Across:
4 - Early release from prison due to good conduct (p. 34)
8 - Practice widely observed in society (p. 24)
9 - Ethical clothing brand sold in Duke Stores (p. 6)
13 - Colloquial Swahili for “white person” (p. 16)
14 - Informal carpooling (p. 18)
16 - Instructive, untaught (p. 34)
18 - Chinese social networking site (p. 26)
20 - Tendency to ignore evidence that goes against our beliefs (p. 34)
21 - Intercity transit company selling trips for $1 (p. 18)
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2 - Philosopher mentioned in Call to Duty article, deontologist (p. 24)
3 - Sole survivor of Lt. Murphy's Navy SEAL Team (p. 24)
5 - Not holding either of two opposing opinions (p. 8)
6 - Activist movement that started in NYC's financial district (p. 26)
7 - To deprive of human qualities (p. 28)
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10 - Runner featured in Nike's “History Stands” campaign (p. 10)
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19 - Capacity to identify with another's feelings (p. 28)
22 - Comic book about a fictional STD (p. 5)
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.
Earlier this fall, our attention was drawn to the labs deep in Geneva’s underground as the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) announced what could become one of the most striking discoveries in modern physics. While few of us knew the true potential implications of the finding of the experiment, all of us were mesmerized with the story of neutrino particles arriving at their destination sixty nanoseconds earlier than light.

What is sixty nanoseconds? A second is comprised of over 16 million 60-nanosecond-long intervals. A nanosecond is to a second as a second is to over 31 years. Tough to wrap your mind around these numbers, isn’t it? Yet, something so small, seemingly insignificant as one sixteen-millionth of a second has the potential to completely overturn our whole understanding of the physical world.

Encompass Magazine encourages its readers to seek out all the instances of ethics that take place around them and realize that little escapes the reach of ethical discourse. The CERN discovery propels us to consider changing the scale of this examination. We have shared with our audience the ethical intricacies of dating and relationships. The CERN discovery propels us to consider changing the scale of this examination.

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Next time you face a choice, we challenge you to pause for a nanosecond and really consider the impact of your decision. It may be more powerful than you think.
The Living Wage Problem

what the ‘devil’ are we going to do about it?

By Athira Nair ’12
Women’s Studies

Matthew Vargas and Elba Nurys believe there is a problem with apparel factories in the Dominican Republic and that Duke University students could be key to solving it. Vargas and Nurys are two Dominican women who are traveling to universities across America to raise awareness about the working conditions for women in the Dominican apparel industry and to create support for the forward-thinking apparel factory they now work at, Alta Gracia. Alta Gracia’s mission is to provide its workers with living wages. Although the living wage problem may seem impossible to solve because of conflicting corporate, consumer, and worker interests that must be reconciled, universities could be the key to developing a solution.

Vargas and Nurys used to work at the BJ&B textile factory in the Dominican Republic, and they allege that the management engaged in illegal practices that created inhumane working conditions for the mainly female employees. First, despite Dominican laws forbidding persons under the age of 18 from working, BJ&B employed children. In 2003, BJ&B signed a contract allowing unions to form. In response, United Students Against Sweatshops and Worker Rights Consortium began pressuring Nike and Adidas to force BJ&B to respect worker rights and allow the workers to unionize. However, BJ&B fired several factory workers for forming a union. In order for Alta Gracia to survive, university students need to purchase their products.

Historically, students have played major roles in obtaining labor rights for apparel factory workers. In 2003, BJ&B fired several factory workers for forming a union. In response, United Students Against Sweatshops and Worker Rights Consortium began pressuring Nike and Adidas to force BJ&B to respect worker rights and allow the workers to unionize. In 2003, BJ&B signed a contract allowing workers to unionize. However, textile factories like BJ&B depend on contracts from apparel brands like Nike to stay in business. In order to mitigate the potential profit loss, retailers have to spend more money on promotional campaigns. Alta Gracia retailers rely heavily on promotional campaigns in order to support sales. There are tags attached to the label of t-shirts that read, “Your purchase will demonstrate that apparel factories don’t have to create poor working conditions in order to produce and remain profitable.”

In order for Alta Gracia to survive, university students need to purchase their products. In order to provide workers with a living wage, which is 3.8 times what competing textile factories in the Dominican Republic pay its workers, Alta Gracia pays 20% more than a competitor does to produce the same t-shirt. However, Knights Apparel absorbs this increase in cost so that the consumer does not have to. Since Alta Gracia is less known than competitor brands like Nike in the first place, increasing the prices of apparel makes sales even more difficult. In order to mitigate the potential profit loss, retailers have to spend more money on promotional campaigns. Alta Gracia retailers rely heavily on promotional campaigns in order to support sales. There are tags attached to the label of t-shirts that read, “Your purchase will change our lives.” Retailers want to build sales by making customers feel like they are doing the right thing by supporting Alta Gracia instead of other brands.

(continued on the next page...)

“...In order for Alta Gracia to survive, university students need to purchase their products.”
Made in a FREE WORLD

You can now help eliminate slavery with the press of a button. A new app called Free World by Slavery Footprint can help consumers track how many forced laborers were involved in the production of everything from their t-shirts to their coffee. After surveying users about their consumption habits, the free app helps them draft letters to the companies about their use of slave labor. It also lets users check into a brand when shopping to see if they use slaves, share info about slavery on Facebook and Twitter by checking in at stores that use slavery, and earn Free World points to counteract their own slavery footprint.

However, it doesn’t make suggestions about brands to switch to; “We wanted to make the application brand-agnostic because this is an issue that is affecting everyone,” says Ambassador Luis CideBaca of the State Department’s Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, who helped develop the app. “There is not a company out there that isn’t tied up in this in some way.”

But the lack of a quick fix hasn’t dampened the appeal of the app to consumers. The day of its launch, a tidal wave of traffic crashed the app’s website for most users. But the lack of a quick fix hasn’t dampened the appeal of the app to consumers. The day of its launch, a tidal wave of traffic crashed the app’s website for most of the day. This app may not be the ultimate fix, but it does bring us one step closer to the ultimate goal: a label that says Made in a Free World.

Check out more at http://www.good.is/post/can-social-media-end-modern-slavery/

EVEN IF ALTA GRATACIA succeeds and provides living wages to its employees, it remains to be seen whether it is a sustainable model that the rest of the textile industry can copycat.

sustain the cost of providing living wages to employees without cutting back on hours or increasing the retail cost of the product. Should governments create more laws regulating working conditions and living wages and enforce them stringently? According to Jim Wilkerson, the Director of Trademark Licensing and Store Operations at Duke University, many countries have stricter labor laws than the United States has. However, governments don’t enforce these laws stringently due to a lack of resources and due to fear that companies will outsource elsewhere. When companies find they cannot procure cheap labor with few restrictions in one country, they often outsource labor to another country. After all, when Nike stopped contracting work to BJ&B after labor practices there improved, BJ&B was forced to close. Perhaps there is a solution to the problem that will not place any country at a competitive disadvantage. Alta Gracia’s objective is to demonstrate that high-margin brands and retailers can absorb the increase in production costs associated with providing employees with living wages.

Other than the textile factory workers themselves, it is not in the immediate self-interest of corporate, consumer, or government stakeholders to take the corrective action they are theoretically capable of. However, Wilkerson says that apparel consumers do not make purchases based on a narrow concept of their economic self-interest. Research has revealed that consumers make complex decisions involving numerous practical, aesthetic and emotional factors and most consumers want to feel good about the things they buy. Wilkerson believes that Alta Gracia’s early success demonstrates that consumers will gravitate toward products that claim to be made in an ethical manner. Furthermore, he thinks that the apparel industry recognizes that working conditions and the living wage are essential issues. Even if Alta Gracia succeeds and provides living wages to its employees, it remains to be seen whether it is a sustainable model that the rest of the textile industry can copycat. Ultimately, it may be up to universities to not only support Alta Gracia financially but to develop a sustainable solution by thinking outside of the box of current economic practice.
In August 2011, the international governing body for track and field, the IAAF, ruled that female marathon runners will no longer be eligible to set a world record if they run a qualifying time while being paced by a man in a co-ed race, or in a race in which the women started behind the men. Not only will this policy be in effect from here on out, but it will also be applied retroactively, stripping women of world records set in races can run with men. As a result, the new rules take over two-minutes off the current world record time. In response to this, Nike initiated a campaign featuring world record holder Paula Radcliffe and the rallying slogan, “You can change the rules, but you can’t change history.”

Nike’s “ATHLETE” campaign in 2007 is another positive outreach example. Their tagline, “Athlete. Gender doesn’t define greatness. Create does,” fought against the tradition to call a woman who is an athlete a “female athlete” while merely calling men who are athletes “athletes.” Nike created television spots and distributed “ATHLETE” shirts to their sponsored sports stars.

Even more recently than their response to the IAAF’s ruling, Nike sponsored a week of events around National Coming Out Day. The corporation decorated its offices with colorful posters explaining what it means to be homosexual on a TV that advocated for making sports a safe and empowering space for LGBTQ individuals, organized talks and donated tens of thousands of dollars to an organization that trains Portland, Oregon-based coaches and PE teachers on ways to make their teams and classes inclusive for students of varying sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions.

These socially-aware initiatives led by Nike’s campaigns that do good things? A Deontologist would say yes if it is morally reprehensible to deprive workers of a living wage and to fail to provide adequate working conditions, then Nike as a corporation is unethical. On the other hand, what if it was possible to do a Utilitarian account of Nike’s ethical practices vs. its unethical ones? When Utilitarianism upholds the ethic of ‘the greatest good for the greatest number,’ if Nike helps more people than it hurts, does that equation solidify the corporation as ethical? And what if every responsible campaign was just a marketing gimmick? Neither conclusion is satisfactory. The ethics of corporate conduct cannot be approached as a black and white delineation. In making a purchase, consumers have to choose which issues to support with their purchasing power. When you buy your next pair of Nike Tempo shorts at an off-campus Nike retailer, you may be supporting a low standard of living for factory workers in Indonesia, but you may also be supporting feminism and female empowerment in athletics. Ultimately, a corporation’s ethical image is determined by what the consumer can stomach, be sold by, or maybe just ignore. Is that ethical? It’s your call.

...if NIKE HELPS MORE PEOPLE THAN IT HURTS, DOES THAT EQUATION SOLIDIFY THE CORPORATION AS ETHICAL?

In 2009, two factories in Honduras subcontracted to produce Nike apparel closed and failed to pay the severance package of healthcare and vocational training required by Honduran law to their workers. Alongside a United Students Against Sweatshops campaign, a student petition collected signatures of 1,100 signatures against Cornell’s Nike licensing contract in response to the refusal to cover worker severance, and the University of Wisconsin, Madison ended its agreement with Nike altogether as a result. In 2010, Nike agreed to pay $1.54 million dollars to the Honduran workers who lost their jobs.1 The outcome of the Honduran labor practices campaign was just a marketing gimmick?

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A patient comes in complaining of dizziness. I am concerned that they need an MRI after talking with them. Their particular insurance won’t pay for an MRI unless I am able to check 2 complaints on a preprinted diagnosis list and it does not necessitate one. So I can check for this patient. Do I lie and check “headache” also to get them their MRI? That particular insurance will let me obtain an MRI after a CT if I still want it then. Of course I wish I already knew I need an MRI. Do I just get the CT first then, in the name of honesty, knowing I am adding a wasted $700 to the cost of healthcare in America and the added burden of deductible and wasted time to the patient personally?

We have samples of a topical NSAID (like ibuprofen without the stomach discomfort) given to us by a drug company representative to give our patients and promote their product. My mother has arthritis and could use some, but she wouldn’t buy this expensive brand name medication herself and in her desire for independence wouldn’t let me buy it for her. Is it wrong to send this “free” sample to her? She’s not a patient of mine. It was given to me to use, but not without implied reciprocity of benefit between giver and receiver which I negate by giving it to someone outside this loop. I also don’t have a license to give out medicine/treat in the state my mother resides.

Little did I know that my 25 years in school and medical training would leave me with so many questions yet to be answered. Is the road to doctor’s hell paved with good intentions? Do we always believe we are doing the right thing, even in the depths of our wrong? Can facing moral ambiguities turn a good person into someone they never wanted to be?

One thing I have learned, though, is that there are a lot of rules involved in practicing medicine. Most of them are good and even necessary to the practice, but there are times when it seems like the rules and the best interests of the patient are at odds. And what is a conscientious doctor to do then? Let me explain my struggle.

First of all, I am dedicated to my patients. I’ve given up countless weekends, pooled and profited people on three continents, lived on a salary equivalent to that of a fast food manager, fallen asleep at a patient’s bedside, vehemently argued with doctors and nurses about patients’ care, written short stories about patients’ lives that are more fascinating than mine could ever be, and even played with their children during my breaks. I love spending time with patients, sensing the momentum of their lives, discovering the subtleties and idiosyncrasies of each one. I strive to be a sensitive and informed advocate when it comes to matters of health.

But as you will see from the following examples, oftentimes my good intentions to help a patient run into obstacles along the way.

A Ukrainian-speaking man is visiting his daughter in graduate school at Duke and has what is determined to be neuromuscular left hip pain after she pays for an out-of-pocket workaround since he is without insurance and does not have the medical specialty resources near his Ukrainian village to assess and treat his particular diagnosis. The medications he needs will not be available once he returns. Is it wrong to write prescriptions in her name that she can fill here and send to him? Is he not still morally my patient once he leaves? Is it a different answer if the medication is just a stronger long-acting version of Aleve versus a low-level cousin of morphine?

“. . . wanting to do the right thing all the time seems so overwhelming when I stop and consider the hundreds of small decisions I have to make every day.”

How do all my good intentions turn darker and darker? What began as a good-natured attempt to help a fellow human being turns into a complicated, confusing moral dilemma with no easy way out. Any way I choose to act will have its own ethical pitfalls, but I am willing to accept them?

I admit that I do not have any definitive answers. I am in the middle of being part of the answer—of living the answer. If there is anything that I have learned from this process it is that engaging with ethics is a hard road. Wanting to do the right thing becomes infinitely more complicated when confronted with a moral dilemma that yields no clear “right” or “wrong” path. But beyond that, wanting to do the right thing all the time seems so overwhelming when I stop and consider the hundreds of small decisions I have to make every day.

On any given day in my practice I see between 12 and 20 patients, get 50 messages regarding some degree of patient care, receive phone calls from other doctors about patient referrals, interpret EEGs, MRIs, EMG/NCSs, and squeeze in a conversation with pharmaceutical representatives during my 10-minute lunch break. I believe that doctors are not turned one way or the other because they make a critical decision every now and again; rather, doctors are being constantly shaped, little-by-little, by just these kinds of interactions made on a daily basis. So I worry: What are all these small decisions amounting to? Might my daily dilemmas eventuate into a much larger moral failure if I develop in the wrong way? Will I look back one day and realize I was not the kind of doctor I always dreamed of becoming?

The Gospel of Matthew reads: “Heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree...” I like to think of my everyday practice of neurology as a kind of mustard seed: it starts out with the tiniest decision, but over time, as I nurture the seed and more and more small decisions must be made, the miniscule seed grows to become the largest of trees. My job, as a conscientious doctor, is to ensure that the tree which emerges will be a good and a healthy one.

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WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

We asked Duke pre-med students to consider what they would do had they been in Dr Kirk’s shoes and encountered some of the dilemmas he had to face in the workplace.

WHAT YEAR ARE YOU?

- Freshman: 35%
- Sophomore: 25%
- Junior: 15%
- Senior: 25%

ARE YOU PLANNING TO GET A MEDICAL DEGREE IN THE FUTURE?

- Yes: 85%
- No: 15%

HOW OFTEN DO YOU EXPECT TO MAKE TOUGH ETHICAL DECISIONS IN THE WORKPLACE?

- All the time: 5%
- Often: 55%
- Sometimes: 35%
- Rarely: 5%

IMAGINE you have samples of an ibuprofen-like medication in your office. Your mom has arthritis, yet is unwilling to spend money on this (expensive) drug and will not let others buy it for her. She is not a patient of yours (and isn’t even in the state which you practice in). Is it wrong to send some of these “free” samples to her?

- “No, she is your mother. Family comes before law.”
- “It may be unethical; it’s by no means fair, but my concern for the well-being of those close to me would definitely outweigh any reservations I had about giving someone close to me free samples.”
- “It doesn’t seem wrong: they are free so it is perfectly ethical.”
- “It is wrong for a doctor to give free medication to a personal relation when there are clearly plenty of individuals who can’t afford the same drug, especially when a physician should treat every patient with equal care.”
- “I would not send these “free” samples to her. If I did this, I would be acting in the conflict of interest with the company supplying these samples, the patients I treat, and the practice I am working for and representing.”

case1

...In medicine the patient’s wellbeing is of utmost importance.

case2

SUPPORT an insurance company will only cover costs for a drug if the patient demonstrates that it takes them longer than 8 seconds yet less than 45 seconds to walk 25 feet. A patient of yours walks it in 48 seconds. Are you justified in bending the truth to get them the medication?

- “You are justified in bending the truth if you are completely sure that the drug will have a positive impact on the patient. There should be no potential negative ramifications for the patient.”
- “It is not right to lie in order to get a patient medication under insurance. While it may seem to be alright in a single, isolated instance because nobody is truly being hurt (while somebody is being helped), this idea doesn’t hold up if everybody were to lie in order to get their claims covered by health insurance. This would only lead to a general increase in insurance premiums.”
- “Yes, the report is at my discretion and I can factor in “outside reasons” why the patient walked in 48 seconds, or I may make them “take it again” and get the desired result.”
- “I would encourage the patient to walk it again, and emphasize that they should try to speed up. But I wouldn’t bend the truth.”

...A physician should treat every patient with equal care.”
spent last summer in my home country, Kenya, doing DukeEngage. Before I left for Kenya in June 2011, the program director talked to me about some of the challenges that I might experience while in Muhuru Bay where the program was being held. I mostly dismissed these warnings; after all, I am Kenyan and have lived in Kenya all my life except for the past two years when I came to Duke to study. What could I possibly come across this summer that I had never encountered before?

But much to my surprise, most of the ‘interesting’ experiences of my time in DukeEngage occurred on the fact that I am Kenyan. To some villagers in Muhuru Bay, I was one of them, while to some others, I was this guy that looks like them but occasionally carries himself like a mzungu (literally meaning “white man,” but also used to refer to someone of a higher social status than you). To the other DukeEngagers, officially, I was one of them, but in some instances, I am sure they considered me more like the local. Thus I spent my summer mentally drifting from one group to the other and at times trying to convince myself that I couldn’t fit in either of the two groups. However, getting stuck between the two groups wasn’t always a hard experience. It afforded me the opportunity to observe how the Duke students and the residents of Muhuru Bay interacted with each other. Seeing my fellow program participants grapple with their new environment provided me some moments of laughter. On the first night in Muhuru Bay, I could see in their faces expressions of happiness for having finally made it to Kenya and for their readiness to embark on their projects. Yet I could also see hints of anxiety that come with being in an environment that is completely different from the ones that they were used to. The thoughts of having to use pit latrines at night, taking a shower in a bathroom with no roof, everyone living in one room with uncomfortable bunk beds, and having to deal with the many bugs that swarmed our dorm room when we turned on the lights were just too much for some of them during the first few days.

However, as the days went by, they adjusted and eventually felt at home with the place and made good friends among the residents of Muhuru Bay. On the other hand, those residents of Muhuru Bay who were eager to work with us had some adjusting to do too. This ranged from learning the hard names of our dorm room when we turned on the lights, to sharing the tattered textbook with five other students. Certainly, if a Duke student had come to my school in those days, I wouldn’t have hesitated to ask them for a textbook. The point somehow was that no one of the students requested me to leave her water bottle. As I was about to find a way of getting a water bottle for some of them during the first few days, I remembered my prized Boston College t-shirt that I got from a visiting student when I was in high school. Needless to say, I gave her my water bottle. This phenomenon of asking for goods was rather new to me and made me feel like a mzungu. While showing me around the village, one of my friends showed me a nice house that belonged to a fellow student of mine who used to judge Kenyan men for the way they dressed. When she showed me into the house, some former Duke students had helped her friend build the house. He then told me that the money he had earned during his time at Duke allowed him to do that. I was happy to see that student could do business with it and that he should be the fundraising bridge between him and the other Duke students. That had me sweating. How could I possibly refuse to perform such a task that could go to a good foreign university like I do. It made me ask myself what special thing I had done that had inspired another student to go to a good school, and me to Duke. It made me wonder about the students who couldn’t go to a good foreign university like I do. It made me ask myself what special thing I had done that had inspired another student to go to a good school, and me to Duke. It made me wonder about the students who couldn’t go to a good foreign university like I do. It made me ask myself what special thing I had done that had inspired another student to go to a good school, and me to Duke. It made me wonder about the students who couldn’t go to a good foreign university like I do. It made me ask myself what special thing I had done that had inspired another student to go to a good school, and me to Duke.

Gender dynamics also put me in a difficult situation throughout the duration of the program. Before we left for Kenya, our program director went into great depth about the role of women in the Kenyan society. I could see the difficulties that the girls face due to the beliefs of Kenyan men. As these hardships and inequalities were confirmed one by one, I felt as if my friends saw me through the same lens that they used to judge Kenyan men for the way they treat women. These instances still remain clear in my mind.

The first is how I was initially very reluctant to take the whole group to my home. Although I had already told some of them that I come from a polygamous household, I was somehow still afraid of actually letting them into my home. I guess in the back of my mind, I felt the need to shield them from the harsh realities of my family. The second incident was when one of the students requested me to leave her water bottle. I then stopped to talk to a villager in Muhuru Bay. After inquiring where my friends were, she asked me how much they were paying me to be their driver.

Did my experience in Kenya make me a better global citizen as DukeEngage aspires to do? I am not sure how much my interaction with both cultures has helped me adopt culture and the culture I grew up in. Through the gaffes I made, I learned how to live with two groups of people whose cultures I understand without leaning too much towards one particular group. The experiences I went through also taught me how to navigate the gray cultural areas that are bound to cause a lot of friction with a host society during such immersive service programs like DukeEngage.
Question: Why did the chicken cross the road?
Answer: To get to the other side.

I’m sure you’ve heard this one before—it’s the generic joke of generic jokes. But have you ever examined the question? What was on the other side? How large was the road? When did the chicken cross the road? Forget the chicken’s, we can’t ignore the context beyond the simple definition of a network of roads, intersections, and freeways. Availability transportation options determine a person’s ability to attend school, exercise, shop at a supermarket, visit the doctor, and travel to work. A lack of efficient alternatives to automobile travel disproportionately affects vulnerable populations such as the poor, the elderly, people with disabilities, and children by limiting access to jobs, health care, social interactions, and healthy foods.

Consider the function of a road. In theory, you might say roads are built to serve people. However, unless you live in Europe or in such pedestrian- and bicycle-crazed anomalies like Portland, Oregon—or perhaps under a rock—you will find that, in reality, roads function to serve cars. A seven-lane roadway with a design speed of seventy miles per hour cannot cater to foot traffic the way it can cater to a minimum full of internauts. Until we recognize this distinction, the design of our transportation system may be costing us our health and quality of life.

Transportation is more than moving high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane, allowing the driver to meet the 3-occupant limit to travel in the lower-traffic, faster-moving high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane, and the rider gets a free ride in the vicinity of his or her destination.

Ethical Transportation? Check out these unique transportation options that reduce traffic, save gas, and maybe even protect the polar bears...

Slogging
Reminiscent of hitchhiking, this organized form of a free ride is in a stranger’s car to get to the desired destination has been online in the D.C. metro area since 1975. Riders form informal carpool by queuing at a bus stop or another unofficial yet locally known location and wait for a driver traveling in the same direction to stop. The symbolic system allows the driver to meet the 3-occupant limit to travel in the lower-traffic, faster-moving high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane, and the rider gets a free ride in the vicinity of his or her destination.

Curbside Intercity Buses
Ever ridden the Megabus to D.C? Curbside Intercity Buses, the first to erupt onto the transportation scene with no precedent and are rapidly changing the game for short-trip travel. These bus routes have no terminal and have largely gained in popularity thanks to word of mouth and on-line presence, not to mention Megabus’s starting price of $1 for a one-way trip. It was found that curbside intercity bus transit reduced fuel consumption by 11 million gallons annually in car trips not taken
Bridging the Gap between People and Places in El Salvador

By Jennifer Hewitt
Biomedical Engineering, ‘14

The academic year prior to the trip consisted mostly of fundraising, working on the bridge design, and communicating with communities. We were fortunate enough to become acquainted with an NGO called Bridges to Prosperity (B2P), whose sole mission is to “provide isolated communities with access to essential healthcare, education and economic opportunities by building footbridges over impassable rivers.” With the help of B2P, we were able to undertake two bridge projects in neighboring communities. Both communities are very rural farming communities, one called La Hacienda Corinto and the other called Guadalupe. The communities are just outside Zaragoza, which is about 15 kilometers from the coast and 20 kilometers from San Salvador, the nation’s capital.

As a team of ten Duke Engineering students, we departed for El Salvador in May feeling prepared but not fully knowing what to expect. On the first day of work, I was handed a shovel and told to dig a ditch. Shovelful by shovelful, I dug what began to feel like my own grave. “What is this digging for? What is the purpose?” I rationalized that I had no idea what the bridge-building process was like, and I started to wonder if any of us knew what we were doing. We had all read through the instructions manuals that B2P sent us, but everything seemed so different now that we were actually on the ground. We knew the basics—the suspended footbridges consisted of four cables strung over two towers on opposing sides of the river. Two cables would act as handrail cables while the other two would be used to support the wooden decking. Beyond that, the details were hazy to me.

I worried that we wouldn’t have enough time to finish, or that at some point during construction something would go wrong that would impede the completion of the bridges. The community members were counting on us, though, after all, we had promised them two bridges.

Although the work didn’t get easier, we quickly figured out what we were doing. There are a lot of intricate components that go into building a bridge—tedious little tasks that I never would have considered. We had to apply water sealant to every piece of wood used for the decking of the bridge. Then, we individually measured, marked, and drilled holes in each piece where the suspend reinforcement bars, which connect the wood to the cables of the bridge, would go through. The reinforce-

ments were hand-cut individually so we could bend them precisely in the correct place—otherwise the bridges wouldn’t fit through the wood properly! The process was even more stressful because we had ordered just enough material for the bridge—one mistake could mean not having enough metal bars to complete the project. Luckily for us, we had B2P there to guide the process.

Eventually, all the steps fell together, and we were able to complete both bridges on time. Although the bridge building itself was a great experience, I got a lot more out of our interactions with the community. I was amazed by the giving nature of the communities we were working in. The maestro who helped us with the bridges invited us over to his family’s shop for lunch multiple times and would never let us pay. Another woman who lives near one of the bridges went out of her way to offer us a bag full of freshly picked mangoes from a tree in her yard. Yet another man and his wife would occasionally bring chicken and soup to us during our lunch break, always making sure we had plenty to eat.

For us, the project was just a two-month commitment. We entered with a plan and a goal, and had accomplished our task as promised. For the communities, however, the project will have a long-standing impact, and we recently received news that the bridges are being put to good use this rainy season. Where these floods once would have disrupted daily life in these communities, now they do not so much as cause a slight disturbance in the communities.

The need for bridges—even domestically—is something that people often overlook. According to Transportation for America, “98,233 bridges—11.5 percent of total highway bridges in the U.S.—are classified as ‘structurally deficient,’ requiring significant maintenance, rehabilitation or replacement.” If the United States, a fully developed country, has this high of a percentage of dilapidated bridges, one can only imagine how severe bridge issues are in rural communities like the ones we worked with in El Salvador.

For Summer 2012, DEED has two more bridge projects: one in the same region of El Salvador and another in collaboration with B2P in Bolivia. While the need for footbridges far exceeds our ability to build them, we’re doing all we can to contribute to these underserved areas. Bridge by bridge, we’re improving mobility, and if that’s not opening possibilities, then I don’t know what is.
Imagine that all the books you read and all the purchases you made were monitored every second of every day. Imagine that all the books you read and all the purchases you made were monitored every second of every day. If you were monitored like this, would you feel secure enough to continue reading and shopping online?

The fragility of Kindle consumers’ privacy surfaced in July of 2009 with the availability of the new Kindle Fire. The bookstore owner then decided she needed the book back and broke into her customers’ house, took the book, and left $.99 on the kitchen table! “Imagine if a customer purchased a (real) book from a bookstore in the non-digital world. The bookstore owner then decided she needed the book back and broke into her customer’s house, took the book, and left $.99 on the kitchen table!”

In the digital era, a single company can control all publication, as such media is only accessible given the proper device (Kindle). Already, it is estimated Amazon’s Kindle holds 70-80% of the e-reader market. As consumers shift towards digital media, this translates into a growing market, raising a degree of their concern to access media from various sources.

In the wake of the Kindle Fire, a new backlash of ethical concerns arises. The new device will not only offer access to books, periodicals, and magazines, but also aims to compete with the Apple iPad, by offering movies, TV Series and game downloads. Amazon is upgrading Kindle to a new browser, “Amazon Silk,” which it boasts makes downloads occur in less than 60 seconds. This will allow Amazon to capture data for every web page visited and every transaction, enhancing Amazon’s data collection. Amazon Silk will not only store owners’ browsing and purchase history, but will also receive information about competing websites and where consumers are going for price comparisons. In effect, users of the new Kindle Fire will aid Amazon in collecting consumers’ private information; while at the same time further the company’s efforts to control the digital media market. This leads to the issue of a single company manipulating how media is presented and distributed. Specifically, the Kindle only allows users to use media purchased from the Amazon Store. This highlights a potentially negative aspect of digital media accessibility, as consumers will become dependent on a single technology. Paper provides a physical medium for ideas to spread—one can publish a printed document. Though more accessible, potentially aiding world literacy and education initiatives. However, there remains the implication that a fairly limited number of companies are controlling and violating what would otherwise be considered, consumer privacy. While it would be unrealistic to argue that consumers should gravitate back towards traditional printed media sources, buyers should demand the revision of digital media laws and regulations. In respect to the right of privacy of its consumers, Amazon, or any other company, should not be allowed to store its patrons’ Internet browsing and purchase history. Furthermore, the freedom to publish and access media should not be over-shadowed by the capitalist prerogatives of e-Book providers.

Consumerism can go in two directions if e-shoppers pay closer attention to their purchases. One direction is for the artist to own, but simply licensed, by the consumer. This affects the rates paid to the artists and has implications for what the customer can do with their songs and videos from the iTunes store.

“Kindle Fire users will have the option to shut off the extra Internet capability, though all purchases must be done through the server.”


Stone, Brad. “Amazon ERases Orwell Books From Kindle. Evil Yoda via flickr

Google, too, has received criticism for its privacy practices; in 2007, Privacy International made Google the only company to receive their lowest “Hostile to Privacy” ranking. One of the largest issues is the placement of long-timed cookies that track a person’s search history, and particularly the concern that under current U.S. law, Google can be forced to hand over this information to the government. In 2009, Google’s CEO, Eric Schmidt, replied to concerns about privacy by stating, “If you have something that you don’t want anyone to know, maybe you shouldn’t be doing it in the first place.”

http://news.cnet.com/2100-1029_3-6026542.html

Forbes. This affects the rates paid to the artists and has implications for what the customer can do with their songs and videos from the iTunes store.


** Imagine if a customer purchased a (real) book from a bookstore in the non-digital world. The bookstore owner then decided she needed the book back and broke into her customer’s house, took the book, and left $.99 on the kitchen table! **

Amazon is not the only company to come under fire for violating customers’ privacy.

Despite its popularity, Apple has not escaped the heat when it comes to privacy and copyright issues. In 2006, as an upgrade to the iTunes software that provided a “MiniStore” feature to provide music recommendations drew criticism for sending information about customers’ playlists that was linked to the users’ unique iTunes account ID. In 2010, the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that songs downloaded from the iTunes store are not owned, but simply licensed, by the customer. This affects the rates paid to the artists and has implications for what the customer can do with their songs and videos from the iTunes store.


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Quick—make a decision. You and three other Navy SEALs have been placed deep behind enemy lines in the Hindu Kush Mountains of Afghanistan, which is full of Taliban insurgents. Suddenly, despite your best efforts at concealment, three goat herders with about 100 goats discover you. They claim that they are not part of the Taliban, but you can’t be sure. Worse still, you have no rope to tie them up with and your radio can’t reach the headquarters. As the mission leader, you realize you only have two choices: kill the goat herders silently or let them go and risk getting discovered by the Taliban. What should you do?

This scenario is not fiction but the actual choice faced by Lt. Murphy and his SEAL team in March 2008. Unlike most professionals, a military officer is constantly confused with situations that are not only morally ambiguous but also could mean life or death for the people he leads. How then does one make the ‘right’ decision? Lt. Murphy let the goat herders go. As a result, over 80 Taliban insurgents attacked his squad, killing him and all but one of his squad mates. Did he make the right decision?

To answer this question, the Naval officer is guided by military law such as the Geneva Convention and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. In his approach to all critical questions, an officer must first consider the legal implications. For example, the Geneva Convention specifically prohibits killing unarmed civilians. However, like many things in life, the interpretations of these laws are far from clear. Lt. Murphy had no way to verify if the goat herders he discovered were harmless civilians or Taliban spies. All he could do was make an educated guess and go from there.

Fortunately, a Naval officer is not helpless in these situations. To help address the ambiguity, a Naval officer is exposed to training and a broad range of ethical discourse. It is here that he or she is exposed to Kant, utilitarianism, natural law, stoicism and more, giving him a moral framework for making decisions. Furthermore, upon commissioning, every officer swears allegiance to defend and support the Constitution of the United States to the best of his ability. At the end of the day, it is not a single theory that wins out, but rather a careful contemplation of the variables of each unique situation that leads to a decision.

For Lt. Murphy, the decision was far from easy. But, after over an hour of debate with his team, he decided to let the goat herders go. For him and his team, killing the goat herders went against the team’s morality and the spirit of the Constitution. Although he could have justified his actions, stating that he was just fulfilling his mission’s orders, Lt. Murphy felt that something was wrong with killing the goat herders in cold blood. As Marcus Luttrell, the lone survivor of the squad stated, “My Christian soul was whispering something in the back of my mind. It would be wrong to execute these unarmed men in cold blood. And the idea of doing that and then covering our tracks and sneaking away like criminals, denying everything, would make it worse.”

For the members of Lt. Murphy’s SEAL team, ethics was not in the realm of irony towering pondering. It was about real, difficult choices that they had to stake their lives on. Yet, despite deadly implications, they still decided to spare the goat herders’ lives, knowing that killing the goat herders would undermine everything they were fighting for. Killing the goat herders might have made their own lives much safer, but it would send the wrong message to the rest of the world. If the Taliban and media got word of a civilian murder in cold blood, the fallout would be terrible. Furthermore, fighting for justice and freedom while only selectively applying it seemed hypocritical.

This is the example a Naval officer tries to follow, and it also illustrates the unique challenge of being an officer. Although they are technically only bound by their legal obligations, the nature of the job often requires officers to make ethical decisions in an ambiguous environment. If a Naval officer truly takes his oath seriously, he realizes that he is bound not only to do what is legal, but what he believes to be morally right. In Lt. Murphy’s case, he staked his life on it.

Fortunately, most of us will never be put in the position of Lt. Murphy and his SEAL team. Nevertheless, his history has a valuable lesson for our own lives. The mark of an ethical person is not what they do when things are easy, but what they do when the choices are difficult and much is at stake. That is why the Navy puts such an emphasis on ethics in training. When situations get difficult, officers have a background in ethical frameworks they work with and rely on. It is thus instructive to examine our own sense of ethics and consider if we are prepared to put our own beliefs to the test.

What is the UCMJ?

The Uniform Code of Military Justice, or UCMJ, is the body of laws that governs the behavior of all members of the armed forces. Like many parts of our government, the UCMJ is in place to ensure a balance of power and an efficient government. Intriguingly, the UCMJ limits some of the freedoms of military personnel in order to ensure the general freedom of the country. For example, military personal are not allowed to participate in any political activity which is unfair, in order to make a clear distinction between the government and the military. Additionally, military personnel cannot use “contemptuous” words against the government and are not allowed to engage in any activities that might bring discredit to the armed forces. Other laws deal with everything from insubordination to spying and espionage.

Though some of the laws in the UCMJ might seem harsh by civilian standards, they all have a clear and justifiable purpose. Members of the armed forces are entitled to the unique power and responsibility of defending our nation and thus must follow a stricter legal code.

Call to Duty: Ethical Decision Making in the Modern Navy

By Brian Traganza, Economics ’12
Battalion Executive Officer, Navy ROTC

To read more about this story see the book Lone Survivor by Marcus Luttrell
M \*n is by nature a political animal,\* Aristotle famously claimed. However, just like the geocentric theory he promoted, this idea requires further examination—especially when we consider the political life outside the Western world. Is political engagement rooted in human nature? Or is it just a result of a certain set of ethics one holds?

In November 2007, Simon Elegant wrote an article for TIME magazine called “China’s Me Generation” in which he depicted China’s post-1980 generation as political “natives,” young urban Chinese today, and you will find them drinking Starbucks, wearing Nikes and blogging obsessively. But do you see them as decisive political actors?

Comparing American and Chinese Political Ethics

by Yueran Zhang, Trinity ‘18

Sinologists in the West have long predicted that economic growth in China would eventually bring democracy to China. But China’s Me generation could shatter such long-held assumptions. As the chief beneficiaries of China’s economic success, young professionals have more and more tied up in preserving the status quo.

— Simon Elegant, TIME

“Average people are being stimulated to speak out when they haven’t been before.”
— Joel Luther, Duke Chronicle

Politics. I.1253a2.
The landscape of the Holy Land is striking. The desert sands rise and fall with grace, carving out picturesque hills and valleys. Occasionally, the monochromatic, lifeless dirt changes in character, overtaken either by vegetation colored that distinct Mediterranean green or by cultivation made possible only by Israeli advances in irrigation and fertilization. To me, the land is made even more uniquely beautiful by the fact that so many consider it holy.

Because of the wall, people living only five minutes away by car will never see each other for their entire lives. In fact, it is extraordinarily difficult for Palestinians to pass into Israel proper. It is similarly difficult for Israelis to enter the Palestinian territories. When I was visiting the region earlier this year, our Palestinian driver brought us to a settlement and was made to wait outside the walls in the bus. When we spoke with Israeli young adults after hiking through the West Bank, they were eager to hear what we thought about the conflict. Yet upon further examination, I saw the statement's truth: speaking to both Israelis and Palestinians, many seemed to see the people on the other side of the wall as nothing more than objects, forgetting the immense beauty and variation that comes with being human. I heard too many people unabashedly express hatred for millions of people, forgetting that each population is composed of little girls who know nothing of the conflict; idealistic, 22-year-old college grades who want nothing more than its peaceful resolution so that their homes can be safe; and old men who never once fought violently in their lives because of a deeply-held belief in pacifism. With 25 feet of concrete breaking their gaze, Israel's often characterize Palestinians as anti-Semitic extremists who will stop at nothing to protect their land; Palestinians too frequently see Israelis as wealthy, all-powerful oppressors who have been pillaging the land for years without shame. Israel's

The Palestinians despise the wall, girding it such evocative names as the "Apartheid Wall" or the "Racial Segregation Wall." On the Palestinian side, it is covered in graffiti that speaks of oppression and desperation. However, Israel's imperative for building it is clear: suicide bombings have been attacking Israel with alarming frequency for decades. One would be hard pressed not to visit the scene of an exploded bus—or an exploded grocery store or night club or pizza place—and not see the reasoning for the wall. The United States is considering building a barrier along the Mexican border in order to protect jobs; Israel has built this fence in order to protect lives.

Keeping Israelis and Palestinians for the most part out of contact with each other does increase security—for both regions, not just Israel. But this lack of personal contact has had a curious and unanticipated effect on the relations between people of the two regions.

Israelis and Palestinians, in general, speak differently: they have different regional histories, different stories of daily life, different accounts of current events. But there was one phrase that I heard uttered, more than once, by both Israelis and Palestinians. "I feel," they said to me, "dehumanized."

It was shocking to hear this exact same word used by people on both sides of the wall to express their feelings about the conflict. Yet upon further examination, I saw the statement's truth: speaking to both Israelis and Palestinians, many seemed to see the people on the other side of the wall as nothing more than objects, forgetting the immense beauty and variation that comes with being human. I heard too many people unabashedly express hatred for millions of people, forgetting that each population is composed of little girls who know nothing of the conflict; idealistic, 22-year-old college grades who want nothing more than its peaceful resolution so that their homes can be safe; and old men who never once fought violently in their lives because of a deeply-held belief in pacifism. With 25 feet of concrete breaking their gaze, Israel's often characterize Palestinians as anti-Semitic extremists who will stop at nothing to protect their land; Palestinians too frequently see Israelis as wealthy, all-powerful oppressors who have been pillaging the land for years without shame. Israel's

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by Ellie Schaack, Trinity '15

Israelis and Palestinians speak differently...But there was one phrase that I heard uttered, more than once, by both..."I feel," they said "dehumanized.""
were restricted from entering. The existence of the wall doesn’t mean that Israel is being unreasonable about security. It means that the extremists—on both sides—are winning.

Extremists seek to dehumanize their enemies. A building blowing up doesn’t look like justice when you consider the people inside: the father picking up baby on his way back from work, calling his wife to ask if she needs anything else; the teenage girl who volunteers to escort her elderly neighbor to buy groceries every Tuesday at 5:00; the mother balancing a baby on her hip, telling the little boy walking beside them “not this time, honey” when he asks with comedic frequency to get his ice cream. Not only does extremism dominate the dialogue because it is so much louder and meaner than reason, it also feeds upon itself, snowballing uncontrollably. Extremism led to the construction of the wall; now, the wall encourages extremism by making it easier to dehumanize people and thus act violently against them. This violent action increases still further division, making negotiations nearly impossible, which only feeds the fire.

One way to combat extremism is to refuse to be dehumanized, to take one’s own humanity and shove it in the face of those who deny it. A tool that is being used to accomplish this goal with increasing frequency is art. Art inspires emotion. It provides a connection between the creator and the viewer or reader that is proving to be a unique tool in fighting against those who would otherwise use violence as a means of settling conflict.

Martin Espada, a poet who writes on the struggles of people in conflict regions all over the globe with the goal of combating dehumanization, said the following in an interview with Steven Rattner for his 2003 book, Giving Their Word: Conversations With Contemporary Poets: “The reason I have hope…is that, in spite of everything, we are as human beings still capable of being gentle, still capable of kindness, of generosity…Given the cruelty of history, there is virtually no reason in the world that any of us should have these qualities. Yet they persist. I am always astonished by the kindness of oppressed people. That, despite what’s put upon them, they can resist—and one of the ways they resist is to become more human, deliberately choosing to contradict the image of dehumanization which is forced upon them by exhibiting those human qualities of dignity and grace and gentleness.”

All around Israel and Palestine, people are making efforts to change the conversation. Movies—both documentaries and dramatizations—are making personal stories known. A tool that is being used to accomplish this goal with increasing frequency is art. Art inspires emotion. It provides a connection between the creator and the viewer or reader that is proving to be a unique tool in fighting against those who would otherwise use violence as a means of settling conflict.

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Math is logic, & logic is everywhere. Walter was relaxing in his room, when...

Some guy made an algorithm or perfect circle?
Walter thinks as good a reason as any to procrastinate.
Math’s important.

What’s the sooner your research project is done, the sooner I have to start changing our printer cartridges again.

No way, I’m going about the same paper. You’re using those sheets.

Here’s no way you can read that. Why, does that make sense?

Get an assistant on the floor of a new chart. Ask your ethics consultant, and use for fun. Or... "Ethical."

Don’t cheat the publisher, mad... It’s unethical.

"Unethical."

Weeks Later...

Ethical Code

Gray Area
A comic by Danny Thielman, Mathematics ’12

Gray Area
A comic by Danny Thielman, Mathematics ’12
this problem to 228 participants showed
tive! A psychology study that presented
readers in 1990 in
terms of probabilities and hence have it
boxes or remain with the one you origi-
guiding you in your reasoning to switch
fore, or even if you have, what is it that is

Are you ready for the solution? Here it
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