposite—an educated person. If the educated person is preferred, we are justifiably concerned about the possibility of indoctrination. If the two are indistinguishable or of equal value, then educators might have little responsibility to recognize and avoid indoctrination. Some of the capabilities that philosophers of education (Hare, 1979; Peters, 1975a; Snook, 1972; Thiessen, 1993) describe as necessary to the educated person include the

ability to evaluate claims to knowledge, the ability to criticize prevailing norms, and the ability to be open to the possibility of revising established knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes, given good reasons. Numerous authors echo the ideal that an educated person is an open-minded, autonomous, rational thinker able to analyze critically the attitudes and beliefs that they and others hold.

The Importance of Open-Mindedness to Rationality

The capacity for rational thought is vital to examine, revise, or take hold of attitudes and beliefs. Inherent to the nature of attitudes and beliefs is that they are deeply personal and that they are learned or acquired differently than skills or facts. Once formed, they may not be, and perhaps ought not to be, revised easily. When attempting to form attitudes and beliefs, a teacher ought to encourage a process of rational thought, because only in this way can students learn to evaluate attitudes and beliefs critically. I refer to Snook (1972) to emphasize the point: "It seems to me that whenever a person sets out to educate he commits himself by the very fact to the importance of rationality" (p. 109). If rationality is bypassed, then so is education.

Educators dare to touch others in a way that shapes the most profound aspects of their person. To assume this responsibility demands vigorous and ongoing self-scrutiny. When learning occurs in such a way that the learner becomes disinclined to critical reflection about a belief or attitude, the charge of indoctrination is valid. Given what is at stake, the reprehensible

nature of indoctrination becomes obvious and a matter of concern to educators. When an attitude or belief is held despite new evidence that should alter the belief or attitude, then it is likely that the learner has closed his or her mind and is suffering the consequences of indoctrination.

For Hare (1979) an educated person must be both willing and able to examine and potentially revise his or her position. He calls this the ability to be open-minded, one of the ideals of an educated person. By comparison, the closed-minded person would be either unable or unwilling, or both, to examine and potentially revise positions held firmly. Therefore, the process of indoctrination eventually restricts either the capacity or the will, or both, to think rationally, an outcome worthy of condemnation. Perhaps it is important to say at this point that there are many ways in which a person is rational or irrational. Although failing to be open-minded is only one mark of irrationality, it is a limitation of paramount concern when assessing the condition of indoctrination.

According to Hare (1979),

> a person who is open-minded is disposed to revise or reject the position he holds if sound objections are brought against it, or, in the situation in which the person presently has no opinion on some issue, he is disposed to make up his mind in the light of available evidence and argument as objectively and as impartially as possible. (p. 9)

People fail to be open-minded in several ways: first, by ignoring reasonable objections to a position; second, by adopting an opinion because it is the popular view or the party line; and third, by attending selectively to evidence and arguments that support a view already held. Hare notes that it "seems

possible that a person who has been indoctrinated could be unaware of his inability to give serious consideration to the positions which others maintain" (p. 8). For me this is a most severe case of restricted rationality, and an untenable outcome of teaching. Indeed, to be unaware is a far greater restriction than is resistance to new ideas, skepticism, or doubt. When a person is unaware of an inability, he or she is entrenched in an ever-tightening intellectual bind, and there is no obvious remedy for the condition. Consequently, attitudes and beliefs can become hardened into an impervious set closed to alternative views.

Hare (1979) says that when a person is subjected to a successful program of indoctrination, and as a consequence is unable to think rationally, that person is "doomed to fail" in any attempt to be objective and impartial. He or she is "thus quite unlike the ordinary individual who may be *liable* to fail to meet these standards" (p. 11) of rationality. I interpret Hare to mean that a nonindoctrinated person is fallible. That is, he or she may make errors, for instance, in the construction of a logical argument; or an ordinary person may fail to examine all evidence impartially. Nevertheless, the nonindoctrinated person is both willing and able to consider criticisms and counterarguments to his or her views and revise them accordingly. A shortfall in rationality is thus distinguished from the inability to take account of counterevidence or the unwillingness to hear alternate views that contradict an attitude or belief that is held in the unshakable grip of indoctrination. "And it is [an indoctrinated person's] inability or unwillingness to follow reason where it leads which leads us to say that he fails to be rational" (Hare, 1979, p. 12).

Therefore, the educated person can be distinguished from the indoctrinated person, with the former preferred. The distinguishing characteristic can be found in the attitude of an open mind imbedded within rational capacity.

I shall return to the idea of open-mindedness in Chapter IV to make some concluding comments, but first it is necessary to turn to the central focus of this discussion—the concept of indoctrination. It is my contention that teachers of ethics have a special obligation to understand indoctrination because they will need to defend their teaching against the charge. Therefore, the following chapter is dedicated to understanding exactly what indoctrination is and whether it is different from genuine teaching of ethics.

CHAPTER IV

INDOCTRINATION AND ETHICS TEACHING

In this chapter I examine scholarly writing on the subject of indoctrination so that the concept is elucidated. In so doing, I reveal how and why it is false to charge that teaching ethics is the same as indoctrination. At all times, as in the teaching of any subject matter, there is a risk of indoctrination in the teaching of ethics. Nevertheless, indoctrination and ethics teaching are not necessarily one and the same thing. I shall defend my understanding of indoctrination in light of the main competing analyses of the nature of indoctrination that have been put forward by philosophers of education.

There is an extensive literature on this complex concept. From the work of selected authors I establish a conceptual outline of indoctrination and consider the risk of indoctrination in teaching business ethics. I will argue that it is possible to teach ethics, particularly business ethics, in a way that is educational. In other words, it is possible to teach it in a way that encourages learners to open their minds to the moral content of business practice, thus avoiding indoctrinative teaching.

Educating Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs

The Oxford and Webster's dictionaries define *indoctrination* in neutral terms as the inculcation of attitudes, beliefs, doctrines, or teachings. The definition bears a striking resemblance to an ordinary understanding of the

term *education.* Yet in contemporary usage the words education and indoctrination are understood to be opposing terms. Education refers to a positive and more benevolent ideal; indoctrination is a term of moral derogation and therefore a forceful and negative charge. Both Snook (1972) and Thiessen (1993) cite Gatchel (1959), who claims that at the beginning of the 20th century "the term 'indoctrination' was no more offensive in educational circles than the term 'education'" (Thiessen, 1993, p. 8). However, in the 20th century the meaning of indoctrination has evolved so that it is now used in a pejorative sense as something opposite to true education. Thus, simple definition does not reveal much.

However, it is relevant that the dictionary definition of indoctrination makes reference to the inculcation of attitudes and beliefs. Although emotion and feeling are absolutely central to human being, teaching associated with this domain is difficult and fraught with ambiguity. The area of human cognition concerned with attitudes and beliefs is a sophisticated intellectual arena that demands the interplay of both emotion and reason (Dunlop, 1984; Peters, 1975a). I concur with Dunlop (1984) when she says that "emotion and feeling are extremely hard to talk about systematically" (p. 2). Intuitively, I recognize that education that becomes indoctrination is connected in some meaningful way to knowledge that resides 'close to the heart.'

Most often the charge of indoctrination has been made against teachers of politics, religion, and morality—subjects in which ethics is a significant component. If ethics education curtails development of rational attitudes and beliefs and rational emotion, then a charge of indoctrination will be

appropriate. My aim here is to determine whether or not there are characteristics connected with indoctrination and ethics teaching that pervert the ideals of rationality, open-mindedness, and the educated person. Although education of the emotions is connected to the concept of indoctrination, I focus this chapter primarily on the available analysis of the concept and touch briefly on the aspect of educating the emotions in the later pages of this chapter.

The Conceptual Analysis of Indoctrination

According to Kleinig (1982), in contemporary usage "the disvalue of indoctrination is built into the very concept" (p. 54). Current philosophical discussion of indoctrination favors the use of conceptual analysis as a tool to distinguish between true education and indoctrination. Furthermore, it has been argued that conceptual analysis "reveals not only its boundaries, but also those considerations which constitute it the undesirable practice that it is" (p. 54). Philosophers of education have disagreed, however, about the criterion that is the conceptual key. Authorities focus on different ideas, but there is some agreement that "four ways isolat[e] the concept: . . . (1) content, (2) methods, (3) intentions, or (4) outcome of what is communicated to others" (p. 55). Thiessen (1993, p. 175) recommends a fifth idea, which he calls the institutional criterion. The following review of the literature on indoctrination is organized according to these conceptual criteria.

The Content Criterion

Content, or what is taught, is one possible criterion of indoctrination. In the concern about content, indoctrination is related to a certain kind of belief; namely, a doctrine. Both Kleinig (1982) and Thiessen (1993) cite Peters (1966), who argues that "whatever else 'indoctrination' means, it obviously has something to do with doctrines which are a species of beliefs" (cited in Kleinig, 1982, p. 56; Thiessen, 1993, p. 59). Peters claims that the teaching of doctrines is usually associated with morals, religion, and politics—subjects that focus on beliefs, values, and attitudes.

Snook (1972, p. 28) explains that, although the content criterion is plausible, it is inadequate for two reasons. First, it is not enough to evaluate a term based on its etymology; and second, the meaning of doctrine as it is used in ordinary language has evolved since the word in*doctrin*ation first came into currency. Previously, the word doctrine referred very broadly to what was taught, and the term was applied to scientific teaching as much as religious or political teaching. According to Snook, the term has taken on a more narrow and specialized meaning today. Kleinig (1982) agrees that the etymological argument is weak, and the word has evolved and narrowed toward a specialized meaning (p. 56); therefore, we must conclude that etymology fails to clarify the concept adequately.

Thiessen (1993, pp. 59-60) reviews the work of authors (Barrow & Woods, 1988; Hirst, 1974; Kazepides, 1987; Peters, 1966, 1974) who discuss the special relationship between doctrines and indoctrination. Many consider science the paradigm case of a subject area in which doctrines do

not exist and, consequently, conclude that teaching subjects such as science or mathematics cannot result in indoctrination. Intuitively, this position seems too simple to be credible. However, the sentiment prevails that in science "one finds rationality, critical openness, logical rigour, objectivity, and procedures by which to test competing claims" (Thiessen, 1993, p. 60). This implies that other subject matter might lead to indoctrination because it is supposedly the opposite: nonrational, closed and uncritical, without logic, nonobjective, and lacking tests to adjudicate between competing claims. This list suggests, however, that there is considerably more to indoctrination than its content—but first, what response can be made to these perceptions of so-called nonscientific subject areas?

Snook (1972) cites Gregory and Woods' (1970) explanation of a doctrine as "a statement not arrived at by scientific method" (p. 34). Must we conclude, then, that because a theologian or an ideologue makes claims about knowledge and truth that are not verifiable as true or false, and such knowledge is merely 'doctrine,' it is something different and less legitimate than a scientific truth? According to Snook, the notion of a doctrine as an unverifiable truth claim lacks substance. Snook notes that the work of many respected scholars—historians and geologists, for example—will not always comply with the experimental standard of scientific rigor. He argues that scientific method refers to "the careful and impartial consideration of data of any sort; [therefore] the theologian or philosopher can claim that this is the way he proceeds" (p. 35). The label scientific method is contestable and

does not help to sharpen the distinction between a doctrine and a nondoctrine.

In his final analysis Thiessen (1993) agrees that Snook (1972) is justified in rejecting the content criterion because the notion of a doctrine is too imprecise. Notwithstanding these efforts to give clarity to the term, Snook argues that "regardless of the way doctrines are defined, they are not a necessary condition for indoctrination" (p. 37) because examples of indoctrination exist even without the presence of doctrines or ideology.

It occurs to me that this claim expresses a concern that in the teaching of ethics certain moral beliefs will be imposed on learners. It is quite reasonable to object to the imposition of beliefs; any such action would be a serious violation of the teacher's obligation, as stated previously, to respect the rational capacity and the independence of a learner to be free from coercion or any form of psychological abuse.

Snook (1972), Kleinig (1982), and Thiessen (1993) reject the content criterion. These authors agree that neither the presence nor the absence of doctrines can be used to distinguish a case of indoctrination from a case of true education. Thiessen presses this point further, concluding "that doctrines so defined are an essential part of all forms of knowledge. Hence a liberal education will invariably involve the teaching of some doctrines. The teaching of doctrines should therefore not automatically be associated with indoctrination" (pp. 78-79). Given this degree of consensus, one can move on to consider other criteria.

The Method Criterion

Closely associated with the content criterion is the method criterion. It is this criterion that Macklin (1980) endorses as the key to indoctrination. She claims that teachers of ethics use methods that "differ radically from those employed by people whose aim is to indoctrinate" (p. 92). Macklin links genuine ethics teaching to a particular pedagogy. She explains that nonindoctrinating ethics teaching is a pedagogy that uses tools of analysis and techniques of careful reasoning. While emphasizing methods, she also refers to a teacher's intention to indoctrinate, yet another candidate that I discuss as the third criterion. In the end, Macklin's account tends to blur the distinction between methods and other criteria of indoctrination; it seems therefore that methods do not stand alone.

Macklin (1980) states that "in contrast to the emphasis on reasoning and justification in the teaching of philosophical ethics, the process of indoctrination tends to avoid critical analysis and the use of rational methods" (p. 84). I take Macklin's claim to mean that the teacher of ethics, innocent of the intention to indoctrinate, would use the tools of analysis, logic, and rational argument; whereas, alternatively, the indoctrinator would use other methods. In making a claim of radically different methods, it is reasonable to expect examples to illustrate the reprehensible nature of certain methods or a reference list of suspect methods. A limitation of Macklin's explanation is that she does not provide a clear explication of the methods of the indoctrinator. Without full explication, we must consider that Macklin's conclusion is unsubstantiated and would require additional supporting evidence.

Other philosophers of education, including Thiessen (1993), have been more specific about methods of indoctrination. The suspicious methods are usually labeled nonrational and noncritical. The prime examples of indoctrinative methods are rote and drill, propagandizing, limited discussion, inadequate analysis of conflicting points of view, and authoritarian teaching (threats, isolation) that induce fear and anxiety in the learner. Although these methods, which may vary from subtle to obvious cases of psychological and emotional abuse, are repulsive to the conscientious educator, I agree with Snook (1972) and Kleinig (1982) that any list of methods will not fully account for the differences between morally responsible and morally irresponsible teaching.

Thiessen (1993) provides the most thorough examination of the method criterion. He agrees with Snook (1972) that there is some vagueness in the method idea, but he disagrees with his conclusion that method is not a distinguishing factor of indoctrination. Indeed, Thiessen supports Macklin's (1980) view that method is the most plausible candidate for demarcating the concept of indoctrination, and he claims that the method criterion has widespread acceptance but that indoctrinatory methods have been awarded limited attention. To link methods conceptually to indoctrination, Thiessen (p. 91) suggests two categories: (a) the techniques that manipulate subject matter, either by failing to provide evidence or by misusing the evidence; and (b) the techniques that manipulate the learner. In the second category are methods that cause a learner to hold a certain belief because of deplorable manipulation by the teacher—an obvious misuse of the teacher's authority.

Though these ideas lend support to the method criterion's centrality to indoctrination, Kleinig (1982) reminds us that "not all indoctrination by-passes a person's reasoning processes" (p. 58). Some of the most successfully indoctrinated persons can "produce an impressive defense of their position" (p. 58). It is a curious oversight that neither Macklin (1980) nor Thiessen (1993) acknowledges that any particular teaching method—including intellectually rigorous examination of opposing views—can be corrupted so as to produce an indoctrinated person. Thus, according to Kleinig, a focus on method is a distraction from what is fundamentally at stake—the distinction between an educated person and an indoctrinated person.

Snook's (1972) view is enlightening. He reveals the limitations of this criterion, and he argues cogently that method is an inadequate criterion (pp. 22-25). First, the method criterion is too vague because all teachers use so-called "indoctrinatory" methods from time to time. Conversely, teachers accused of indoctrination may present a defense based on evidence that they encouraged discussion or provided explanations and rational arguments. It is unlikely that nonrational methods would convince learners who would require a fair degree of rational explanation that fosters understanding before they would accept a belief. Indeed, at times the well-indoctrinated person can present an impressive rational argument for a belief. In our pluralistic society learners are exposed inevitably to contrary views; the indoctrinator who does not give reasons, answer objections, or promote discussion would be too obviously ineffective and incompetent. As Snook explains,

> if he is wise, the indoctrinator will avail himself of [the knowledge of teaching methods] as avidly as the educator, for he too is concerned about efficiency of learning. In so far as it is plausible to argue that reason-giving is vital for learning, the indoctrinator will use this technique also. (p. 26)

Snook (1972) contends that method cannot be assessed separately from content, an indicator of the imprecision of this criterion. For example, if a teacher is drilling students in arithmetic basics, then drill is not a reprehensible method. If a teacher is drilling students to chant "Long live the revolution!" we might worry. He agrees that indoctrination is most often concerned with the teaching of values and beliefs. Therefore, when a particular case is examined, we need to ask not only how the teacher is teaching, but also what the teacher is teaching. Snook's third and final counterargument is that with very young children rational methods are not always possible. Thus, to apply the term indoctrination to every so-called "nonrational" teaching method "glosses over the important distinctions we are attempting to make" (p. 25).

> If we accept that the use of 'non-rational techniques' is the mark of indoctrination, we are forced to say that the child's early training must be indoctrination. Of course, it is open to us to say that, provided of course that we are using indoctrination in some neutral sense. You will recall, however, that . . . we are concerned with indoctrination in its pejorative sense. (p. 24)

Philosophers of education might agree that certain teaching methods such as drill, memorization, and teaching without presenting evidence are appropriate for younger learners. Snook (1972) claims that "with very young children, rational methods are rarely possible" (p. 24). This point is not contentious. As noted previously, making all nonrational methods used in the formative years subject to the charge of indoctrination fails to add

anything substantial to the distinction between education and indoctrination. One can assume reasonably that choice of teaching method depends on educational context and age of the learner; so, like Snook, I maintain that the charge of "nonrational methods" is not a sufficient condition for calling a certain form of teaching indoctrination. Although Macklin (1980) and Thiessen (1993) raise a number of cogent points, they ultimately fail to be convincing that it is the distinguishing factor. Hence, further exploration is required to locate the key criterion.

The Intention Criterion

Snook (1972) and Cooper (1973) review the ideas of philosophers (Flew, 1966; Gregory & Woods, 1970; Hare, 1964; Kilpatrick, 1940; White, 1967) who consider the teacher's intention to indoctrinate as the most important distinguishing factor in a case of indoctrination. These authors contend that content and instructional methods derive from the teacher's intentions and that intention provides an adequate explanation of indoctrination. In his discussion of this criterion, Kleinig (1982) summarizes the premise of the intention criterion with the following statement: "A person indoctrinates if and only if he/she intends the beliefs he/she teaches to be held regardless of the evidence" (p. 60). This premise is a fundamental shift in focus away from teaching issues that are external to persons (namely, content and methods) toward the indoctrinator and the circumstances that reveal intent.

Snook (1972) favors the intention criterion, and he concludes that intention, more than anything else, provides both a necessary and a sufficient condition for the paradigm case of indoctrination. Cooper (1985) counters, arguing that the intention criterion is misconceived. Kleinig (1982) is also unconvinced and poses two relevant questions: (a) Is intention the essential criterion for indoctrination when it is plausible to conceive of cases where the indoctrinator fails in his or her attempt and the learner is resistant to the indoctrinator's intentions? and (b) Does a person have to intend to indoctrinate to indoctrinate? In his discussion Kleinig argues that the intention criterion is implausible given that indoctrination is likely to occur to some degree regardless of the presence or absence of a teacher's malevolent intention. Some values are systemic and taken for granted in any society, and these form "the context of [the teacher's] teaching rather than the intention" (p. 60). He cites the charge of indoctrination of capitalistic values in Western schools as an example. Other examples are the indoctrination of sexist values and heterosexual preference as two more taken-for-granted values "imparted unthinkingly and absorbed uncritically" (p. 60) in educational settings.

Kleinig (1982) is not satisfied with the intention criterion, however. He suggests that the appeal of the intention criterion is derived from the need to ascribe blame for the moral wrongdoing inherent in the nature and consequences of indoctrination. Through intention it may be possible to hold someone—that is, the teacher—morally responsible for a deplorable intention to indoctrinate. Kleinig raises several concerns with this viewpoint. First, he points out that if we are determined to ascribe blame, then it is also

possible to anticipate a charge of negligence. This is also blameworthy. Kleinig notes, however, that "negligence requires neither intention nor foresight" (p. 61). Further, one can imagine situations where a teacher has caused indoctrination to occur even though he or she may have tried to avoid the occurrence. Also, a teacher may attempt to indoctrinate, but fail; for example, the situation of an indoctrinator who loses his or her grasp on the learner who rejects the indoctrinator's beliefs and attitudes on the basis of independent rational assessment of the indoctrinator's views.

These circumstances—failed indoctrination, negligence, and unintentional indoctrination—do not remove the burden of culpability. Kleinig (1982) reassures the proponents of the intention criterion that recognizing that it is not the key to indoctrination does not imply that one ought to let the teacher 'off the hook' with respect to professional obligations. He notes that intention, as well as the previously discussed criteria, is related to indoctrination but is "not constitutive of indoctrination" (p. 62).

Beehler (1985) constructs an interesting fictitious case study to support the view that intention is not necessary for indoctrination. He is concerned about cases where teachers can, and do, unintentionally indoctrinate. He describes the plausible case of a conscientious but naive teacher who indoctrinates—unintentionally. Situated in the 1930s, the naive teacher prepares and presents lessons to his pupils, ages 8 and 9 years, about the Native peoples of Canada (pp. 263-264). In this case the best publicly verifiable resource material paints an unattractive picture of Native peoples as primitive in their domestic habits, imprudent, lazy, living a life

with no promise of advancement or cultural growth, and so on and on. The teacher imparts these ideas to his young students and, in doing so, establishes in the children a disrespect for Native people, traditions, and culture.

Although the teacher intends an open, critical educational process and a thoughtful, age-appropriate examination of ideas by the learners, some or all of the young pupils will be indoctrinated. Beehler (1985) concludes that "the truth or falsehood of what is 'taught' is irrelevant to the question whether children are being indoctrinated" (p. 267). What is relevant to Beehler is the manner in which certain attitudes and beliefs are internalized within the learner. In other words, the distinguishing criterion of indoctrination is the "way the person holds the beliefs . . . into which he has been indoctrinated. And this suggests that it is by looking at the way in which he has come to hold them that we shall find their indoctrination by the teacher" (p. 265).

The teacher in this hypothetical case study is teaching values and beliefs that children cannot "enter into" as learners. Even though the teacher was complying with the provincial curriculum, the Grade 3 pupils were taught value judgments far beyond their maturity and capacity to question.

> Children of the age the young man is seeking to educate can have no capacity at all to judge the justice of (the teacher's) claim, or the compellingness of the evidence on the basis of which it is concluded to. . . . It is rather that they do not have the psychological understanding—because they do not have the human experience . . . which allows them to appraise intelligently [that which is taught]. (p. 267)

At this point I would like to consider Thiessen's (1993) claim that indoctrination in the early years of learning is an inevitable and necessary part of learning. This assertion is controversial and, I think, a dangerous misconception. Given Beehler's (1985) concern for the vulnerability of young intellects, I expect that he would want to reply to Thiessen that a child is not yet capable of holding certain beliefs intelligently. Beehler is not explicit, but he seems to imply that indoctrination might occur when the rational capacity of the learner is bypassed. The result is that beliefs are held without sufficient rational adjudication. Although this learning phenomenon may occur at any age and stage of intellectual development, young learners are most vulnerable. As intellectual capacity to scrutinize truth claims develops and as the capacity to evaluate ideas autonomously matures, the learner may become less vulnerable—even resistant—to indoctrination. "It is the setting in which particular beliefs are placed which determines whether or not there is indoctrination" (Kleinig, 1982, p. 63). Where, for example, a person's beliefs are so closely associated with strong moral assertions that questioning them would induce guilt feelings, "we could expect them to be indoctrinated" (p. 63).

To Thiessen's (1993, p. 92) claim that indoctrination is unavoidable, Beehler (1985) counterargues. First, he coins the phrase to "be claimed by" (p. 268) to distinguish between that which children can comprehend and reasonably take into themselves and that which is beyond their grasp. From this distinction he advises us to avoid indoctrination of young minds rather than accept it as inevitable. He questions the assumption that very young children do not understand notions of wrong, right, or ought. I agree that

even by two years of age children begin to grasp these abstract notions. Teaching avoids indoctrination when the teacher (or parent) engages the child at a level appropriate to the child's capacity. Beehler's point is that, because young children are most susceptible to the potential of indoctrination, we must consciously take pains to avoid indoctrination. Indeed, educators and parents should

> strive continuously to acquaint the child with the nature of his or her acts (not, "That's wrong!" but, "That hurt Sally," "That is deceiving Mommy," etc.), . . . [so that] we constantly encourage and invite the child's reflection upon the character of what is done. (p. 269)

This task is not easy. A nonindoctrinative approach that awakens rational moral capacity requires diligence, patience, and moral discernment.

Surely, diligence, patience, and moral discernment are the emotional and intellectual responsibilities of a professional educator. One might speculate that a vexing problem associated with the possibility of indoctrination is that teachers—especially a child's parents, who are the first teachers—lack sufficient knowledge and skill to appeal to a learner's rational capacity in age-appropriate ways. We may be tolerant of ignorance in parents who are rarely trained, but we ought not to be tolerant of professional educators who are ignorant of the cause and effect of indoctrination.

The Limitations of Content, Methods, and Intentions as Criteria of Indoctrination

Thus far the concept of indoctrination has been analyzed by examining content, method, and teacher's intent. None of these seems fully satisfactory because none provides a reasonable explanation of what is morally objectionable about indoctrination.

It has been noted above that the content criterion, though clearly related to indoctrination, does not adequately distinguish a paradigm case of indoctrination. The teaching of untrue or unverifiable content might be presented as a case of indoctrination. Additionally, Beehler reminds us that truth can be indoctrinated. Though most examples of indoctrinated beliefs and attitudes come from the areas of politics, religion, and morality, where doctrines are likely to be found, several writers have pointed out, correctly, that science has its doctrines as well. These examples lead me to conclude that content is an insufficient explanation.

Macklin (1980) and Thiessen (1993) argue that teaching methods can determine the case of indoctrination. In support of this claim, Thiessen compares the methods employed by educators to other methods employed by indoctrinators. He proposes categorization of methods based on manipulation of subject matter or manipulation of the learner. Opponents to the method criterion have argued convincingly that a case of indoctrination may occur even when a teacher uses approved methods such as critical analysis. Furthermore, it was noted that an educator may at times use the tools of learning associated with indoctrination: drill, rote learning, and so

forth. This has the absurd consequence that any teacher could be called an indoctrinator, no matter how open-minded and respectful toward students.

The intentions of the teacher are highly relevant, but this idea is shown to be inadequate in at least two cases. First, some teachers fail despite the intention to indoctrinate; and second, some teachers indoctrinate unintentionally. Although criticized for vagueness, it is also suggested that the appeal of focusing on intention perhaps is that it allows for accountability, which recognizes negligence and incompetent practice, and the admonition that teacher ignorance about the cause and effects of indoctrination is intolerable.

As of this point the most that we can say about the content, methods, and intentions criteria is that they are related to indoctrination because of a causal connection (Kleinig, 1982, p. 62). But these connections do not illuminate the key moral issue we are seeking. One is compelled to look further into the concept.

The Outcome Criterion

A more plausible idea is the focus of Kleinig's (1982) and Beehler's (1985) work. Beehler comments that to "appreciate when indoctrination is going on, and what it involves, is to begin at the *outcome* of this activity: the indoctrinated person" (p. 263). He asks us to focus conceptually on the consequences of indoctrination to the learner. Kleinig too argues for this approach. He defines the outcome criterion as "teaching in which the beliefs, attitudes, values, etc., taught are held in such a way that they are

no longer open to full rational assessment. . . . This is not the same as saying that it is held without reasons" (p. 62). This idea shifts our attention from content and methods to the results of teaching—the intellectual condition of the learner. The outcome criterion advances the analysis in a significant way by speaking to the most important person in the teaching-learning paradigm—the learner.

Content and methods are distractions from the moral issue—the curtailment of the human capacity for reasoning. With intentions there is a shift to include the human dimension, but the explanation is limited to the teacher, leaving too many unclear cases. The outcome idea allows philosophers to begin to focus on the moral issue at the foundation of the concept—what is morally reprehensible about indoctrination. In Kleinig's view, "Centrally, indoctrination constitutes one form of assault on the person" (p. 65).

Though perhaps obvious, I want to say explicitly that the learner is much more than a mere vessel for content, more impressionable than a passive player, often vulnerable to inappropriate actions by a teacher who is presumed to be an exemplar—a role model. The learner is engaged in a uniquely human relationship with the teacher, who holds a privileged role. Through the teacher-learner relationship, the learner is striving for maturity and autonomy. It seems almost redundant to say that the teacher has an enormous responsibility to foster the uniquely human capabilities of each learner, one of which is moral agency. Indoctrinated beliefs and attitudes frustrate the human capacity for autonomous moral agency. Although the statement is simple it is not always obvious. I agree with Kleinig (1982)

when he writes that "although it is usually *beliefs* which are said to be indoctrinated, it is almost more appropriate to speak of *persons* being indoctrinated" (p. 63).

According to Kleinig (1982), indoctrination

> involves a violation of people's personalities such that the beliefs, attitudes, values, etc., which they hold . . . are not available for appraisal. To the extent that this is so, they lack independence and control over their lives. The indoctrinated person is not likely to hold every belief, etc., in an indoctrinated fashion. Usually indoctrination is restricted to areas of normative pre-eminence: those areas of a person's life on which great significance is placed, generally because of their practical implications (hence the frequent association of indoctrination with 'doctrines'). (p. 65)

Indoctrination, a negative outcome of certain teaching, demonstrates a profound lack of respect for the other person. It is, fundamentally, a type of instruction that encourages a closed mind. For this reason, it is the antithesis of education.

To Thiessen (1993, p. 150), consequences alone cannot constitute indoctrination; consequences are the results of indoctrination. Nevertheless, Thiessen admits that "it would seem that indoctrination must be related to consequences in some way" (p. 151). Snook (1972), in objecting to outcome as the key criterion, argues that it is insufficient because it excludes the indoctrinative acts committed by the teacher. He is especially concerned about cases of failed indoctrination. It seems to me that indoctrination is merely an abstract notion until there is a recognizable, and deplorable, effect on a learner. Snook admits that if the outcome of the teaching process never conduced to a closed mind, then we would not have to worry very much about indoctrination (p. 38). In his final analysis,

however, Snook sacrifices his concern for the resulting closed-mindedness to emphasize teacher-intentions. Thus, his line of thought is internally inconsistent because he acknowledges the seriousness of the outcome of indoctrination but declines to give it prominence.

What Is the Objectionable Outcome of Indoctrination?

A common thread through the literature on indoctrination is the philosophical concern for the nurture of human rationality. Kleinig (1982) is worried most about the manner in which attitudes and beliefs are held—that is, in a "closed and impervious set" (p. 62). Although he does not use the term explicitly, Kleinig objects to the type of mis-education that has as a consequence to the learner a closed mind that restricts the person's rational capacity—a highly unacceptable outcome of education.

Closed-mindedness and the inverse trait, open-mindedness, are terms used quite frequently in contemporary educational literature, and they refer to ways of thinking. One might ask, What aspect of thinking can become so constrained that it ought to be called indoctrinated thinking? Hare's (1979) comments on closed- and open-mindedness are instructive here. He offers two descriptions of the way in which a person manifests a closed mind revealing the affliction of a limited rational capacity:

> (i) If A is subjected to an intense program of indoctrination, he may become quite *incapable* of thinking of any objections to his own position, or of recognizing any merit in contrary points of view. His mind is closed to alternatives because he is unable to entertain them. (ii) On the other hand, B may be perfectly *able* to

> think of difficulties in his position but try to ignore them. He may be able to recognize a good counter-argument, but be *unwilling* to attend to such arguments. (pp. 7-8)

Furthermore, the most successfully indoctrinated persons may be able to deceive themselves by thinking that they are open-minded. The closed-minded person can appear to be giving due consideration to alternative views, counterarguments, evidence, and the like; but he or she will claim to be, as yet, unconvinced. Notwithstanding appearances, the significant point is whether or not the person has the willingness to revise their views. The successfully indoctrinated person has a set attitude that will cause them to decide in advance of hearing a counterargument to reject the challenge to an indoctrinated belief. Thus, the indoctrinated person is cut off from his or her rational capacity by the attitude of closed-mindedness.

In the final analysis the objectionable outcome of indoctrination is associated with a particular kind of attitude that I will call *closed-mindedness.* There is little doubt as to the great importance of the education of attitude and its interplay with the intellectual sphere. With Dunlop (1984), I contend that it is difficult to discuss the education of attitude in a systematic way. Dunlop (p. 2) attributes the difficulty to the nature of the task, the imprecision and looseness in ordinary language usage with respect to attitudes, and the education of the emotions. If indoctrination is a matter of a certain attitude, then it is a matter of a certain affective disposition.

Thus, as previously argued, indoctrination is not really a matter of the content of a person's beliefs; rather, it is a matter of certain emotional

inclinations that follow as a result of teaching. Closed-mindedness may be revealed by certain emotional reactions by an indoctrinated person to counterevidence or criticism of a belief held closed-mindedly. We might recognize the condition of indoctrination through defensive emotional reactions such as indifference to insightful criticisms or the arrogant dismissal of telling evidence or even anger and resentment toward the challenger.

It is essentially a mis-education of the emotions more than it is a mis-education of a particular belief. That is why content, methods, or intentions are not as revealing as is the outcome of teaching; indoctrinative teaching is a matter of placing a belief into an emotional web that protects it from examination and revision. Indoctrination, then, results in a closed-minded attitude or, in other words, an affective propensity toward counterevidence and counterarguments such that the evidence and arguments will not be registered against a belief. That is why indoctrinated beliefs are sometimes referred to as unshakable beliefs.

It is tempting to look for the criteria that precisely define the closed-minded attitude. However, I agree with Hare's (1979) account that educators must concede, at this time at least, that there is an imprecise line between open-mindedness and closed-mindedness. But this does not render the desirable trait of open-mindedness an implausible component of rationality. Instead, it means that educators can acknowledge that there will be difficult cases. In the case of open- versus closed-mindedness, the terms are used to "ascribe a trait [according to] the sorts of ways (not precise, mandatory ways, but an open-ended range of ways) in which people

frequently (but not always and necessarily) behave in certain sorts (not precisely specified) of circumstances" (p. 15). Consequently, vagueness is built into the trait. Hare compares the trait of open-mindedness to other human traits such as judgment and humor, which exist as imprecise human traits.

There are ways to distinguish closed-mindedness from other irrational ways of thinking. Usually, arbitrary or whimsical decisions are labeled irrational because such decisions are taken without the consideration of evidence and argument that rationality demands. Whereas arbitrariness is irrational, it is not necessarily closed-minded. Also, a position may be held with reasons that are flawed by contradictions or ambiguity, or the reasons may be carelessly constructed. However, these flaws are not liable to the charge of closed-mindedness. "Again the central question to be raised is that concerning the author's disposition or lack of it to revise, reconsider, and judge anew when the contradiction is unearthed, the hasty generalization challenged, or the simplistic view exposed" (Hare, 1979, p. 12). On the other side of the issue, the term open-mindedness carries a generally favorable tone and it is considered by many to be a desirable intellectual virtue. Open-mindedness is the name of that attitude that continuously strives to be open to the due consideration of counterargument or evidence.

To summarize, indoctrination is primarily distinguished by a resulting attitude of closed-mindedness in a learner and an emotional propensity to disregard evidence. Rational capacity is therefore thwarted in an objectionable and unacceptable way.

The Fifth Approach: Institutional Indoctrination

It is appropriate to acknowledge Thiessen's (1993, pp. 175-203) work on a fifth criterion, which he labels *institutional indoctrination.* He explains that, although scholars have touched on this idea in previous analyses, the fifth criterion has not received due attention. Thiessen notes that Peters first referred to the institutional context of education in his 1966 text *Ethics and Education.* Peters is very much aware of the condition of the young mind and stresses that the development of the mind occurs as the child is "initiated into public traditions enshrined in the language, concepts, beliefs and rules of a society" (cited in Thiessen, 1993, p. 200). Further, as Peters (1965; cited in Thiessen, 1993) is quoted, "All education can be regarded as a form of 'socialization,' in so far as it involves initiation into public traditions" (p. 201).

Thiessen (1993) claims that "it is not possible to get around this problem [institutional indoctrination] by simply ignoring or denying that there is an institutional component to education whenever it occurs" (p. 202). His discussion adds a subtle dimension to the issue of culpability, broadening the notion of systemic indoctrination as discussed under the idea of intention. He points out that the charge of indoctrination comes up again and again, regardless of the agency providing the education—the family, the church, a union or association, the modern state-administered public system, home-schoolers—suggesting that institutional context cannot be ignored. He argues further that it is important to acknowledge what other scholars may have assumed to be too obvious; that is, that education occurs inside

particular social environments which may nurture indoctrination—in other words, systemic indoctrination.

Social institutions are by their nature biased. At the very least the potential for indoctrination certainly exists. This nature should not be condemned, but instead we need to scrutinize openly the character of social institutions. Furthermore, people are by nature social, political, and institutional beings. From birth into a family system residing within a culture, we are deeply—and subtly—influenced by the institutions that surround us. Residence within various social institutions is a necessary condition for healthy human growth and development. This human condition is the reason that we should seek constantly to improve our understanding of the role of institutional indoctrination. Notwithstanding this outline of social context, systemic indoctrination is not contentious. It has been identified previously as an area of concern.

Thiessen (1993) concludes that though an area of concern, systemic indoctrination alone cannot fully explain indoctrination, nor is he satisfied with any of the other ideas presented by scholars (some reviewed above) as suitable candidates to describe its essence. He argues for a new approach, the construction of a complete theory of indoctrination (p. 232). He claims that "the concept of indoctrination is riddled with problems regardless of how the task of conceptual analysis is defined. . . . Philosophers have no clear and coherent notion of indoctrination when they make the charge" (p. 213). This is a rather dissatisfying conclusion in that Thiessen is avoiding the issue. His final analysis does very little to help us distinguish between morally responsible and irresponsible teaching, leaving the central

questions about what is morally reprehensible about indoctrination unanswered.

Consequently, one is compelled to agree with Kleinig's (1982) position that educators ought to be primarily concerned with students who depend on their teachers to respect them as persons by fostering the attitude of open-mindedness. The attitude of open-mindedness is essential to the condition of truly autonomous moral agency. Therefore, it is my claim, with Kleinig, that outcome most reveals cases of indoctrination. The issue of significance to teaching ethics is therefore that a student ought to have unrestricted rational access to "areas of a person's [ethical] life on which great significance is placed" (p. 65).

A Commitment to Rationality and Teaching Business Ethics

In what way is the analysis of indoctrination linked to business ethics education? As one gains a firm grip on the concept of indoctrination, one can see that teaching in the discipline of ethics does not necessarily conduce to the condition of indoctrination. Because content is not a sufficient criterion of indoctrination, then one cannot claim that the content of ethics education is itself indoctrinative. Consistent with Bok (1976), Macklin (1980), Callahan (1980), and others, I maintain that the claim that ethics teaching is the same as indoctrination is simply a mistaken idea.

Teachers of business ethics encourage students to think seriously about the moral tension that occurs, inevitably, in the conduct of business enterprise. The possibility of indoctrination in ethics education raises an

urgent moral red flag that responsible teachers must heed. What is at stake educationally is the learner's ability to examine the moral content of business with an open mind and make rational ethical decisions. If we fail to foster these capacities in our students, then we are incompetent teachers.

To recognize a case of indoctrination in ethics teaching, as in any other subject, we would need evidence that the learner is unable or unwilling to examine and potentially revise positions held firmly. There is nothing inherent in the nature of morality, in business or in any other arena of ordinary life, that makes indoctrination inevitable. Therefore, the objection that teaching business ethics inevitably turns into indoctrination is untenable. In business ethics, as in any other subject, teaching may conduce to open-mindedness as readily as it can be abused to instill closed-mindedness.

Although there may be no barriers to teaching ethics built into the concept of indoctrination, it must be recognized that the possibility of indoctrination in ethics education places a serious moral requirement on teachers. Teachers have an obligation to respect each learner's capacity to form and hold beliefs rationally and intelligently and to avoid the circumstances that allow indoctrination. When one focuses on the consequences to the learner, one becomes concerned about how students hold their attitudes and beliefs. It follows then that ethics education would be indoctrination if it caused the mind to close, and this condition would become recognizable and subject to moral condemnation.

Throughout the literature authors refer both directly and indirectly to a concern for human rationality; it is assumed that educators hold rationality as a fundamental educational value. My contention is that a commitment to rationality is central to the concept of true education versus the case of indoctrination. It is worth stressing, like Peters (1975c) and Dunlop (1984), that rationality includes both emotion and reason as characteristics of the open mind. I maintain, as Snook (1972) did before me, that

> whenever a person sets out to educate he commits himself by that very fact to the importance of rationality. . . . The notion of setting out to make people irrational *in every way* seems unintelligible and certainly could not be called education. The case for rationality as the aim of education is *prima facie* established. (p. 109)

A commitment to rationality does not suggest that it is the only significant aspect of human potential for which a teacher is responsible to nurture, but it is particularly relevant to an accounting of indoctrination.

Given that no barrier of educational significance stands in the way of teaching business ethics, it would be useful to consider the teacher's challenge to teach in a way that is nonindoctrinative. As a consequence of the teaching process, the learner ought to be able be examine the gritty and uncomfortable problems that they will inevitably encounter in the workplace. My contention is that educational philosophy ought to make a contribution to the field of ethics teaching in at least two ways. First, educators can speak about the moral dimension of business with an emphasis on its significance to decision making and general practice. Second, educational philosophy can explain the importance of ethics education in the development of morally responsible business people.

A point worth restating is my contention that business people—including well-educated managers—are not educated adequately to think precisely, coherently, and deeply about competing moral conceptions. A number of reasons for this situation can be identified, two of which are of concern in this thesis. The first reason is the indoctrination that goes unchallenged in business education programs; second, business education programs have not done enough to encourage an examination of beliefs that are held, too often, without adequate reflection. This situation suggests that educators ought to teach in a way that fosters an attitude of open-mindedness and encourages the intellectual capacity of critical self-reflection.

In a concluding chapter to follow, I illustrate what it means to nurture the capacity for rational thought about ethical issues in the business ethics classroom.

CHAPTER V

THE NONINDOCTRINATIVE ETHICS CLASSROOM

As previously noted, there is an impressive resurgence of interest in ethical business practice. From personal experience I know that business people prefer not to be silent about the ethical issues that they are attempting to resolve, nor do they prefer to disregard the moral dimension of business life. Unfortunately, the moral content of business practice is not well attended to in professional and career education; it is treated superficially, badly, or not at all. In this final chapter I attempt, first, to clarify the role of educators and moral philosophers in the arena of business ethics education. Then I present contrasting images of the business ethics classroom, with emphasis on the relationship between teacher and learner and its consequence for the learner. My purpose herein is to provide a practical illustration of nonindoctrinative ethics teaching in action.

In general the knowledge and skills required to confront and resolve inevitable moral problems are not abundant in the business world. This is because of two converging influences that Bok (1976) and others highlight. First, moral education and the study of ethics have fallen off the educational agenda in recent decades; and second, the moral landscape is increasingly complex and difficult to maneuver. An array of multiple and conflicting ethical conceptions confront scholars and practitioners, and right decisions are not clear cut. In addition to simple ignorance, one can reasonably expect that social and educational indoctrination has constructed barriers to clear and coherent ethical thinking. It is clear that moral educators can take a

leadership role by advocating for ethics education and then by teaching well—if we have the will to do so.

In the introduction to the textbook *Business Ethics in Canada,* the text's editors, Poff and Waluchow (1991), explain that "the interests of business people and moral philosophers do converge . . . [because] decision-making in business has and always will have a moral dimension" (p. 1). A collegial relationship between a moral philosopher and a business person may at first glance appear to be incongruent. Perhaps it is timely to look more closely at the potential of such a relationship; it may be less *un*common in the future as the need for higher standards of ethical behavior yield to pressures from the public and the business community itself. The traditional professions—medicine and law, for example—have a long-standing official commitment to ethical practice. Today the practice of business management is becoming increasingly professional. If managers, executives, and entrepreneurs aspire to the status of professionals, then they will have to take on the moral demands of professionalism. Present-day business people are well educated, and it is reasonable to expect high standards of ethical conduct.

A Role for Moral Philosophers and Ethics Teachers in Business Education

The task for the moral philosopher is to question the obvious—to question the taken-for-granted. Moral philosophers ask why a certain belief is held, and as educators they are positioned to encourage the dialogue through which business people may articulate the grounds for their moral

beliefs. When given a philosophical push, most people are unable to provide a coherent argument supporting a belief that withstands critical scrutiny. Unless the moral dimension of business practice is studied seriously and deliberately, it is reasonable to expect that business people will, at times, hold beliefs without sufficient justification or for the wrong reasons. Further, it is reasonable to expect people to be somewhat ill-informed or inadequately informed about the principles, ideals, or arguments that underlie opposing views. Consequently, moral philosophers have an opportunity to contribute to the field of business in the same way that they contribute to other disciplines, by engaging learners in the rational assessment of attitudes and beliefs—their own and other people's.

At the same time the moral philosopher should not be cast into the role of a moral expert or arbitrator of moral conflicts. Business people should not presume that an ethicist holds the right answers, precise interpretations, or clear-cut solutions to the difficult and intransigent moral conflicts in business. In the thick of an issue it will be ethical business people, imperfect as they may be, who make decisions and take moral responsibility for their actions. Despite the stereotyped image of the hard-nosed manager, the very best business people struggle to reconcile competing interests in a sincere attempt to take the right action in difficult cases. A degree of angst and uncertainty in a dilemma is part of our human sensibility—a part of the condition of our human-being.

It is regrettable when uncertainty about the moral dimension is exacerbated because rationality is constrained by inadequate education. Notwithstanding this shortfall, the capacity for ethical business practice is

greater, I think, than educators and business leaders have been willing to acknowledge. It is not useful to judge those who attempt to take responsible action, but are confused or fail in their attempts. Instead, it is appropriate to call attention to the lack of ethical preparedness and highlight the necessity for improvement. Further, heeding the concern for genuine ethics teaching that avoids indoctrination and fosters open-minded attitudes, I would like to present educators, philosophers, and business people with a sample of the ethics classroom from which they might model their own teaching.

Teaching About the Ethics of Bluffing

Among the topics discussed in contemporary business ethics courses are the ethical questions surrounding deception. In the textbook *Business Ethics in Canada*, editors Poff and Waluchow (1991) include a section on deception, lying, and honesty in business. Generally, in Canadian social and business culture, lying is condemned and truth-telling is held as an important moral virtue. To conduct business and promote harmony in relations, parties in a business transaction—for example, customers, suppliers, colleagues, and partners—look for a reasonable level of assurance that the other party is honest. Despite this norm, many people are unclear about exactly what a lie is or is not in the conduct of business.

The nature of misrepresentation and the intent to deceive and the corresponding moral responsibility for deception are discussed in the business ethics literature. In the arena of labor contract negotiations the

ethical questions around deception have been heavily debated. Among the debatable issues is the practice of bluffing, a common tactic used in various aspects of business and a tactic frequently used in contract negotiations. Carr's (1988) article entitled *Is Business Bluffing Ethical?* and the issue of bluffing are current today, as one can see by a discussion of Carr's views by Carson, Wokutch, and Kent (1982) in a paper republished by Poff and Waluchow (1991, pp. 500-508). In brief, Carr argues for two ideas: first, that business is a game with special rules and standards of right and wrong that are different from those defined by the standards of common morality; and second, that business people are game players who *cease to be* ordinary citizens when in the role of players. According to Carson et al., "[Carr] defended bluffing and other questionable business practices on the grounds that they are just part of the game of business"; and, in making this argument, Carr "created a storm of controversy" (p. 500). The authors go on to describe a portion of a controversial course taught at Harvard Business School that illustrates the acceptability of bluffing.

Students were allowed to bluff and deceive each other in various simulated negotiation situations. Students' grades were partially determined by the settlements they negotiated with each other, and hence some alleged that this course encouraged and taught students to bluff, lie to, and deceive negotiating partners. These controversies raised issues concerning the morality, necessity, and even the legality of bluffing in business negotiations which were never adequately resolved (Poff & Waluchow, 1991, p. 500).

Likely, Carr would endorse the content of the negotiations course and agree that deception in a certain form is acceptable on the grounds that

labor negotiations are a part of a business game. Both negotiating partners understand bluffing as a game convention and, in accordance with the convention, play to the best of their ability. The rules of the game are defined in labor law—and the law is the exclusive and sufficient benchmark for ethical conduct.

These essays, and the subject matter, are typical of an introduction to a business ethics course. Let us compare how the topic might be treated in two different classrooms: first, an open, nonindoctrinative classroom; and second, a closed and potentially indoctrinative classroom.

Scenario 1: Teaching About the Ethics of Bluffing to Open the Mind

What would an open and nonindoctrinative approach to teaching business ethics look like on the topic of bluffing in labor contract negotiations? Let us start with the premise that it is the teacher's aim to encourage openness to alternative ideas and to foster the students' capacity for critical reflection, their perception of moral issues, and the capacity to search for and evaluate ethical choices. The instructional goal is to allow students to form and defend a rational view about the ethics of bluffing. The teacher assigns Carr's (1988) article and Carson et al.'s (1982; cited in Poff & Waluchow, 1991) essay as reading in advance of class work. Consider the following scenario.

Classroom discussion. A student speaks up to open the discussion and offers the comment that Carr's (1988) argument might be questioned because he fails to acknowledge that the law does not necessarily provide

adequate moral standards; nor is the law intended to define all aspects of ethical conduct. Carr's claim that labor law is a sufficient standard to define business ethics is open to criticism. Another student adds to this line of thought: Even when the law is morally laudable, it tends to underdetermine what counts as morally appropriate behavior. A third student speaks up to add that the law can be morally wrong; some laws are arguably unjust and unfair, favor one group in society over another, are inadequate, and so on. All aspects of fairness, freedom from coercion, concern for the interests of others, or other ethical considerations cannot be dictated in statute. The teacher would sum up the points made in the following statements:

- The law has limitations and boundaries; ethical standards may go beyond the law.
- Some students in the class are saying that it is a matter of fact that we have morally imperfect law, and Carr's first claim does not hold up.
- Even in the best of circumstances, the law underdetermines morally appropriate conduct.
- If business people rely solely on the law for ethical standards, they would be relying on a faulty or inadequate standard.

To consider opposing the views, the teacher would then ask if anyone would be willing to put forward alternatives or counterarguments. If no student is able or willing, the teacher might ask a student to attempt to anticipate how Carr would reply (to play the role of Carr) to defend or reinforce the author's

argument. If no student is able to do so, the teacher can be prepared to be the voice of Albert Carr.

The purposes of these teaching strategies are to deepen and extend discussion and to stimulate thought about the ideas presented by both the author and the students. It is important to do more than encourage clever rhetorical skills in students; rather, a teacher should encourage depth in student knowledge of authoritative views, whether they are consistent with personal views or not. Carr's (1988) views should be understood because a similar view will be heard among the voices of colleagues and supervisors in real-world situations. Also, students can be encouraged to be patient with the process of forming personal views; it is better to understand positions, consider alternatives, and avoid hastily formed attitudes and beliefs.

Finally, to the conscientious teacher it is vital that one avoid any suggestion to the students that all members of the class are expected to hold the same view to earn a good grade. That suggestion would negate any serious attempt to consider available competing rational arguments. In all teacher-learner relationships the teacher is in a position of authority and trust as an educational expert who will influence the form, content, and tone of the discussion.

In an open classroom the teacher would begin to direct the learner's attention toward the moral issues at stake. The class could begin with a discussion of the adequacy or inadequacy of the law to determine the standard of conduct of labor negotiations so that students could begin to sense the boundary between ethics and law. Students might summarize

what Carson et al. (1982; cited in Poff & Waluchow, 1991, p. 502) say about the National Labor Relations Act (U.S.), which provides the legal framework for collective bargaining in the private sector. The statute establishes the 'honest claims doctrine.' One might pose a question to the class: What is the legal status of bluffing in labor negotiations? The American Act, to which Carr (1988) is referring, establishes that the U.S. National Labor Relations Board and the courts have established the honest claims doctrine, which states that good faith necessarily requires that claims made by either party should be honest claims (Carson et al., 1982; cited in Poff & Waluchow, 1991, p. 502). This law has consistently been upheld.

The teacher could then ask, How does the legal requirement for honesty influence the ethics bluffing? Carson et al. (1982; cited in Poff & Waluchow, 1991) say that the honest claims requirement applies only to claims that pertain directly to bargaining issues and an employer's ability to provide certain conditions of employment. "However, bluffing about objective issues not subject to negotiation . . . is allowable" (p. 503). The authors provide a number of examples to illustrate objective issues. These examples provide the class with situations into which they could project themselves imaginatively, judge issues as bargaining issues or objective issues, and assign the rules of conduct governing each situation. From these hypothetical situations the teacher could provide the learners with a set of questions intended to move beyond defining parameters of law and ethics and to move forward into the intransigent moral issues. According to Carson et al. (pp. 502-504), the questions might include the following:

- When does the bluff violate the honest claims doctrine?
- Would a *(certain presentation of false information)* be an honorable bluff, and when would it become deception?
- When does the bluff become a lie, if ever?
- When does exaggeration become false information?

To this point the class has not yet grappled with the moral issues at stake. Students have been asked to define parameters and boundaries between ethics and law and to consider with an open mind that there are as many differing views as there are student authorities seated in the classroom. Fostering an attitude of open-mindedness requires students to be able to choose for themselves ethical standards based on reasons and the available moral arguments and evidence (even conflicting evidence), and at the same time to be of a mind-set that is open to revise standards given differing views or new evidence. That is the ultimate aim of the nonindoctrinative form of teaching.

Adding the ethical dimension. Applying the ideal that the role of moral philosophy is to question the obvious, it is reasonable for the ethics teacher to ask for an explanation of why the status quo on bluffing in labor negotiations is morally laudable or, alternatively, worthy of criticism. In this case the teacher might pose one or more questions, such as, On what ground is this statement defensible: Business people ought to detach themselves from the ordinary standards of morality and subscribe to a special standard because they are players in the business game? Or: Although bluffing can be advantageous in negotiations, is it obvious that it is

economically necessary? Or: There is a presumption against lying in Canadian culture; do bluffing and other deceptive business practices require some sort of special justification to be permissible? What are the arguments for and against?

Discussion might include points such as the following:

- Business is analogous to a game; game conventions are generally expected to comply with moral norms.
- Games are governed by rules and game conventions that comprise the standards of the game; rules and conventions ought to be scrutinized.
- The fact that bluffing is part of the game is its own justification.
- Bluffing and deceptive practices are condoned, but no one has challenged the status quo.
- Bluffing is justified because the moral presumption against lying holds only when the other party is not attempting to lie. Therefore lying is unacceptable only when the other party is unusually naive or scrupulous.
- Games are not self-contained, rule-governed practices exempt from external moral critique.
- The moral imperative to tell the truth applies only to situations where the other party has the right to know. In labor negotiations the other party has no right to know one's bargaining position; therefore there is no obligation to tell the truth.

And so the discussion might go.

The teacher might then attempt to focus the moral issue by asking students to brainstorm a list of the moral imperatives foundational to the debate. The class should clarify through discussion, reference to assigned reading, or further reading the definition of a lie, the concept of deception, and the distinction between a false statement and a lie and between intention, lying, and deception. Finally, learners should reflect on the differences, if any, between social norms and special business norms. These lists might reveal social expectations and society's moral benchmarks. Brainstorming, clarification, and reflection presumably allow the learner to reflect on the relevant issues at a deeper level than unexamined common sense will remit.

Next the teacher could ask students to consider whether or not the implication in Carr (1988) and Carson et al. (1982; cited in Poff & Waluchow, 1991) that there is only one way to conduct labor negations is in fact correct. Are there alternative negotiating methods available? Is there more than one right way to conduct business? Students could research other approaches to negotiation; the teacher's interest here is fostering the students' ability to question the taken-for-granted, to recognize alternatives and the moral foundations of alternative methods. As a consequence of questioning, discussion, presenting alternative views, brainstorming, and so forth, the examination of this issue becomes far reaching and focused on moral thought and ethical conduct, with the range of alternatives placed in the hands of the learner. The students are engaged in moral deliberation and encouraged to draw their own conclusions.

Scenario 2: Teaching About the Ethics of Bluffing to Close the Mind

In Scenario 2 assignments are the same, and the discussion would open with comments similar to those in Scenario 1. At one point a student challenges the direction of the debate on delineating situations where bluffing is acceptable. This student may question Carr's (1988) premise that business is a game with special rules, that bluffing is a reasonable tactic, and that the fine distinctions that Carson et al. (1982; cited in Poff & Waluchow, 1991) draw are distractions from the moral issues at hand. This student might contend that fundamental moral imperatives, such as respect for persons, the responsibility to avoid the exploitation of others, and so on, are noticeably absent from the discussion.

What would the teacher do with this student's provocation? Let us assume for the purposes of this example that the professor holds the view that there is no moral content in business practice, that questions of morality and ethical conduct are irrelevant to business practice. The teacher's aim is to prepare learners to be competent game players who understand that actions are subject to different standards than the usual standards of everyday morality. The teacher has a choice of pedagogical methods through a range from harsh to gentle that transmit the view of an amoral business field.

The harsh teacher might reply to the student's interest in the moral questions connected to Carr's (1988) position with a derisive tone or use of body language and words that demean or personally attack the student. The teacher might judge the student's idea as naive, overly scrupulous, and

irrelevant to the debate. These behaviors effectively close the discussion. Alternatively, the teacher could respond in a way that is less obviously contemptuous but still reinforces the view that moral content is irrelevant to business practice. A gentler approach is a more subtle but equally effective device to close the question. The teacher might acknowledge that common sense holds lying to be a matter of moral significance and that, all things being equal, lying is wrong. The curious student may have the impression that the point has been given due consideration.

The teacher may then explain about cases drawn from personal real-world experience and proceed to endorse strongly the practice of bluffing. Relying on the normal relationship of trust that is inherent in the teacher-student relationship, the teacher may gently patronize students by expressing a keen interest in their future success. The students will receive the message loud and clear: To be successful, the correct approach is the teacher's approach. This teacher will gently but most certainly deny in the fullest sense proper rational assessment of Carr's (1988) or Carson et al.'s (1982; cited in Poff & Waluchow, 1991) (or the teacher's) views.

In the most difficult cases the closed-minded teacher is sincere about his or her beliefs but is given to condescension. The teacher in this example believes that labor negotiations are inherently adversarial; at the same time, she is sincerely committed to the future success of the students. Cooper (1973) makes a subtle but interesting point that most likely cases of indoctrination will involve the teacher who is a 'sincere indoctrinator.' According to Cooper, the sincere indoctrinator is "one who himself believes the propositions he is teaching, and who thinks it important that his

students should believe them precisely because, according to him, they are true" (p. 44). What is significant here is that the teacher will not ask students to question that which is taken for granted—in this case, that bluffing is common practice and essential to negotiations. Because business has no moral content, the teacher would not ask students to consider the moral implications of adversarial systems. To be persuasive, the teacher might concede that a great deal of lying and deception occurs in the business sector of society. However, much of this behavior is condoned or encouraged by both labor and management, particularly in bargaining or negotiating circumstances. The teacher would then call on other expert opinions. For example, she might quote Carr (1988), who says, "The main justification for bluffing [is] the fact that the moral presumption against lying to or deceiving someone holds only when the person or persons with whom you are dealing is/are not attempting to lie to or deceive you" (Carson et al., 1982; cited in Poff & Waluchow, 1991, p. 506).

Through either method—derision or persuasion—the students will hear a clear message: Given the exigencies and harsh realities of the competitive economic system, certain behaviors that would be condemned in other social contexts are permissible and necessary in the real world of business. The competent business practitioner is able to play according to the special rules of business; to follow any other set of rules would be folly, a show of incompetence, and a sure way to fail. The sincere indoctrinator would not choose the learning activities that foster discussion of alternative views beyond the restricted boundaries set by the teacher. Exploration of the ethics of the adversarial model or efforts to define the difference between a

lie and a bluff would not be available to the class. Neither would the sincere indoctrinator give class time to other successful methods of labor negotiations that are an alternative to the adversarial model and have a foundation based on different moral suppositions. The student will get the message that concern for the moral questions is either misguided or irrelevant.

This approach may conduce to two possible outcomes. First, some students will embrace the teacher's view that common-sense morality does not apply to business and that there is no reasonable alternative view of the nature of business practice. If learners form an idea based on a rational argument that closes off further rational assessment, then, according to Kleinig's (1982) description, instruction becomes indoctrination. Although the teacher's intention is not malevolent, the outcome of the instructional process ought to be criticized. The teacher is, however, negligent in his or her duty to teach in a way that fosters rational capacity and avoids indoctrination. Likely, the teacher would be appalled at the implied accusation of negligence and indoctrination and would defend his or her teaching as a commitment to the well-being and future success of the students. Despite innocent intention, patronization of learners produces no thoughtful consideration of the ethics of practice occurred, and learners are ignorant of what is morally at stake for themselves and others. Minds will be closed to certain assumptions that are worthy of critical scrutiny. The learner's capacity to think rationally and consider alternative views is seriously constrained.

Let us imagine a second possible consequence for learners. Some students, although hearing the teacher's view clearly, will limit or withhold formal rebuttal to the teacher's view—in class discussions, in papers, or in examinations—and express agreement so that they can meet a practical goal of successful completion of the course. Privately, students who question the status quo may be willing to discuss their ideas in a forum other than the classroom.

What can we say about the case of indoctrination given this outcome? It seems obvious that these skeptical students are not indoctrinated. They may be able to articulate the teacher's view in class assignments, and they may appreciate the teacher's sincere concern for their future success in business practice. Therefore, despite the teacher's content, methods, and intention, students maintain a robust sense of doubt and remain open to other views. One can conclude correctly that no indoctrination has occurred as an outcome of instruction.

These scenarios suggest very different learning experiences that might reasonably occur in the business ethics classroom. Although content and methods vary and the teacher's intentions may be either honorable or dishonorable, it is the outcome that matters most. Some students, especially those who are more mature, may be able to recognize indoctrinative teaching and seek other outlets for learning. Sadly, other students do not recognize indoctrinative teaching and become its victim. Clearly, the teacher's responsibility is ponderous and bears further delineation.

What Is the Teacher's Responsibility?

It is my contention that educators as professionals have a responsibility to understand when and how the teaching process departs from a truly educational process and becomes indoctrination. By continuously scrutinizing what is taught and how students hold knowledge and beliefs, teachers can and must recognize the seeds of indoctrination. This vigilant self-awareness is a responsibility of professional life. The seeds of indoctrination can be seen below the surface, as hidden curricula imbedded in the teaching process. Just as the moral philosopher challenges the taken-for-granted, the educator must search deeply for underlying and taken-for-granted values that are imparted directly and indirectly to learners. Even if some students can resist overt and/or covert indoctrination, the phenomenon is a serious educational concern.

With reference to the example case, if a teacher is clear and open about a commitment to certain underlying values and states that the objective is to prepare students to bargain according to the rules of an adversarial model, then students may choose to satisfy the course-evaluation criteria without revealing their degree of acceptance of values expressed by the teacher. This describes the situation in most business theory classrooms today; the curriculum is silent on morality and ethics. The expressed values of the institution and its faculty may be held by a student firmly, tentatively, or not at all. In most courses, measures of student learning do not yield clear evidence of how a value or attitude is held by the learner. At best, students may be asked to recognize or name a value. Thus, recognizing a clear case of indoctrination is usually avoided.

Both the open-minded and the closed-minded student may look quite similar at the end of a course, and business educators need not be concerned with the deeper intellectual capacity for reflection and introspection.

It is conceivable that the students graduating from either of the classrooms pictured above will practice the bluffing strategy as they gain real-world experience. As the textbook suggests, bluffing is a standard of labor negotiation into which the students are to be initiated. Over time, however, two different routes are available as the novice becomes a competent negotiator. Learners who embrace the belief that the nature of negotiations is in fact inherently adversarial and without moral content will detach their sense of common morality and become masters of the bluff; they will expect their opponents to bluff; the boundary between a bluff and a lie will be undefined. They will understand that some bluffs will be successful and some will not: "Win some and lose some." The best negotiators will teach others, and bluffing will remain standard practice, with the ethical questions about deception in business practice unspoken.

On the other hand, open-minded students who are interested in the ethics of business may seek to clarify a bluff and a lie and may amend their practices, or they may seek out alternative ideas and negotiating approaches. There may be different motivations for the continued search. As business people they may not see business practice as morally neutral, or they may question the idea of special justification for bluffing and other sorts of strategies of a deceptive nature. Regardless of the motivation, these business people may seek an alternative to the institutionalized belief. This suggests that they are not successfully indoctrinated.

Conclusion

Given their special status and their potential influence on learners, teachers have an obligation to ensure diligently the presentation of values and beliefs in a nonindoctrinative manner. These contrasting scenarios illustrate that the charge that ethics teaching is indoctrination is a false charge and that ethics, like other subject matter, can be taught in a truly educative or indoctrinative manner. Perhaps it is simpler and more direct to say that the possibility of indoctrination is not a reasonable deterrent from teaching business ethics well.

It is reasonable to expect teachers of ethics to recognize the significant influence that attitudes and beliefs have on everyday conduct in the real world and to accept the professional obligation for self-criticism and the teaching obligation to encourage learners to examine beliefs and attitudes critically.

The future prospects for teaching ethics in business programs are optimistic; growing interest will translate into a demand. The two substantial barriers to teaching ethics well are indifference and a shortage of qualified teachers. The education and business communities need to talk, at length and often, about the requirements for business ethics education and search together for solutions to the problems that are fundamentally empirical. No substantial philosophical issue needs to divide these communities. A climate of respect and a mutual interest in a workable interdisciplinary approach are visible on the horizon.

The matter of developing good teachers is a challenge for the education community. More damage may be done if ethics courses are introduced into the curriculum and then taught by incompetent teachers. Aspiring teachers will have to make a commitment to becoming appropriately qualified; team-teaching may fill a gap.

In the ever-increasing professionalization of business practice, it is obvious that a more central place for the teaching of ethics in formal business education is desirable. Few members of either the education or the business communities would disagree that business education ought to go well beyond the merely technical; it ought to aim to prepare learners for long and distinguished careers in which questions of great significance will test their integrity and demand conscious standards of ethical conduct. No one can or should be expected to maneuver through the most complex of human matters without adequate preparedness.

It is fitting to conclude with a few words from the recommendations of the Hastings Center Project (1980; cited in Callahan & Bok, 1980) report, which has been a guiding light:

> Courses in ethics . . . should seek to assist students in the development of those insights, skills, and perspectives that set the stage for a life of personal moral responsibility reflecting careful and serious moral reflection. . . . The teaching of ethics in professional schools ought to prepare future professionals to understand the types of moral issues they are likely to confront, . . . introduce them to the moral ideals of their profession, and assist them in understanding the relationship between their professional work and that of the broader values and needs of the society. (p. 300)

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APPENDIX

TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS: COMPARISON OF CRITERIA

Bok's criteria	Callahan's criteria
Adequate knowledge of moral philosophy	Firm academic grounding in the subject matter of ethics
Knowledge of the field of business	Academic knowledge of the field of business
Pedagogues with ability to conduct rigorous classroom discussion	"Special" pedagogical skills
	Personal experience of the kinds of moral problems encountered in the business world