The purpose of Encompass Magazine is to renew an ethical dialogue among all disciplines of the Duke community. We hope to show that ethics isn’t just for philosophers, priests, or obnoxious goody-two-shoes.

The following survey was taken from a diverse mix of Duke students, faculty, and staff who have no specific relation to the study of ethics.

**What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the word ‘ethics’?**

- Doing the right thing versus the wrong thing.
- Honesty
- Morals
- Having a sense of morality and doing the right thing
- Life situations and issues like homosexuality and abortion
- Writing a paper on ethics
- Obama: From what I heard in his campaign speeches and his stance on healthcare reform
- Jesus
- Gandhi: He was a man of peace.
- Mother Teresa: She was not corrupted and didn’t have her own agenda. She looked out for what’s best for other people
- Abortion because it’s taking a life without that life’s consent
- Staling a shirt from my sister
- Debauchery
- Getting promoted based more on who you know rather than on your actual qualifications
- Social prejudice

**Who are some of your ethical role models?**

- Obama: From what I heard in his campaign speeches and his stance on healthcare reform
- Jesus
- Gandhi: He was a man of peace.
- Mother Teresa: She was not corrupted and didn’t have her own agenda. She looked out for what’s best for other people
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- Social prejudice

**Can you come up with an unethical action that is also legal?**

- Social prejudice
- Debauchery
- Getting promoted based more on who you know rather than on your actual qualifications
- Stealing a shirt from my sister
- Getting promoted based more on who you know rather than on your actual qualifications

**Poll:** On a scale of one to five, how confident are you in your ability to identify an ethical life?

- 1 = Not confident
- 5 = Extremely confident

- 1: 8.3%
- 2: 12.5%
- 3: 20.8%
- 4: 41.7%
- 5: 16.7%

**This is where we begin...**

**Letter from the Editors**

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As a moral medium

By Alex Burns
Political Science, ’10

Art as a moral medium

In describing the power of art and justice, Sachs provided the evidence of a univer-
sal human language of imagination, sense, and emotion. Experienced through senses rather than reason, art transcends rational frameworks specific to certain cultures. Art unites audiences through sensorial experience and imagination, and thus inspires the empathetic and compassion-
ate responses described by Sachs.

Because of this powerful appeal to the emotions, art often acts as the medium through which morality is transferred to a collective consciousness. Whether it is through political speech, interpretive dance, or impressionist painting, art speaks through the senses and pervades the emotions, connecting feeling to think-
ing, and inspires an experience of ethics.

We can see morality as an emotional and rational examination of right and wrong. Although ethical values differ across cultures, art can serve as a kind of moral adhesive for the disparate because moral sense and artistic imagination are human intelligences inden-
pendent of culture. Though individual responses to art often differ, art mirrors the experience, emo-
tions, and senses of man. The reflection of a com-
mon humanity enables art to influence empathy and relate to ethics regardless of cultural boundaries.

Whitman summarizes the effect of art on ethics well when he describes art as having the ability to merit differ-
ces and saturate the conscious and unconscious beliefs of man. He argues that art permeates to the very marrow of society, pervading the thoughts, feelings and actions of man. Therefore upholding morality manifests itself as a function of art, as the beauty of art evokes an empathetic response and combines the hearts and minds of all humanity.

Enrico Aura, “Art on the MoMA Floor 2”, March 16, 2008 via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)
Then there’s the rush-out-of-class moment. While it seems understood as part of the college student social contract that we start pursuing a friend’s attention: you would end up making a quick “stop and chat.” Think about the sounds you hear walking across the BC Plaza (where good things happen): yes, I’d love to drown out the tabloids, the cell phone yappers and the occasional construction work, but what about the “hello”s and “what’s up”s from your friends, that guy who plays guitar at the Cosmic Cart or even the random snippets of overheard conversations that are totally out of context but completely hilarious? Turning on the music limits those chances for social interaction and, in fact, creates a wall of sound that separates our senses from the outside world.

Moreover, it seems like this is part of a larger trend, one where we, including myself, pretend to be busy in order to avoid those little social moments that threaten to require a lot of effort. In the context of a college campus, habits such as these could subtly undermine the cohesiveness of our intellectual and social community. The bus is a prime example. Since I usually hop on the bus alone, I make sure to bring a Chronicle with me so I can bury my face. But I remember a time—maybe it was just that first week of freshman year, though I suspect it was longer—when the bus was the place to meet people. Then there’s the rush-out-of-class moment. While it seems understood as part of the college student social contract that we start putting away our books in the last minute of class, the ensuing sprint to the door may not help our cause. Though professors certainly moan about the early putting away of books, their real gripe is that conversations often fail to continue outside the classroom. Even if we aren’t going to stick around and talk Foucault, we’re still missing an opportunity to further socialize.

The earphones, the silent bus rides, the rush-out-of-class—not to mention Jim Wulforst’s (the Director of Dining Services at Duke) claims about how take-out food is ruining our social dining experiences—all add up to the same thing: they take away social moments from college life. And that’s a real shame because in our university—completely unlike the streets of New York City—public social action and interaction are primary values.

The quad is more than just a gap between buildings or a pretty lawn. It’s a place for community members to interact—to play, to talk, to debate, to bond, to flirt. Unlike the more exclusive residential spaces or niche-specific academic ones, everyone uses the quads. When we plug in the iPods or bury our noses in the Chronicle, we lose an opportunity not only to publicly reaffirm our bonds with friends and acquaintances but also to meet those who we would never meet in French Science or Kilgo House G.

Moreover, the quad is a space for public action. It’s where we as students exercise our rights to free speech, to protest, to come together to promote a single cause. For example, tabling serves a crucial purpose to the groups on campus as they seek to recruit new members, gather donations and further serve their missions. The quad is a place where we take our experiences as individuals and bring them out to a public forum. How are we to hear these important social messages when we are too caught up in the music in our ears? We all recognize the inherent value of socializing. Yet, we don’t realize that our mp3s negate it on a daily basis. By turning on our ipods as we go out in the quad, we encase ourselves in audio bubbles as we move around what ought to be a very public space. Pods trap us in and shut the world out. I know that sometimes that is what one needs. Yet, our university is so small: there’s always a chance you’ll run into someone you know on your way to class. And often enough they could distract you from your daily concerns just as well as music. Maybe it is time we swapped our pods on the quad for wide smiles and attentive looks welcoming hellos from those that pass us.

We’ve come to accept this as normal. I, for one, rarely even take a mental note of who’s hooked in to their mp3—it’s as common as if they were going for a jog rather than simply going to class. It’s hardly a topic of conversation or controversy. Maybe it should be.

Last year, New York State Senator Carl Krueger introduced a bill to ban the use of mp3 players by New York City pedestrians. He argued that the devices posed a “major public safety crisis” in that people crossing the street would be less able to sense, say, an oncoming bus. Ouch.

Since a range of moving vehicles on our campus is pretty much limited to club cars and Segway scooters, perhaps there are reasons besides safety to consider when thinking about our portable music habits.

Not many realize that the issue is a social one. When we walk around campus with music playing directly into our ears, we isolate ourselves. This is obvious if you ever tried to call a friend’s attention: you would end up making a fool of yourself calling after someone who simply just couldn’t hear you. Sure, they aren’t intentionally ignoring you, but all the same, the moment of contact is lost. After a while, those dangling cables start to relay a message: don’t talk to me, I’m not out for conversation.

Pods on the Quad

It’s a sight we’re all familiar with: the little white circles plugging the ears, the thin cords trailing down the neck, disappearing somewhere into the tonyo. Wherever we walk on campus, we’re bound to run into others touting this peculiar accessory. Maybe you yourself have swapped earrings for ear buds when venturing out on the quad. There’s no doubt about it: many of us wear our pods on the quad.

Sunglasses

You know what they say, the eyes are the window to the soul. The cool factor may not be worth shutting the world out. Don’t hide behind your shades!

What else affects a sense of community?

An active social life appears to delay memory loss as we age, a new study shows. So, social isolation may not only lead to a pretty sad life, but also invites cognitive decline. (The American Journal of Public Health)
Should there be absolute anonymity online? By Ken Rogerson Lecturer, Sanford School of Public Policy

Most people would agree that the Internet has provided space for a greater number of voices. Though certain types of content are offensive to some nettizens, most of them understand and accept the right of the content to be there. One exception to this freedom—a category of content that most people agree should be stopped—is the online sexual exploitation of minors. Whether under the guise of child pornography or sexual predator, there are a number of laws forbidding these offenses and law enforcement agencies have become almost obsessed with tracking and halting the perpetrators of these crimes.

The anonymity of the online environment allows both potential child predators to hide their identity and, at the same time, allows law enforcement officers to do the same so that they can catch them.

What is the value of anonymity on the Internet? Is that value different for individuals and for society as a whole? Should policymakers argue for greater transparency on the Internet in general while keeping the identities of law enforcement officers secret? What is the threshold for things that are “bad” enough to circumvent existing laws about online identity disclosure? In other words, what are the acceptable exceptions and why are they acceptable?
Comedy at its best is based on truth. We laugh at stories of childhood, visits to the den, or frustrations with airplane food because we can directly relate to these situations. When comedians find clever nuance to everyday life, we applaud them with laughter and the phrase “Wow, that is so true!” But when, if ever, does the truth stop being funny? What lines are too tender to cross, and how do we know when it is acceptable or who is allowed to cross them?

While questions about ethics can show us that comedy isn’t all about fun and games, so can biology. Laughing has been shown to be therapeutic by releasing endorphins and lowering blood pressure. On a social level, it is one of the best ways to connect with others. In many situations, comedy also enables us to discuss topics that might otherwise be considered taboo. Comedy can help us explore the past and find the humanity in our loneliness, frustrations, and secrets.

But does comedy take on a different tone when we start joking about issues of race? What about tragedy? The Broadway Musical “Avenue Q” challenges these questions with puppets that dance and prance to songs about racism, pornography, and shadenfreude. They claim that “everyone is a little bit racist” and that’s OK. Comedians such as Pablo Francisco, Katt Williams and Lisa Lampanelli make careers of delving into topics that are generally considered taboo, such as religion, sexism, assault, and terrorism. While these jokes may open discussion, they can also reinforce stereotypes, offend the audience, and ostracize individuals in a way that makes the topics even harder to discuss. So where do we draw the line? What can we do to keep jokes from dividing us?

Our sense of humor can ultimately be seen as an extension of how we see the world, so telling others that their laughter is unjust or out of place can actually be a fairly personal attack. I doubt censorship will find much success in the comedy industry. But there is something people can do: they can be educated consumers of comedy. At its root, comedy depends on the simple economic concept of supply and demand. You have the power of instant feedback, so use it. You stop laughing, we’ll stop joking.

But also remember that comedy can help us cope, discuss, and find human empathy. When used tactfully, humor is something that we can all share. It bonds individuals and jokes fun at reality. It stretches our thinking and helps us understand what looks funny to other people. It is really one of the most intimate looks into what can bridge people across cultures, religions, age and sex. So let’s protect the sanctity of comedy and do our best to master the most valuable comedic tool of all, the ability to look inward and laugh at ourselves.

Comedy depends on the simple economic concept of supply and demand. You have the power of instant feedback, so use it. You stop laughing, we’ll stop joking.
Seasoned pro. Much of this is to gain the benefits actually suffered through mistakes and poor professional judgment regarding risk and safety, and issues of what it means to be a professional in its myriad forms.

Their experiences with ethics generally have been under the mantle of academic integrity. Thus, to teach ethics to undergraduates, it is necessary to build a bridge between academic integrity and professional ethics. In other words, students must know why and how to be morally exemplary in school, so this is an ideal framework from which to design a course that will help with the transition to the work setting. One could argue that this is exactly what happens when a teenager learns to drive a car.

Professional ethics can be likened to driver’s education training, where the basics of driving a vehicle from a textbook (i.e. the “Rules of the Road”) is augmented by hypothetical cases and scenarios to engage the student in “what ifs” (e.g. what factors led to a bad outcome, like a car wreck?). Society realizes that new drivers are at risk and are placing other members of society at risk. Teenagers are thinking about handling an object with a lot of power (e.g. hundreds of horsepower), a large mass (greater than a ton), with a potential to accelerate rapidly and travel at high speeds. To raise the consciousness (and hopefully their conscientiousness), they are shown films of what happens to drivers who do not take their driving responsibilities seriously. Likewise, ethics classes include films and discuss cases that scare the future professionals in hopes that this will remind them of how to act when an ethical situation arises. This takes place in a safe environment (the classroom with a mentor who can share experiences), rather than relying on the one’s own experiences.

But, memory fades with time. Psychologists refer to this as extinction, which can be graphed much like a decay curve familiar to engineers (See Figure 1). Unless the event is very dramatic its details will soon fade in memory. This may be why educators often use cases with extremely bad outcomes (e.g. operations gone horribly wrong, bridge failures, fatal side effects, scientific fraud on a global scale) as opposed to less extreme, yet more likely cases, such as the engineer or architect who must decide whether to avoid a conflict of interest in selecting bids for a project.

Another possibly contributing factor in extinction is that if a bad thing happens to someone else, like the scenarios in the driver’s education films, they are not easily remembered, even if the results are gory. Much more memorable are events that occur to us personally. Anyone who has been in a car wreck will remember the event for many years. The hope for young people is that the wreck that is sure to come will be severe enough to be memorable but not physically harmful to the driver.

Thus, at least two ways of trying to make sure that future professionals remember the importance of ethical decisions are: 1) using powerful cases, or 2) repeating the lessons. In the latter case the extinction curve is bumped up periodically (See Figure 2). But, like driving, most ethical education occurs “out there.” Only when a professional is confronted with the actual ethical problem will what has been learned be put to the real test.

Learning ethics, as is the case in learning to drive a car, results from a combination of formal study, interactive learning, and practice. While considering cases is helpful, it is no substitute for experiential learning. Thus, many professions require a period of time when the newly minted professional must learn from a seasoned pro. Much of this is to gain the benefits of real-world experience, without having to actually suffer through mistake after mistake as the unguided new professional uses trial and error to finally learn the best approaches beyond textbooks (patients and clients would not allow this!). But, this is also to help the new professional become inculcated into a new scientific and professional community, with its distinct and often unforgiving norms and mores. This can be likened to the new driver spending time behind the wheel with a seasoned driver. Only when a professional is confronted with the actual ethical problem will what has been learned be put to the real test.

Professor Vallero’s class, Ethics in Professions, covers a wide swath of ethical issues, especially those associated with scientific and technical disciplines. It is always a blend of undergraduates from Trinity and Pratt. The topics are wide ranging. While they consider the philosophical underpinnings of morality, they go well beyond this to consider actual cases involving fraud, malpractice, poor professional judgment regarding risk and safety, and issues of what it means to be a professional in its myriad forms.

Figure 1
Hypothetical extinction curves. Curve A represents the most memorable case and Curves B and C less memorable. Curve C is completely forgotten with time. While the events in Curves A and B are remembered, less information about the event is remembered in Curve B because the event is less dramatic. The double arrow represents the difference in the amount of information retained in long-term memory.

Figure 2
Hypothetical extinction curves. The solid line represents a single learning event with no reminders (reinforcements). The dashed line shows reminder events in addition to the initial learning event. The double arrow is the difference in retained information retained in long-term memory as result of adding reminders.
WHAT IS ETHICS?

I'm not going to tell you what ethics is. I'm not sure what ethics is. I have a pretty good idea of what questions are at its core. Questions about what sort of life you should lead and what kind of life you think you're leading right now. Because people often mistake themselves and mistake the assumptions in the life that they are leading. That doesn't mean that I know the answers to these ethical questions, but maybe I can help them to see their own presuppositions.

TRAVELING COMPANIONS

I hope the texts of the course (Ethics Certificate Program)—the Republic, Oedipus the King, the Zimbardo and Milgram Studies, Melville, Machiavelli, Samantha Power, and others—become something like traveling companions: people who are in your head both to debate with when confronting ethical choices to and help us in recognizing what constitutes an ethical issue. Of course, I hope students continue to talk with real people and that they don't do too much of the conversation with the texts out loud in public.

IS STUDYING ETHICS ENOUGH?

Ethics has a lot to do with what you are doing in the university as a whole, and not just in the classroom. One of the paradoxes to this is that some of the head members of the SS, the storm troopers of Nazi Germany had advanced degrees in philosophy, including moral philosophy. So clearly that kind of an education doesn't ensure that people won't do horrible things.

GOTTA “RISK” IT!

If you're going to question the decisions you have made and the life you have chosen, it cannot be just going through the motions. If you don't risk something, if you remain aloof and make it an intellectual game, then everything you read and hear will confirm what you already know and already plan on doing. Somewhat and someway you need to bring your life to the class and the class back into your life. There is a sense in which I need to be a student of my students so I can be a better teacher of them.

WHAT IF “RIGHT” ISN’T “RIGHT”?

Even robbers think robbing is a good thing to do, because if they didn't think it was good then they wouldn't do it. If they thought it were a bad thing to do, wouldn't that be a bit curious? In fact, I get kind of nervous any time people simplify morality into strict terms of good and evil, because it's inevitable that they are on the 'good' side and everybody else is on the 'bad' side.

So we are always trying to do something we think is good for us, but what if it isn't? What if we made a profound mistake? What if the assumptions we have been carrying with us since we were children are somehow profoundly wrong, or lead to places and the becoming of people that are very different from what we would hope?

HOW TO TEACH ETHICS?

There is no one way to teach ethics any more than there is one way to think about ethics. I don't have to be the person with the answers. But I do have to be the person with the questions, and to be able to say: why these questions rather than others matter more when it comes to ethics. I also have to make ethical arguments as a way of indicating that such arguments can be made and that a good ethical argument may not yield a conclusion or solution in the way these are available in other fields or aspects of life.

I am not sure why students take my classes—you should ask them. But perhaps one reason is that I love to teach, and they may see that passion in me. It doesn't hurt if you bring humor and playfulness into discussions about what are some difficult, even horrific, as when we consider the moral collapse under the Nazi regime.

BOOK OF JOB: LOSING IT ALL

A moral imagination is the capacity to see the world as someone else sees it. There are people that can project themselves into the situations of others. Not become others, they can't possibly do that, but they can imaginatively go visiting where those people live in the world and see the world from their point of view. That's a kind of essential quality to ethical inquiry.

THE CLASSROOM: MICRO-ETHICS

Ethical issues are all around us even in what we think of as the mundane parts of our lives. In certain respects, what goes on in the classroom itself can be morally instructive. Do students respect each other even when they strongly differ on an issue or the reading of a text; are they able to make an argument and hear counter-arguments; are the stakes in the arguments clear or are people playing intellectual games or talking to show how smart they are? Do they take responsibility for what they say and the way they say it?

WHAT IS MORAL IMAGINATION?

Many, but by no means all, students at Duke have a sense of privilege. They do not doubt that they deserve to be here and are confident that they can realize their ‘career trajectories.’ But the Book of Job, with which I begin the Gateway course to the Ethics Certificate Program, suggests otherwise. Here is a wealthy, honored, powerful man who has everything anyone could want and is reduced to a stereotypical homeless person—unshaved, full of sores, despised, smelly, and shooing things that seem absurd. This sense of radical reversal, the idea that there but for the grace of God go I, is central to Greek tragedy. The acknowledgment of loss, the recognition that we are all mortals with its attendant sense of vulnerability may not yield a conclusion or solution in the way these are available in other fields or aspects of life.

ETHICS CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

“The Ethics Certificate Program helps students to analyse the ethical challenges of everyday life, to see the world from an ethical perspective different than their own, and to engage the Gateway Course authors—Sartre, Job, Plato, James Baldwin, Machiavelli, Nietzsche, Sophocles, Arendt, and Melville—in a moral dialogue that will continue throughout their lives.”

PETER EUBEN, Ethics Professor

“The Challenges of Living an Ethical Life was the best course that I have taken at Duke. I found myself connecting and applying the themes of our readings and discussions to my daily life constantly.”

Sean Poppell, T’10

“Peter Euben has been one of the most important influences in my life at Duke. The books for The Challenges of Living an Ethical Life remain on your shelf—and reappear on your reading list—long after you’ve finished taking the course.”

Jared Blau, T’10

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Moral Holiday in South Africa

By Jessica So
Political Science, ’10

A
fter several exhausting weeks of traveling and sleeping in cheap, dingy hostels, it was such a relief to be welcomed into the home of a warm and generous family. I was thousands of miles away from home participating in DukeEngage South Africa and this immediate ease was comforting; they even had the same kitchen countertops as my own family! It was all picture-perfect: the dog was friendly, a pool waited in the back yard, and I had home-cooked meals for dinner every night. By any standards, I should have been completely happy.

H
owever, despite the ideal living conditions, I couldn’t shake off this nagging uneasiness, a feeling I identified, upon further reflection, as a sense of guilt. Why couldn’t I simply enjoy the luxury of comfort and familiarity with my hosts without feeling conflicted? The key reason, I realized, was the context of my environment. If I had been in America, I would not have felt as troubled as I did then. As it were, I was in South Africa, a country with one of the greatest wealth disparities in the world, and the mansion I was living in belonged to a white Afrikaner family in Stellenbosch, the Napa Valley of South Africa.

W
ealth inequality exists in America and the rest of the world, but South Africa’s situation is unique in that much of the wealth of the white South African minority was built on the recent oppression of the vast black majority.

F
rom 1948 to 1994, black South Africans were systematically and legally discriminated against, exploited, and disenfranchised by the apartheid government. Based mostly on the color of their skin and the texture of their hair, people were classified as "white," "colored," "indian," or "black," and their rights were determined based on these classifications. People were forced to live in segregated townships according to their race, and many non-whites were physically removed from their homes in order to make space for white neighborhoods. Although most white South Africans did not actively participate in the apartheid regime, they all benefited from the privileges of being white.

J
ust a week before my visit to Stellenbosch, I stayed with a rural Xhosa family in a one-room house with no plumbing or running water. I, along with the five family members, slept in a room with a kitchen on one side and a single bed on the other. The lack of privacy and personal space was striking: I woke up every morning to my host sisters bathing just a few feet away from where I was sleeping. One week later, I had a bedroom and a bathroom the size of their entire house all to myself in a multi-million-dollar home! The large, racially-skewed wealth disparity in this country could not have been more visibly obvious. With the memories of my former hosts’ poverty still vivid in my mind, I could not help but feel guilty every night I climbed into my soft bed.

“But why do you feel this way?” I asked myself. After all, I clearly had no part in apartheid history and was not personally responsible for any government actions. It was the mere fact that I was enjoying Afrikaner hospitality, however, that was enough to trigger my uneasiness. In an indirect but very concrete way, I was reaping the benefits and privileges of apartheid. If my guilt was unwarranted, however, who was to blame? That is, who should be held morally responsible for the current state of South Africa? The easy answer is the apartheid government and its supporters, but apartheid ended there, however; positions of privilege should be recognized as a legacy of apartheid and, at the very least, leveraged to redress past wrongs.

I
believe the answer is a complicated "No." There is a marked distinction between guilt and responsibility, between legality and morality: one can be found legally innocent and yet still be held morally responsible. The majority of white South Africans are clearly not guilty of personally committing apartheid. Nevertheless, because the apartheid policies have benefitted – and indirectly continue to benefit – white South Africans as a whole, I believe it is their moral duty to recognize and take collective responsibility for the continued effects of apartheid-era policies. It shouldn’t end there, however; positions of privilege should be recognized as a legacy of apartheid and, at the very least, leveraged to redress past wrongs.

Africans (also known as the Boers) are the white, Afrikaans-speaking people descended from northwestern European settlers who first arrived at the Cape of Good Hope at the end of the 17th century. Afrikans is a young language based off simplified Dutch.

The Xhosa make up 18% of the South African population, and are mainly located in the Eastern and Western Capes. Famous Xhosas include former presidents Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki.
In the summer of 2008, Duke sophomore Elad Gross led the need to improve upon the glaring disparities in education he had witnessed firsthand in his hometown of St. Louis, Missouri. He attended a suburban high school with a bussing program, one of the original desegregation efforts of the city, which brings city black students into predominantly white suburban communities, and a smaller number of white suburban students into the city. When DukeEngage launched its first full-scale program, Elad took the initiative and recruited other Duke students to apply as individual participants to serve as volunteer teachers in one struggling St. Louis public school. In total, four other Duke students joined Elad’s makeshift group project in what would become the foundation for a service organization led by Elad and myself.

After our DukeEngage experience, Elad and I set two main goals: 1) continue sending Duke students to volunteer in St. Louis public schools, and 2) integrate students from St. Louis colleges and universities into our model. We decided to focus on college students because they are not only apt to offer new and different knowledge to their younger students, but because they also function as role models who those young learners can look up to and easily connect with. Using Duke students was a model that we were already familiar with, but we wanted to add participants from local colleges and universities. We did this to ensure our program’s future sustainability and to further a greater purpose: the development of a community of education that is lacking in St. Louis.

With these goals in mind, we looked for any opportunities at Duke to improve our program. We met with professors and local community organizers and leaders and discussed the logistics of creating a successful community organization from the ground up. We entered the Duke Entrepreneurship competitions and attended their workshops where we developed elevator pitches and business plans. Even our spring semester plans were impacted by our work. Elad studied in New York, where he publicized our work in an expo held in the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum and attended a non-profit boot camp. I spent the semester abroad in Chile and Argentina, where I studied different education systems firsthand and gained a new perspective on the U.S. system.

At the same time, we were both working with DukeEngage to expand the original project. During the fall and spring semesters after DukeEngage, we developed a more ambitious DukeEngage group program that ran this past summer. We strengthened our ties within the St. Louis community by reaching out to local universities, of which two participated in the expanded DukeEngage program. Seven students from Duke, ten from St. Louis University, and around eighty participants from the University of Missouri St. Louis worked in one of three elementary school sites serving around nine hundred children. We ran the program during the six weeks of summer school, and DukeEngage students also participated in internships at the St. Louis Public Schools headquarters.

What we once believed would only be a summer volunteer program has now grown into much more. We are already planning for next summer’s program and offering other universities in St. Louis the opportunity to partner with us as we try to include more elementary schools. This fall, we are running a pilot regular school-year program with our longtime partner elementary school, and more than forty college students are participating.

We are also seeking ways to improve our program through research. During the summer, we were able to visit with the Memphis City Schools and the Chicago Public Schools to learn how other districts deal with community involvement and what opportunities there may be for programs like our own in different urban school districts. Elad and I are also jointly writing an honors thesis that measures the effect of summer program participation on the local community’s social capital. One of our future plans is to link student researchers from multiple universities to share ideas and lead to innovation and deeper analyses of current issues.

Today, we are developing a service organization to encapsulate all of these activities: In-class teaching assistants, district head- quarters and community internships, and research into education. This organization is called the Education Exchange Corps, and we plan to incorporate as a non-profit organization this upcoming spring. Other organizations bring volunteers into classrooms on a regular basis, but our unique focus on college students and encouraging academic interests in the field of education allows our service organization to affect two generations of students: the children we work with receive the extra help they need to succeed academically, and the college participants who work with us participate in a potentially lifelong-changing experience that impacts their career choices.

The journey Elad and I took to build upon our original service project has been long, strenuous, time-consuming and, most importantly, rewarding. We pushed through times of uncertainty, dealt with set-backs, and have received both negative and positive feedback on our program—though mostly positive. However, not all service projects have to result in the founding of a new nonprofit to be deemed successful. Ultimately, helping out in the community is a giving of time, our most precious endowment. Thoughtful planning, rigorous thought, and determination will improve the understanding and its ties with the community—that is what we have striven to do.

What is DukeEngage? DukeEngage provides funding for Duke undergraduates who wish to pursue an immersive (minimum of eight weeks) service experience by meeting a community need locally, domestically or internationally. Thanks to funding from The Duke Endowment and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, DukeEngage funded and supported 350 students in both group programs and independent projects during the summer of 2009. Since the program began in 2007, more than 800 Duke students have participated.

The Kenon Institute for Ethics and DukeEngage Dublin
In partnership with University College Dublin, several Irish NGOs, and DukeEngage, the Institute is sending eight students to Dublin, Ireland, for eight weeks in summer 2010 to help understand and tackle growing problems in the Irish refugee community.

For more information: dukeethics.org
None of the gay marriage debate, common sense and reason cannot solve the dis-pute because neither exists in a universal way. Forms of common sense vary de-pending upon the traditions, habits, and thought patterns of whichever group is holding the sense in common; there is not one form or sense that is exactly and uniformly the same across cultures or even be-tween groups within a particular society. With sexuality, the particular beliefs about the pur-pose of sex held by one religious group will inevitably create a framework of sexual sensi-bility that is different from another group that does not share the same notions. So, some, assuming a definition of “natural,” say, “The parts just don’t fit,” and conclude that common

sense says that gay relationships are not on the same level as heterosexual ones and should not be legally affirmed in the same way with mar-rriage. Others assume that sexually expressed human relationships are not justified by the external anatomy and procreative capacity in-volved, but by the love and commitment that is present between two people; for them, this is common sense. Either way one goes, the foundational assumptions about the meaning and purpose of love, sex, and relationships in these scenarios are different. Here, there is not a common sense to be held in common. One may concede the lack of universality in realms of common sense, but might ask if re-ason is not a more calculated, precise, dispos-session, universal standard to which all people can appeal? In short, no. The notion of au-tonomous universal reason has the same quali-tative problem as the many conceptions of com-mon sense have. How a group reasons and the “rules” of reason used depend upon what the group values both intellectually and in practice. In turn, these aspects are all held together by the story the group holds or tells about the na-ture, meaning, and purpose of life. Thus, dif-f-erent ultimate stories produce different forms of reason. So, if a group of people believe in a particular god with a particular character and a particular telos (“end” or “purpose”) for hu-man kind and behavior, the content and nature of their reason will be different from a group that believes in no gods at all. This situation is perhaps best summed up by Catholic priest, Richard John Neuhaus, who said, “Debates be-tween (Christian) tradition and reason are actu-ally debates between two traditions of reason.”

When not recognized, this lack of a com-mon foundation to which different groups can appeal for the adjudication of disagreements results in people arguing past each other and finding it incredible that those who disagree with them could be so ignorant and morally reprehensible. On the side of support for gay marriage, arguments are often made based on something called “universal human rights” be-lieved to transcend any particular religious or cultural beliefs; these rights are supposed to be accessible to all through reason. Again, the “reason” problem here is that how one con-strues and fleshes out the substance of “univer-sal” rights is entirely dependent upon one’s cultural, social, and ultimate assump-tions about life. There is little chance for gay marriage opponents to convince conservative Catho-lics, Evangelicals, and Mormons that there is a universal human right to marriage that should override the concerns and values. The con-junctures of the particular god of the universe that they believe is against homosexual be-havior. There are no universal human rights that can universally be known as universal.

Of course, the difficulty on the side of those that argue against gay marriage is fundamen-tally the same. Instead of using human rights language, this side appeals to a definition of marriage itself that they cast as universal and unchanging. For religious conserva-tives, marriage is an intrinsic physiological “otherness” embodied in the male and female cre-ar-ture regarding their posi-tions. They maintain that through common sense and reason, any person should be able to see that their cause is clearly right. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The only way to get universal agreement on common sense would be to get every-one in the world to share the same ultimate understandings of life and the universe. I do not see that happening anytime soon. In the American context there will ulti-mately be one broad perspective on legal ho-mosexual marriage that will have cultural and political dominance over the other. Though

those in favor of gay marriage have balled and bristled against conservative Christian he-reditaries or understandings of marriage for much of Western history, they are, in turn, positioning themselves to gain dominance over the cultural imagination and will inevita-bly capture it; it will simply be the same game, but with different winners. All of this is not to say that it is impossible in this situation to live by side by side in the midst of such disagreements on sexuality. Even though there certainly will always be one story of the ultimate that carries more people’s lives and imaginations than oth-er narratives in a society, perhaps tolerance of the people’s lives and practices associated with more marginal stories is still possible. This, I believe, would have to start with the recog-nition of the nature of the current situation, which is that, while there may be some univer-sal or universal level of meaning or purpose from some god or the cosmos, there is not a universal narra-tive that can be known universally by all people in the same way. In other words, there is no common ground of meaning, common sense, or reason with which to convince the other who she or he is wrong. Until this is acknowl-edged, the debate can only keep heading in the direction that it already is: one big argument where gay rights activists and conservative re-liigious people will try to dominate and coerce each other into legal and social submission.

ISSUES AT STAKE

STALEMATE

The Deadlocked Debate over Gay Marriage

By David A. Steinbrenner, Th.M.

A ny public debate on ethics where the participants of the discussion do not share a common “ultimate” story is a debate that is likely to be decided by coercion and force. There is perhaps no better contemporary example of this than the ongoing debate on homosexual mar-rriage. In particular, the November 2008 approval of Proposition 8 in California—an amendment to the state constitution that declared only mar-rriages between females and males would be legally recognized and allowed—has lead to height-ened debate on the subject nationwide. Opponents of Prop 8 argue that homosexuals should have the same right to legal marriage as heterosexual couples and that the state should not privilege one type of re-lational arrangement over another when defining marriage. Proponents of the ban posit that marriage by definition is a union between a man and a woman and a par-ticular quality to it that should not be equated with monogamously committed same-sex couples. Those supportive and critical of homosexual marriage incessantly argue with each other publicly and privately. Each hopes to sway the legal system and the broader cul-ture towards believing that what they are arguing for is right, just, and moral. Contingents in both camps debate as though they possess a universal moral certitude regarding their posi-tions. They maintain that through common sense and reason, any person should be able to see that their cause is clearly right. Nothing could be further from the truth.
Barack Obama is a positive step towards the goal of racial tolerance, the president himself recognizes, as Baldwin did, that freedom from racial barriers takes more time and mutual understanding between blacks and whites. He says, “We cannot be free until they are free.” Baldwin believes that the blinded sense of white rule is not caused by the incapacity of white people to understand what they have done to blacks in the past, but by an unwillingness to do so, a denial of wrong deeds. This is where innocence diverges from ignorance, and, according to Baldwin, “it is the innocence which constitutes the crime.”

Today, in a new era of change, the issue of race has still not magically disappeared. Though the election of President Barack Obama is a positive step towards the goal of racial tolerance, the president himself recognizes, as Baldwin did, that freedom from racial barriers takes more time. Obama said in his speech entitled “A More Perfect Union” that he has “never been so naive as to believe that we can get beyond our racial divisions in a single election cycle, or with a single candidacy.” Obama acknowledges that although racism is not as overt today as it has been in the past, it very much still exists—in the school systems, in neighborhoods, and in the criminal justice system to name a few.

Glen Loury, in his article titled “Why are so Many Americans in Prison? Race and the Transformation of Criminal Justice,” attempts to suggest racial inequality and its various forms. He found in 2007, for every white American who is unemployed, there are two unemployed black Americans. For every white child born to unmarried parents there are three black children born to unmarried parents. For every white infant that dies before they reach one year old, three black children die. For every white American incarcerated, there are eight incarcerated black Americans.

Racial Disparities: By the Numbers

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- For every white child born to unmarried parents there are three black children born to unmarried parents.
- For every white infant that dies before they reach one year old, three black children die.
- For every white American incarcerated, there are eight incarcerated black Americans.

Objective sense. He found in 2007, for every white person who was unemployed, two black people were in the same situation. For non-marital child bearing, the black-white ratio was 3-1, for infant mortality, 2-1, and for incarceration, 8-1. From these numbers we see that the issue of race is not completely in the past. But what, if anything, can be done to remedy these unfortunate statistics?

Baldwin’s solution for ridding the United States of racial inequality is love. To love is to show empathy, to imagine yourself in someone else’s place. Thus, the inclination to act would not be dependent on personal benefit, but rather on the basis of what is just. In addition, Baldwin thinks that he who calls for change must take the first step by removing his veil of innocence and “cease fleeing from reality and begin to change it.”

Complementing Baldwin is Loury’s belief that the key to getting rid of racial barriers is the possession of a moral imagination. He tells his readers, “Imagine that you could be born a black American male outcast shuffling between prison and the labor market on his way to an early death to the chorus of nigger or criminal or dummy. Suppose we had to stop thinking about us and them. What social rules would we pick if we actually thought that they could be us?” But it is not enough to simply realize that inequality exists; from this acknowledgment must come a genuine effort towards change.

So, is race history? In the sense that race is behind us, I think the answer is undoubtedly “no.” Although, as Obama points out, racism is far less overt than it has been in past eras, Loury’s statistics speak to the reality of the disparity between black and white in America today.

In this way, race defines history because we cannot separate our generation from the long tradition of inequality in our nation’s past, but it does not have to be a source of constraint. Inequality can be eliminated.

Baldwin’s solu...
Michael Palmer
Assistant Vice President for Community Affairs

Michael oversees the office that manages the Neighborhhood Partnership. A former deputy Durham County manager, he fosters productive relations between Duke and community groups and coordinates outside funding for partnership activities. He is Duke’s main liaison to Durham city and county government.

Sam Miglarese
Director of Community Engagement

Sam helps run the Neighborhood Partnership and directs the Duke-Durham Annual Campaign that helps the university raise funds. He manages a budget of $28 million and coordinates the partnerships activities.

What is the Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership’s mission?

Sam: Civic Engagement – a unique collaborative between the neighborhoods directly beyond Duke. It is a defining feature of what it means to be a Duke student. There is a bottom-up intersection from the students and also a top-down concern to create an environment that allows for good citizenship and a commitment to the community.

Michael: There are a few reasons why Duke wants to get involved in the community. First, for enlightened self-interest – the university is inextricably tied to its community and, so goes the community, so goes the college. Secondly, Duke students are the leaders of tomorrow, and they need to know the people that they are positioned to lead. This is achieved through service-learning engagement. Thirdly, the university needs to deal with global issues such as poverty.

What specific projects have you undertaken? How has the partnership, since its inception, improved the community’s realities?

Michael: We have developed a listening strategy – listen to the community and let them articulate the issues, and then you can figure out how to move their agenda.

From personal experience I know that the community sometimes responds adversely to Duke’s actions and feels that it does have a higher responsibility in the community’s future. How has the receptivity of the community been since 1996?

Michael: The response has been good for our work because of the consistency and the quality of the people we work with, both staff and students. I think that has helped us evolve a relationship that used to define Duke as a vaguely big thing out there. There is no Duke flag waving and saying, “Look what Duke did!” Instead it reads, “We were able to accomplish this with Duke’s support.”

Private higher education is a complex entity. While people assign to the university capabilities of wealth and privilege, most of the money is earmarked for specific purposes and the university does not necessarily have the ability to allocate a $30 million dollar donation in any way it sees fit.

Sam: We also have to raise money. Just like everyone else. The average Durham citizen is unaware that there are more than 300 student organization within the university that compete for funding. We don’t have unlimited resources. When we make certain decisions we have to constantly be thinking about funding resources.

Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership (DDNP)

What has been the feedback from Durham residents who have received support from Duke?

There is a mixed reaction. I don’t think Duke could resolve all the economic problems in Durham even if it wanted. Duke has been very generous in providing infrastructure in certain communities that have a need, but what has been missing is the ability to empower those same communities to maintain those services over time. Once Duke pulls out, those services are not sustainable anymore because the capacity to maintain them is not present in the community.

Has Duke been socially responsible?

Yes, in some areas, but there is also room for improvement. One essential factor is to get proactive interaction and planning between Duke leaders and various lay and clergy leaders in Durham, like Durham CAN achieves.

Do you feel that Duke has affected Durham polities, economics, etc.?

Duke is a big player in many different areas in terms of philanthropy, outreach and development. Sometimes there are open democratic conversations, but at other times those conversations have been difficult because of Duke’s self-interest. However, that is part of the world as it is.

The role of organizations like Durham CAN is to craft a space for discussion – to complete the 3-legged stool: government, private industry, community.
It is hard for me to judge how apathetic students are to the Duke Maintenance Staff. I don’t know if they’ve ever stopped to think about who cleans their dormitories after a weekend of hard partying, or if they’ve ever considered the force that magically makes their vomit on the bathroom floor go away.

I can’t say for sure that Duke students have never taken the time to meet the maintenance staff, nor can I assert that they don’t know their names or even what their faces look like. I don’t know what is true for Duke undergraduates as a whole, but I know what is true for me: I was guilty of all of the above, before I decided to take my camera and go meet Keith Jones and Shariffe Conley. These two individuals clean all five floors of Kilgo House—I where I reside—on Monday through Friday, starting at 7 am. They clean every shower stall and every toilet in every bathroom on those five floors. They clean the common rooms and the kitchens, the nooks and the hallways, and they do it all before most students return from the day’s classes.

I hope that these photos will help to give a face to those who so often are ignored.
Fuentes' tragic tale is just a glimpse into the harsh realities that many workers face under North Carolina's H-2A guestworker program. The H-2A program must immediately be reformed in order to curtail the rampant abuse and mistreatment of immigrant workers.

The H-2A program, in theory, is very valuable for both American employers and migrant workers. Through this program, the federal government authorizes the lawful importation of temporary or seasonal agricultural labor into the United States to perform temporary or seasonal agricultural labor. This visa directive is intended to provide "an efficient and secure program for farmers to legally fulfill their need for agricultural workers within the law rather than outside the law." It is especially concerning, then, that many ethically objectionable conditions exist not only for undocumented immigrants, but also for workers who have come to the U.S. through the governmentally endorsed means.

Over ten thousand of these foreign guestworkers work in North Carolina farms each year; more than in any other state in the country. In fact, the two-story metal warehouse in Vaas, NC, which every H-2A worker must pass through each growing season, is the nation's largest single distribution point for imported farm labor. Given the large number of H-2A workers situated in our state, it is an outrage that so many of these laborers continue to suffer from inhumane living and working conditions that escape the public eye.

The federal government is supposed to regulate the working conditions of H-2A farms, but many farm-owners flagrantly mistreat H-2A workers without fear of being penalized by authorities. A six-month investigation of the program revealed widespread complaints that some growers have refused their workers water in the fields; housed them in crumbling, rat-infested buildings in which sewage seeps up through the drains; denied workers medical care after exposing them to pesticides; and even threatened them at gunpoint.

Much of this injustice goes unreported and unnoticed by those outside the fields and farms. Because guestworkers are legally tied to a single employer, they are vulnerable to being deported to their home countries if they complain about worker protection violations.

The H-2A program must immediately be reformed in order to curtail the rampant abuse and mistreatment of immigrant workers. The government terminated the program in 1964 after a television documentary exposed squalid living and working conditions and ignited widespread public outcry. Today's H-2A program displays similar levels of maltreatment and exploitation. This program, like its WWII predecessor, must be eliminated if it continues to demonstrate such a propensity for abuse and neglect.

Drastic reforms in the government's regulation and enforcement of proper living and working conditions must immediately be enacted. The government must raise its standards for H-2A living and working conditions, as well as actively enforce such regulations. Workers must also be released from their tethers to a single employer, allowing them the opportunity to voice their objections to abuse or neglect. Such urgent measures are only the start of what must be a comprehensive investigation and reform of the H-2A guestworker program.

We cannot continue to turn a blind eye to this grave problem, and must respond with aggressive and effective measures that eradicate the exploitation that currently plagues the H-2A program.

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Beatrice Hahn has shown that both HIV-1 and HIV-2 are the offspring of Simian Immunodeficiency Viruses (SIVS), found in populations of chimps and sooty mangabeys respectively. Can we really risk introducing more of such horrendous diseases into the world?

So, why with all these ethical arguments against it, is everyone still eating apes? In a brilliant piece of writing, Peterson drops the anvil on two groups who are not usually associated together: the usual suspect, Big Logging, and the surprise, Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN).

Big Logging companies (CIB, SIBAF, etc.) have been the notorious villains around the world for ages. They are famous for ravaging nature without concern for the consequences. Moreover, this practice is not limited to a handful of impoverished farmers. Dale Peterson, in his book *Eating Apes*, tells us that there are a host of other actors implicated. Peterson raises questions such as, where do the guns and ammunition used to hunt the apes come from? How do the hunters get into pristine (and sometimes protected) forests? Why are they killing far more than is necessary for subsistence? How does the meat end up in the city markets? And finally the big question, who is actually eating the apes?

Before he answers these questions, however, Peterson first explores what exactly is wrong with eating apes. Is it that they are our closest relatives, and the ordeal fairly reeks of cannibalism?

Chimps share over 98% of our genetic code, and exhibit many of our ‘human’ characteristics—too many, eating something so close to a human being is like eating another human.

Chimps share over 98% of our genetic code, and exhibit many of our ‘human’ characteristics such as theory of mind and awareness of self. To many, eating something so close to a human being is like eating another human, and thus morally wrong. On the other hand, let it be known by some accounts that we also share 50% of our genetic code with bananas, and we sure eat a lot of them. Maybe the ethical issue is that in some situations, there may be fewer than four hundred individuals of a species remaining in the wild. Eating apes, without regard to their population numbers or reproductive rate, as is currently being done, risks sending them the way of the dodo.

When we lose the gorilla, the chimp, or the bonobo, we are once again burning the proverbial Library at Alexandria.

Furthermore, the roots of many super-diseases, including Ebola and HIV, have been traced back to origins in the primate order. In *Eating Apes*, Peterson gives multiple accounts of hunters who happened upon a “mysteriously” dead gorilla and, upon butchering and eating the carcass, developed symptoms of Ebola. Similarly, groundbreaking epidemiological research by

**Sources:**