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Ethical Dimensions of High School Administrative Decision-Making

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ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF
HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION-MAKING

by

Michael J. Kisicki

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

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1990

Abstract

That there is a need for ethical leadership in America is an idea widely accepted throughout the nation today. Ethical problems have plagued every area of American society, from business to government and from sports to religious institutions. It is therefore no surprise that education, so omnipresent and all-encompassing as it is to the very fabric of American society, has not escaped the modern ethical crisis. More and more, schools have become the focus of the demand for a national rebirth of values, morals, and ethics.

Many programs have come forth to develop values education for our young; similarly, the concept of "teacher as exemplar" is commonly known. What ingredient, then, is still missing? Immegart and Burroughs (1970) put forth the proposition that "the ethical aspect of the educational administrator's job has received little attention." Modern effective schools research has called our attention to the integral part that a "strong instructional leader" plays in making a school academically effective. Is it not logical to assume that a strong ethical leader would serve a similarly integral role in re-establishing effective ethical behavior within our schools? If this is so, then it is time to address an area of educational administration that Immegart and Burroughs characterize as a "conspicuously silent" one -- the role of ethics in educational administrative decision-making.

The purpose of this study was to determine just what role ethics plays in the day-to-day decisions made by a specific set of school administrators, namely high school administrators, and, once the role was determined, to investigate just how ethical those decisions really were. A qualitative study was used to survey 101 high school administrators, namely principals, assistant principals, vice principals, and deans, within the southern Chicagoland and northeastern Indiana regions. The survey included five case studies in which the respondent was asked to answer three questions after each. The questions were uniform throughout the five cases: 1) What would you do in this situation?; 2) What reason(s) would you give for your decision?; and 3) What ethical issue(s) do you see involved in this situation? The five case studies each contained a "borderline" ethical dilemma, that is, a question of ethics that was not clear-cut, but rather in the so-called "gray area" of ethical decision-making. Results of the 101 respondents were then analyzed so as to determine what, if any, predominant ethic they saw as present in the case, and how

their decisions were in fact ethical. The determination of the predominant ethic was the result of analyzing the responses themselves, especially to the second and third questions; if these responses indicated that no ethical standard was used to make the decision, the respondent was judged not to have shown "ethical awareness" in that situation. If an ethical standard or standards were drawn upon in the responses, then the response was analyzed to determine the predominant ethic. The moral reasoning model of Strike, Haller, and Soltis (1988) was then used to investigate just how ethical the decisions actually were.

A biographical questionnaire was also employed to determine if any particular demographic characteristics significantly affected the ethicalness of the responses. Follow-up interviews with twelve respondents who voluntarily surrendered their anonymity in the survey allowed the researcher to clarify and amplify the ethical dimensions of the responses. The results of the study were then used to make fifteen specific conclusions and five general recommendations on the topic of the role ethics plays in educational administrative decision-making.

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The researcher also thanks the many educators and friends whose help made this research study possible, notably Dr. Michael N. Riley, Dr. Patricia Brown, Dr. Jay Lalley, Br. John M. Hibbard, O.S.A., Ms. Mary Surico, Miss Theda Slater, Miss Aletta M. Hicks, Mr. David Spitzer, Mr. Mark Kisicki, Mr. Daniel Zepeda, and especially the encouragement, time, and technical assistance of Ms. Sally Jo Zepeda and Mr. John F. Gremer. Such friends made the research study a most enjoyable experience and make the researcher a very lucky person indeed.

Finally, the researcher acknowledges his mother, Mrs. Adele Kisicki, without whom none of his meager accomplishments would ever have taken place.

VITA

Michael John Kisicki , the researcher in this study, is the son of Mrs. Adele (Gorniewicz) Kisicki. He was born August 31, 1951, in Chicago, Illinois.

He completed grammar school in May 1965 at St. Joseph Catholic Grade School of Chicago, Illinois. He completed high school in May 1969 at St. Rita of Cascia High School, also in Chicago.

In August 1969, Mr. Kisicki entered Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois, graduating with high honors from Lewis with a bachelor's degree in English and a minor in education in May of 1973. While at Lewis, Mr. Kisicki was elected to national academic fraternities in English and Journalism, as well as Delta Epsilon Sigma (for overall academic achievement) and Kappa Delta Rho, a national social-service fraternity. Mr. Kisicki was also editor of the college newspaper and a two-time electee to "Who's Who In American Colleges."

In the summer of 1973, Mr. Kisicki began pursuit of his Master's Degree in Developmental Reading at the University of Arizona in Tucson. Mr. Kisicki earned this degree in 1976 and completed a second Master's Degree, in Educational Administration, from the University of Arizona in 1982.

In his educational career, Mr. Kisicki has co-founded a developmental reading program at St. Rita High School (1974) and developed that school's current programs in Activities (1977-83, 1986-87), Public Relations (1976-1982), Discipline (1983-1985), and Staff Development (1986-1989). He was elected one of the school's two "Teachers of the Year" nine times, from 1977 to 1982 and again from 1984 to 1986. Mr. Kisicki was honored as a Congressional Teacher Merit Award Winner in 1989, by the Illinois State Board of Education as a "Those Who Excel" winner in that same year, and received citations from the Illinois State Legislature, the Chicago City Council, and from the University of Chicago. He entered the Loyola University doctoral program in 1987.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

That there is a need for ethical leadership in America is an idea widely accepted throughout the nation today. Episcopal Bishop Rev. Edmond Lee Browning lectured President George Bush on Inauguration Week Sunday, 1989, that "people today hunger for moral leadership, grounded in the inner disposition of love and compassion."¹ Maran Doggett, writing in the N.A.S.S.P. Bulletin, speaks of headlines that scream of unethical behavior by politicians, military leaders, investment brokers, religious leaders, and the like.² Ethical issues have broken to the forefront of every major American institution -- the American people have witnessed the political fall of a President and his Vice-President on ethical grounds, and, more recently, have watched as a Speaker of the House and one of his top lieutenants (Rep. James Wright of Texas and Rep. Tony Coelho of California, respectively) have been brought down for violating congressional ethical standards. Censures for the Senator from Minnesota (excessive fee-taking schemes) and a Congressman from Massachusetts (unethical use of his influence to benefit a male prostitute-friend) occurred in rapid succession in July, 1990; the future deliberations of the Congressional Ethics Committee on the so-called "Keating Five" (senators who used undue influence to illegally aid a floundering savings and loan association) await the outraged reaction of the American people.

From Ivan Boesky to the recent conviction of Chicago brokers for insider trading, the range of unethical behavior in the business community has also been a recent source of national disgrace. Business leaders have realized the critical necessity of injecting ethics

¹ George Cornell, "Bush Told Country Wants Moral Leadership," Southtown Economist, 26 January 1989, p. 12.

² Maran Doggett, "Ethical Excellence for School-Based Administration," NASSP Bulletin 72 (December 1988): 6-8.

into the marketplace; note the following quote from James Cash Penney, founder of the national J.C. Penney department store chain:

In former periods, business was identified as secular, and service as sacred. In proportion as we have discerned that between secular and sacred no arbitrary line exists, public awareness has grown that the golden rule was meant for business as much as for other human relationships.

The quote itself is forty years old; yet its applicability to the modern ethical crisis in business is as fresh as are the scandals that make Penney's words ring so true to us today.³

Ethical problems have rocked religious institutions and moral leaders, have dogged purchasing practices and standards at the Pentagon, and have invaded the lifestyles, concerts, videos, and even lyrics of many modern musical figures; it is no surprise that education, so omnipresent and all-encompassing as it is to the very fabric of the American society, has not escaped the modern ethical crisis. Columnist Michael Hirsley of the Chicago Tribune has laid the entire problem at the doorstep of the schools, writing that "they (the schools) have simply forgotten how to teach human values."⁴ "Many kids today are growing up alone, developing their personalities with little moral, ethical, or personal direction, from any significant adult in their lives," writes Steven E. Landfried, who then goes on to call for "classroom discussions on moral issues" in the schools.⁵ Richard W. Paul decries "ill-thought out programs of moral education in the public schools" and pleads for the type of programs that will teach ethical thinking because, as he simply yet powerfully states, "ethical persons, however strongly motivated to do what is morally right, can do so only if they know what that is."⁶ The recently -formed Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Panel on Moral Education, chaired by Prof. Kevin Ryan of Boston University, found that there is "increasing protest against the way

³ James Cash Penney, Fifty Years With The Golden Rule: A Spiritual Autobiography, (New York:Harper and Row, 1950), 52.

⁴ Michael Hirsley, "Schools Prodded On Moral Values," Chicago Tribune, 27 January 1989, sec. 2, p. 8.

⁵ Steven E. Landfried, "Talking To Kids About Things That Matter," Educational Leadership 45 (May 1988): 33.

⁶ Richard W. Paul, "Ethics Without Indoctrination," Educational Leadership 45 (May 1988) : 11.

values are addressed in schools.”⁷ Public figures from William Bennett to New York Governor Mario Cuomo and from Ronald Reagan to former U.S. Commissioner of Education T.H. Bell have decried education for the lack of moral and ethical thinking among our citizenry. “(Schools) seem to have reached an all-time high point in truancy, disrespect, and lack of commitment,” Bell has said, “and these problems will be with us until we abandon our moral and ethical neutrality.”⁸

It is hardly surprising that schools have become the focus of this demand for a rebirth of values, morals , and ethics in our country. It is less surprising that the classroom has been singled out as the most promising national forum for this ethical rebirth to occur in. And yet it must be noted that the educational market is glutted with books, pamphlets, programs, and even state mandates on how to teach morals and ethics to our young. What ingredient, then, is still missing?

In Ethics And The School Administrator , Glenn Immegart and John M. Burroughs speak plainly on a long-neglected, yet crucial area of ethical instruction within our schools:

Although an awakening relative to the ethical is taking place and, overall, the relevant professional thought regarding educational administration as a field of practice is rapidly improving, the ethical aspect of the educational administrator’s job has received little attention. In fact, textbooks are conspicuously silent on the subject of ethics except for occasional references or short passages on values and moral dilemmas, as is the periodical literature in the field. ⁹

Can this be the “missing ingredient” in our schools? Are our school administrators making what might be called “ethical” decisions, or are they operating in an ethical vacuum, be it the reason or result of the paucity of attention given to the ethical dimensions of an educational administrator’s job, as Immegart and Burroughs state? The critical nature of such a question is clear -- for if educational administrators are in fact making decisions

⁷ Kevin Ryan et al, “Moral Education In The Life Of The School,” Educational Leadership 45 (May 1988) : 36.

⁸ Charlotte Saikowski, “American Schools: Whatever Happened To Ethics?”, The Christian Science Monitor (15 April 1976) : 15.

⁹ Glenn Immegart and John Burroughs, Ethics And the School Administrator (Danville: The Interstate Printers and Publishers Inc., 1970), 6.

without significant regard to the ethical ramifications of their work, then it is quite likely that the moral fabric of the school building itself is similarly lacking in ethical concern. Research by Edmunds, Brookover, and the other effective schools movement leaders has called our collective attention to the integral part that a “strong instructional leader” plays in making a school academically effective. Is it not logical to assume that a strong ethical leader would serve a similarly integral part in re-establishing effective moral instruction within our schools, and, through the schools, into American society as well?

Such a notion is not without its proponents. The A.S.C.D. Panel on Moral Education has listed, among its ten major recommendations, that schools “establish and convey clear expectations for teachers and administrators regarding their roles as moral educators. Furthermore, we recommend that their performance as moral educators be included as a regular and important part of their evaluation,” and further call for educators to “continually examine the institutional features of school life to ensure that climate and instructional practices contribute to the same moral growth.”¹⁰ In a recent article in the N.A.S.S.P. Bulletin, Raymond Calabrese calls ethical leadership both a “prerequisite for” and an “integral part of” effective schools, asserting that “an ethical environment is achieved through thousands of decisions” made by the school administrator.¹¹ Robert Stout has written that “school administrators have been trained in theories of organization which fail to account for the fact that the dominant purposes of schools are moral,” and reminds administrators that the values and ethics by which they act each day influence how the entire school is run.¹² Author Hugh Mulligan has discussed how American business has come to a similar conclusion, investing heavily in ethical training for its administrators because of the “ripple effect” that ethical leadership has on an organization and its employees, and the dramatic results that can result from such ethics-based leadership. “There is (now) an awareness” that ethical leadership in the business community “can avoid fines and jail sentences, reduce court suits that entail costly legal and accounting fees,

¹⁰ Ryan et al, 38.

¹¹ Raymond L. Calabrese, “Ethical Leadership: A Prerequisite for Effective Schools,” N.A.S.S.P. Bulletin 72 (December 1988) : 1-4.

¹² Robert Stout, “Executive Action and Values,” Issues in Education 4 (Winter 1986): 198-214.

diminish the threat of more governmental regulation, increase company morale, and attract a higher type, more loyal employee.”¹³ Amitai Etzioni has written that morality ought to be taught through “live experiences” in the school, that is, through the actions of principals, administrators, and teachers. “Lecturing ethics does not work. School provides live experiences -- it is important that the principal (and administrators) and teachers ethically examine their own behavior,” Etzioni has stated.¹⁴

All of the above quotes suggest that the ethical leader has a powerful and significant impact upon those in his environment, be it school or business. If this is true, then one can assume that it is of critical concern to education and to the nation that educational leaders are in fact acting and making decisions well-grounded in the ethical dimensions of the issue or problem at hand. When decisions are being made ethically, then the moral environment is uplifted in a school, and the school climate is one that encourages ethical thinking ; thus, the effectiveness of moral education in the schools will have been addressed by a powerful new force within the school building, and the ethical crisis so decried by critics of the schools will be faced with a potent foe.

Before one can begin calling for intensive ethical training and mandated ethical evaluation of administrators, however, it seems most logical to first investigate the current status to ethical thinking among school decision-makers. Such an investigation will serve two important purposes: first, it will ascertain whether school administrators currently are in fact attuned to the ethical dimensions of their decisions and actions, and as such will be instructive to the degree that new training and mandates are actually needed; and secondly, such an investigation will help pinpoint specific areas of ethical decision-making in which school administrators currently are strong, or weak, or simply adequate. Thus, an investigation into the current ethical dimensions of educational administrative decision-making may help determine how serious the problem is, and what areas of ethical decision-making need to be focussed on. Results of such an investigation could therefore lend important direction to the national debate on the need for ethical and moral education in the schools, and the concomitant debate on the need for strong ethical leadership in all areas

¹³ Hugh Mulligan, “Ethics: Doing The Right Thing A Red-Hot Topic Now,” Southtown Economist Trends, 10 April 1989, p. 15.

¹⁴ Saikowski, 15.

of the national community.

The purpose of this research, then, will be to determine just what role ethics plays in the day-to-day decisions made by a specific set of school administrators, namely high school administrators, and, once the role is determined, to investigate just how ethical these decisions actually are.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

ETHICS: GENERAL DEFINITIONS

As we prepare to investigate the ethical dimensions of high school administrative decision-making, it is our first task to define the concept "ethics." Webster's dictionary offers this as a definition:

The discourse dealing with what is good and bad, or right and wrong, or with moral duty and obligation; a group of moral principles or set of values; a particular theory or system of moral values; the principles of conduct governing an individual or a profession; standards of behavior.¹⁵

Gauerke offers a pragmatist's definition. "What is generally called 'the ethics' of a profession is actually but consensus of expert opinion as to the human duty involved in a vocation, calling, occupation, or employment, " he writes, adding that the term seems to relate to moral action, motive, or character and to pertain to "what is ...right or befitting."¹⁶ This definition of ethics as based on mere consensus has been soundly rejected by many philosophers and educational authors, typified by Peter Singer, who rejects such ethical relativism by pointing out that consensus-defined ethics leads one to the indefensible position of judging slavery, for instance, to be ethically sound simply because a consensus of Southerners found it to be "right and befitting" in the early 19th century. "That ethics is always relative to a particular society has most implausible consequences," he writes.¹⁷

Ethics clearly seems to deal with the moral, or value-laden, dimensions of our lives. Max Lerner has defined ethics as being primarily concerned with "worth, (that is), what is

¹⁵ Philip B. Gove, ed., Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 1986), 780.

¹⁶ Warren E. Gauerke, Legal and Ethical Responsibilities of School Personnel (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959), 17.

¹⁷ Peter Singer, Practical Ethics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 6.

it that makes life worth living? What are the guiding purposes of life?"¹⁸ Philip G. Smith defines ethics as "the philosophical study of morality," and notes that the study of the nature and structure of ethics is "sometimes called metaethics, which is concerned with how norms are involved in a great range of activities, including analyzing and prescribing as well as describing."¹⁹ Strike, Haller, and Soltis differentiate between ethics and metaethics in a slightly different manner, asserting that ethics "seems directly concerned with what we ought to do in specific situations," while metaethics "seems to be more general. (Metaethics is) about our process of moral reasoning itself" and is concerned with the justification of our moral principles and our ethical theories."²⁰ Smith feels that ethics, or more precisely metaethics, must be involved in a threefold combination of individual concerns with human norms, in which there is:

- (1) a concern to understand, by making explicit in a clear and concise manner, what norms seem to be governing what kinds of activities;
- (2) a concern to improve these activities by urging the adoption of certain norms;
- (3) a concern for the appropriateness, adequacy, and worth -- in short, the value of -- certain norms.²¹

From all of this initial discussion, what is most clear is that ethics is integrally interrelated with the values and norms and morals that govern our behavior.

Payne and Charnov have written that , in all discussions of ethics, there is a presupposition that "goodness is found therein."²² In fact, that which is "good" or "moral" is often considered synonymous with that which is "ethical," although some notable theorists, such as Mowrer, disagree.²³ All agree with the simple notion put forward by Levy, however, that ethics involves "standards of conduct." Seen in this light, ethics

¹⁸ Max Lerner, Values in Education (Bloomington: Phi Delta Kappan Foundation, 1976), 13.

¹⁹ Philip G. Smith, Theories of Value and Problems in Education (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970), 4.

²⁰ Kenneth Strike, Emil Haller, and Jonas Soltis, The Ethics of School Administration (New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1988), 5.

²¹ Smith, 4.

²² Steven L. Payne and Bruce H. Charnov, eds., Ethical Dilemmas for Academic Professionals (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas Publications, 1987), 4.

²³ Orval H. Mowrer, Morality and Mental Health (Chicago: Rand-McNally Press, 1967).

transcends the philosophical study of morality and involves the conduct or behavior determined by such a philosophy.²⁴

Values seem to inherently be at the heart of ethics; thus, we must now turn to the concept of values so as to better define ethics. Hall has done much work in the field of defining the determinant characteristics of a value. This author sees a clear distinction between values, or principles, which have been “fully developed in the mind and heart of the actor” and those which are undeveloped or underdeveloped values or principles. Both may result in a similar action; but only true values, resting as they do upon fully developed and in-depth understanding of the motivating force behind that action, constitute an entry into the realm of ethical behavior. The undeveloped values, which rest upon other motivations which might include social pressure, routine, organizational demands, and so on, are termed “value indicators” by the author. Hall lists the following seven questions as a method of determining whether “a given thing is a value, or only a value indicator”:

- (1) Was the value chosen from a range of alternatives I was aware of?
- (2) Did I consider the consequences of the alternatives I was aware of?
- (3) Is this value evident in my recent behavior?
- (4) Do I act on this value repeatedly in some fashion, through a variety of similar experiences?
- (5) Am I happy and pleased by the choice of this value?
- (6) Am I willing to state this value publicly?
- (7) Does this value enhance, and not impede, the development of my emotional and spiritual well-being?²⁵

Hall feels that only if the answer to all seven of these questions is “yes” are we acting on what is truly a full value; and thus, if it is truly an action based on a full value, then we have begun to act within the realm of the ethical.

It is the term “value” that, despite Hall’s work and that of many other authors and philosophers, seems to most trouble students of ethics. Strike, Haller, and Soltis, in their

²⁴ Charles S. Levy, “The Context of Social Work Ethic,” Social Work 17 (1972): 95-101.

²⁵ Brian P. Hall, Value Clarification As Learning Process (New York: Paulist Press, 1973), 14-15.

recent works, attempt to clarify the relationship between ethics and values by drawing a clear distinction between ethical judgments and preferences. Ethical judgments are those statements of value that lie within the realm of the moral; a typical example is when one says, "It is good to tell the truth." This is easily distinguishable from mere preferences; a typical example here might be "I prefer pickles to olives." The authors point out three traits which allow us to distinguish ethical, or moral, judgments, from mere preferential judgments.

First, preferences are personal statements which may or may not be true for any other person other than the preference-holder; ethical judgments express ideas which can draw upon reason, logic, or consequent facts with which to offer proof of a more universal validity. The authors make no claim that reason, logic, or facts can actually validate an ethical judgment fully; they do point out, though, that we can draw upon reason, or logic, or consequent facts to "bolster" an argument over what is most moral, or ethical, in both a personal and more universal sense. "If I believe that it is okay to lie whenever I feel like it, it is possible for someone to point out to me reasons why I should not believe this. If I happen to like olives better than pickles, it is not clear how it is possible for anyone to show me that I am in error," the authors write²⁶.

Secondly, ethical judgments are related to facts in a manner quite foreign to the relationship between preferences and facts. While neither can follow Carnap's axiom that facts must describe the world the way it truly is, it is demonstrable that ethical judgments can be the result of the consideration of facts, or draw upon facts as proof of their validity, as noted in the paragraph above. Thus, ethical judgments are seen by Strike, Haller, and Soltis as having a relationship with facts quite different from that which facts have with preferences. "If, for example, we believe that it is wrong to cause needless suffering, the fact that ridiculing someone causes needless suffering is relevant to establishing the moral judgment that we ought not to ridicule that person."²⁷ On the other hand, state the authors, "it is not clear that statements of preference" are related to facts in any way at all.²⁸ No facts

²⁶ Strike, 37.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

can be drawn upon to significantly improve the validity of my liking pickles more than I like olives; thus, the relationship between facts and preferences seems to be a non-existent one, much different than the relevant relationship that exists between ethical judgments and facts.

Finally, the authors propose a third manner in which to distinguish preferences from ethical judgments. “Generally, it is wrong for one person to impose his (preferences) upon another. But it is a mistake to apply a similar logic with respect to moral principles.”²⁹ The authors reuse the example of the pickle, noting it would be quite unjustifiable to attempt to force others to like or choose pickles over olives simply because that is my personal preference. Yet it is quite justifiable, and in many ways reasonable, to “coerce individuals who do not freely accept their moral obligations. The fact that a particular person is not persuaded of an obligation to abstain from theft or murder is not a reason for permitting him to engage in such a behavior.”³⁰ Thus do we see that there are critical and important differences between preferences and ethical judgments.

The significance of such a differentiation is clear when we mistakenly view all values as mere opinion, and as such confuse values with mere personal preference. When this confusion occurs, then there suddenly can be no discussion whatsoever of the validity, or “trueness,” of ethical judgments. Under such a condition, any ethical judgment can be summarily dismissed with a wave of the hand and the statement “Well, that’s your opinion.” Yet Strike, Haller, and Soltis have helped us to refute such a blanket rejection; it may well be true that preferences can be summarily dismissed as mere matters of personal opinion, but it is clearly not true that moral and ethical judgments, related as they are to fact and significant as they are in guiding human behavior, can be treated as mere opinion. The result is our acknowledgement that ethics is a field where reason, logic, and facts can and may be used to establish the essential “rightness” or “wrongness” of a human behavior, thus lending the concept of ethical inquiry a much more objective foundation than is usually afforded it.

²⁹ Strike, 38.

³⁰ Ibid.

THE TELEOLOGICAL-DEONTOLOGICAL DEBATE

This is not to say, however, that questions of ethics can be settled merely, or fully, by an appeal to facts. Facts are incapable of completely settling ethical issues, because a reliance on facts alone would result in a consequentialist, or strictly utilitarian, point of view. The consequentialists espouse a teleological theory of ethics, and find their historical-philosophical roots in the work of the British reformer Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). Bentham's maxim, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," summarizes the standard used to measure the ethicalness of human action. It is a philosophic view that measures the moral worth of an action simply by what any particular action produces, and as such, it limits the ethical to that which produces the happiest ends, regardless of the means used to achieve them. To critics who pointed out that Bentham's utilitarianism made ethical decision-making highly problematic due to the near-impossibility of gauging the expected consequences of an action in a way that would allow them to be compared in measurable units, the reformer responded with the creation of the hedonistic calculus, in which a sophisticated analysis of a potential action's "intensity, duration, certainty or uncertainty, propinquity or remoteness, fecundity, and the purity of the value in question"³¹ would allow "reasonable men" to calculate the relative measure of pain and pleasure, and to use these "units of measure" to assess the relative preferability of an action.

Thus, if we assume that factual consequences can be the sole measure of ethicalness, then we have "bought into" consequentialism, or utilitarianism. Yet such a philosophy is not without its critics, who point out serious flaws in utilitarianism. Tuleja notes that utilitarianism is flawed by two major problems: subjective bias, which would lead the actor to subvert the actual results of his actions to the benefit of his own personal gain or happiness, and a so-called "justice problem," in which individual rights are trampled and

³¹ Richard DeGeorge, Business Ethics (New York: MacMillan and Company, 1982), 42.

made meaningless by the ethics-by-numbers approach of the utilitarianists.³² The philosopher G.E. Moore's work also shows that ethics dare not rest on a mere weighing of whether the result of a decision or action is "good" or "bad"; Moore notes that there is a fundamental difference between how far certain actions are good in themselves, and how far they have a tendency to produce results that are good.³³ This presents a philosophical paradox of the highest order: how can an end or consequence be judged ethical when it is the result of unethical means? The clear suggestion is that utilitarianism alone cannot account for the standards needed to define what is ethical and what is not; and since utilitarianism rests upon the idea that ethicalness can be measured by a concomitant weighing of the factual results of an action, therefore it is quite inescapable that ethics cannot be judged by facts alone. Thus, if ethics cannot be sufficiently defined by facts alone, we must return to the initial quandary of how values fit into the definition of ethics.

Having shown the problems with a teleological point of view, we now turn to its opposite, the deontological school of thought, for help in defining ethics. Deontologists hold that certain basic, unyielding moral principles exist, and that they are a priori principles, that is, principles that are in and of themselves right and just. The deontological school of thought is a formalistic one, as it requires that an action's ethicalness be judged in accordance with its adherence to these basic, unyielding principles. Fairness, justice, and truth are examples of the deontologist's basic a priori principles that govern ethicalness. The deontologists will therefore search the means as well as the end to determine the morality of an action, making sure that both are consistent with basic principles of ethicality before pronouncing an action to be itself ethical.

As Bentham, and later John Stuart Mill, provide the intellectual foundation for utilitarianism, so do we look at Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) as the leading proponent of the deontological school of thought. It is Kant who offers the standard modern rules by which to judge an action or decision as being ethical or not. Kant's Categorical Imperative puts forth the notion that a truly ethical act is one in which the rule that describes an individual's behavior could consistently be willed to be a universal rule that would govern

³² Tad Tuleja, Beyond The Bottom Line (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), 18-22.

³³ George E. Moore, Principia Ethica (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 24.

all human behavior. This notion, called the Categorical Imperative, is thus a determinant of what is truly ethical. Rules which we would want generalized into moral universals are therefore implicitly ethical.

Tuleja discusses Kant's Categorical Imperative in the following quote:

Kant devised three versions of the Categorical Imperative, each one stressing one of three interrelated characteristics by which a moral action could be recognized. The clearly moral action would: 1) be universalizable, that is, it would make sense, consistently, for everybody in a similar situation to take the same action; 2) demonstrate respect for individual human beings, that is, it would treat others not as means, but as ends in themselves; and 3) be acceptable to all rational beings, that is, if the action were made the basis of a universal law, receivers as well as initiators of the action would agree that it was just.³⁴

In short, we now see a definition of ethical behavior that requires three tests to be passed, three prerequisites that create the logical structure within which ethical behavior can be judged-- prerequisites of universality, consistency, and impartiality.

Such prerequisites put Kant's deontological stance at odds with the consequentialists and teleologists. Consequentialism can hardly be concerned with consistency, as every situation is judged uniquely and separately by its own unique results. It can similarly not be concerned with universality, since it allows for a hedonistic calculus by which the suffering of some is acceptable as long as it is outweighed by the happiness of the majority. And while consequentialists would no doubt claim a certain impartiality in determining the ethicalness of their actions, based as it is on judging the common good by a measuring system devised by Bentham, it is again noted that the charge of subjective bias is one most frequently leveled against the consequentialists in action. It is a charge that throws a shadow over any claim that consequentialism might have to being the sole and rightful determinant of ethical behavior, despite Mill's angry reply that utilitarianism "is not the only creed which is able to furnish us with excuses for evil doing, and means of cheating our

³⁴ Tuleja, 22-23.

conscience.”³⁵

Can the two juxtaposed philosophies be combined so as to produce an “all-inclusive” determinant structure for ethical behavior? Philosophers such as Max Weber and more recently Herbert Simon would say no. The inherent tension between the two philosophies makes them incompatible, and as such we are forced to choose between them in determining the way we will examine and evaluate ethical behavior. Other philosophers, such as Hodgkinson and Greenfield, see no problem with judging ethicalness on a combined basis of fact and value, thus opening the door for a deontological -teleological detente. It is in the work of the modern authors Strike, Haller, and Soltis that we find such a combination, as the authors offer a fourfold plan by which to assess whether an action is in line with moral principles, and as such is ethical. Note the combination of aspects of both philosophies in the following plan offered by Strike, Haller, and Soltis :

- 1) It must exhibit consistency, impartiality, and universality
- 2) It must exhibit equal respect for the personal dignity and value of others
- 3) It must exhibit a concern for consequences that are, and are being seen by others as, good for people
- 4) It must exhibit a respect for reason, evidence, and truth.³⁶

Note that concept 1 is a direct restatement of Kant’s deontological Categorical Imperative; that concept 2 is also deontological in nature; that concept 3 is utilitarian and teleological in nature; and that concept 4 is, curiously, reminiscent of the requisites for knowledge put forth by many modern philosophers, specifically those aligned with linguistic analytical modes of inquiry, such as Israel Scheffler , as well as being grounded in Dewey’s Theory of Valuation, which bases ethical evaluation in open-minded reflection utilizing reason, knowledge, and truth. Whether the joining of two such odd bedfellows (or perhaps three) is philosophically possible is not an issue able to be treated with any depth here; it is more important to note that these modern authors have attempted to produce a new logical

³⁵ Max Lerner, ed., The Essential Works of John Stuart Mill, from the tract “Utilitarianism”(New York: Bantam Books, 1961), 211.

³⁶ Strike, 9.

structure by which to determine ethical behavior, a structure which will be utilized later in this dissertation as a standard by which to launch objective investigation into the ethicalness of human behavior.

Yet another method of determining ethicality remains to be discussed. This third methodology is an offshoot of the teleological school of thought, but depends solely on consensus, or the will of the majority, as the determinant factor. It is different than pure teleology in that it does not necessarily depend on the final outcome being good for the majority of those affected by it; it is more narrowly defined, as it depends merely on what the majority of people in a society have determined to be ethical or unethical by means of their culture, traditions, and laws. Thus, a law passed by the majority of people in a society may have devastating effects on the majority of people it affects, yet remain "ethical" in the eyes of the society because it is the law, or is grounded in the traditions of that culture. The current debate over the ethicality and legality of Christian Scientist parents allowing their children to die rather than violate their religious beliefs about medical aid is an example of such a societal or psycho-cultural determinant of ethicalness. It has previously been noted that Singer, as well as Strike, Haller, and Soltis, reject such a definition of ethicalness forthwith; to allow such a definition would be to justify slavery at one point in the world's history, for instance. Yet theoretician Theodore Brameld of Boston University has popularized the concept of consensual validation of ethical behavior, a position he feels that "educational leaders are...virtually compelled toward" by the "dualism and subjectivity" of other approaches.³⁷

Brameld defines consensual validation as a four step process. First, maximum evidence must be obtained, using all the philosophical schools of thought to contribute to that body of evidence. Idealist, realist, linguistic analytic, and existentialist positions are all of relevance to Brameld as he gathers this evidence about the ethicalness of any given action or decision. Secondly, maximum communication is necessary, as we express our concerns and thoughts and feelings on such matters to as many involved actors as we can.

³⁷ Theodore Brameld, "Toward the Ethics of Educational Leadership," from Ethics and the School Administrator, Glenn Immegart and John Burroughs, eds. (Danville: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1970), 80.

Existentialists refer to a similar principle as “inter-subjectivity,” the sharing of immediately experienced perceptions. Brameld then requires the third step, maximum agreement, as all involved reach the highest degree of common ground on an issue through their inter-subjective sharing of experience. Finally, Brameld writes, comes the stage of testing and retesting of our agreements, in light of the growing, developing nature of man. The result of consensual validation is a body of principles which, taken together, form what Brameld calls empirical universals, a term reminiscent in no small manner of the work of Immanuel Kant. Empirical universals, reached through consensus validation, provide for the “ultimate desirabilities” that men call “ethical principles.”³⁸ Whether consensual validation is a philosophically separate methodology of determining ethical behavior, or whether it is rejectable on the grounds put forth by Singer, as well as Strike, Haller, and Soltis, it still remains another theory which must be considered in any effort to determine some definition of the term ethics.

Other authors have attempted to define ethics in different ways. Eigo draws upon Aristotelian virtue ethics to define ethics in terms of how the “whole man” expresses “virtue and love;”³⁹ Frankena defines ethics as standards of conduct that flow from any one of many philosophies, including Dewey pragmatism, existentialism, and linguistic analysis;⁴⁰ Knezevich characterizes ethics as “the good ends...pursued by the good means; the moral end...realized through the moral means.”⁴¹ Overall, we see a picture of ethics as something grounded in universal applicability, based on values, affected and relevant to facts, involved with both means and ends, and significant both as a philosophical discussion of the highest importance and as a practical standard for day-to-day human behavior. The next question that awaits us is one of conflicting ethical standards -- what is to be done when an

³⁸ Brameld, 82-83.

³⁹ Rev. Francis A. Eigo, O.S.A., The Professions in Ethical Context: Vocations to Justice and Love (Villanova: Villanova University Press, 1986), 1-6.

⁴⁰ William K. Frankena, “Educational Values and Goals: Some Dispositions to be Fostered,” from Theories of Value and Problems of Education, Philip G. Smith, ed., (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970), 99-108.

⁴¹ Stephen J. Knezevich, “The Ethical Concerns of Professional School Administrators,” from Ethics and the School Administrator, Glenn Immegart and John Burroughs, eds. (Danville: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1970), 13.

individual has determined the ethical standards involved in his upcoming behavior, and finds these standards in conflict?

MODELS OF ETHICAL ANALYSIS

Lewis Beck discussed just such a tension between competing ethical behaviors in his article "Professions, Ethics, and Professional Ethics." Beck divided ethics into two types: 1) prima facie ethics, that is, ethics that "on the face of things" ought to be done, and 2) qua-duties, or ethical duties imposed upon an individual as a result of the position that person occupies in society. Telling the truth would be an example of the former; arresting criminals would be an example for a policeman of the latter. Beck points out that the two often come into conflict; his examples include how a doctor, via his qua-duty for personal information on a patient, might invade a person's individual right to privacy to inquire about his past, thus violating a prima facie duty; or how a research group, eager to pursue its qua-duty for new and important sociological information, might eavesdrop on the deliberations of a jury, thus violating a prima facie duty to respect the confidentiality of such deliberations.⁴² How are such conflicts to be resolved? Beck offers the concept of casuistry as the solution, a term he defines as "the application of abstract principles to individual cases."⁴³ Casuistry involves a reasonable and in-depth discussion of the abstract principles involved in such cases: courtesy, the right to privacy, medical requirements for proper treatment, confidentiality, deception, the need for valid on-site research. Such a discussion is not meant to befuddle the situation, but rather to clarify it as an individual seeks to find what is most ethical in each situation. The concept of casuistry will later be analyzed and amplified in our discussion of the Strike, Haller, and Soltis model of ethical analysis as a means of settling inevitable ethical conflicts.

Immegart and Burroughs offer the Ethical Screen Model as a means of settling conflicts

⁴² Lewis White Beck, "Professions, Ethics, and Professional Ethics", from Ethics and the School Administrator, Glenn Immegart and John Burroughs, eds., (Danville: The Interstate Publishers and Printers, Inc., 1970), 44-47.

⁴³ Beck, 46.

between competing ethical principles. These authors suggest that the actor in any situation refer to a five-pronged set of ethical standards as that actor attempts to decide what to do in a morally ambiguous situation. These five ethical standards are those that the authors have found to be of import in a universal way; they include:

- 1) Societal ethics -- “norms or core values that are intended to govern the behavior of all members of a society.”
- 2) Professional Ethics -- “job ethics; Professor Beck’s ‘qua-duties’ or the ethical aspects of a given...occupation.
- 3) Personal ethics--”unique personal value structures ; personal ethical standards to guide behavior...personally and idiosyncratically derived and formulated over the years”
- 4) Organizational ethics--”a set of standards or values typical to the organization that employs you”
- 5) Means Ethics--”the criteria or standards which apply to the procedures or approaches (an individual) employs in doing whatever he does.”⁴⁴

Immegart and Burroughs suggest that the interplay between these five factors produce the Ethical Screen Model, through which any individual can filter his decision. The individual chooses which set of ethics most applies to the situation at hand, and follows that standard of conduct; or the individual notes the conflict between two or more seemingly equal sets of ethical standards, and then sets priorities before making his final decision. Immegart and Burroughs realize that the Ethical Screen Model has its own inherent problems, among which they make note of 1) incompatible standards within the screen, 2) incompatible standards within a category in the screen, 3) the use of different standards to judge a single event or problem by different “actors” or “adjudicators,” and finally 4) the potential for dishonest or devious use of ethical standards by which genuine ethicalness may well be thwarted or even punished by actual unethicalness of behavior. These problems notwithstanding, Immegart and Burroughs urge the use of the Ethical Screen Model for setting up a reasonable, rational process of determining the most ethical decision possible.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Immegart, 92-94.

⁴⁵ Ibid , 92-97.

MacIver urges the use of a concept called “the Ideal” to settle disputes among competing ethical standards. In this model, individuals are urged to ponder what “universal principle” is at stake, and what the “ideal” situation would be. Having done this in a reasonable and rational manner, the individual chooses the ethical standard or behavior that is most in line with the universal principle involved, and the ideal situation he has decided upon. What is most ethical, therefore, is that which most closely adheres to the universal principle and that which most closely parallels the ideal. MacIver dismisses lists of ethical rules as just “societally approved ways” of reaching the ideal, and reiterates that it is the appeal to the ideal itself that determines the degree of ethicalness in any individual decision.⁴⁶

For Kenneth Blanchard and Norman Vincent Peale, a simple three-question Ethics Check provides the answer to the question “Is it ethical?” These authors suggest that a course of action must answer each of the three questions positively in order to “pass muster” on the Ethics Check, and thus qualify as an ethical decision. In cases of competing ethical standards, the more positive the response overall, the more ethical the decision. The Blanchard-Peale Ethics Check model includes the following questions:

- 1) Is it legal? -- “Will I be violating either civil law or company policy?”
- 2) Is it balanced? -- “Is it fair to all concerned in the short term as well as the long term? Does it promote win-win relations?”
- 3) How will it make me feel about myself? -- “Will it make me proud? Would I feel good if my decision were published in the newspaper? Would I feel good if my family knew about it?”⁴⁷

It is interesting to note that this somewhat simplified measure of ethicalness does contain elements similar to the Ethical Screen Model (note the societal, professional and organizational ethics suggested by question #1 and the personal ethics suggested by question #2) as well as a teleological concern with the end result, as suggested in question #3. Note also that a deontological concern with the means is only suggested indirectly by the wording of question #3, suggesting further that the Ethics Check is a generally

⁴⁶ Robert M. MacIver, “The Social Significance of Professional Ethics,” The Annals 297 (January 1955): 118-124.

⁴⁷ Kenneth Blanchard and Norman Vincent Peale, The Power of Ethical Management (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1988), 27.

utilitarian, consequentialist approach to determining ethicalness and settling disputes between competing ethical standards.

Quantitative measures have also been attempted in an effort to sort through competing ethical standards. We have discussed Bentham's attempt to quantify ethics by use of the hedonistic calculus; modern-day efforts to do much the same have also been attempted. One such attempt was the Ethical Judgment Scale, a quantitative survey instrument developed by Van Hoose and Paradise to identify various levels of "ethicalness" in individual decisions.⁴⁸ The instrument has come under heavy critical fire, most recently by Quinton Doromal Jr. and Donald G. Creamer, who wrote in the March 1988 edition of the Journal of College Student Development that the Ethical Judgment Scale was of "questionable validity" and displayed "unacceptably low reliability" even though three different scoring methods were used in the analysis of the instrument by the authors.⁴⁹ Similarly, research done by Sherry K. Gable and Larry L. Kavich in 1981 indicated that two subscales of the Halpin Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (the L.B.D.Q.) are positively correlated with what the authors termed "ethical leadership ability." The subscales positively linked with ethical leadership are Initiation of Structure and Consideration, and the authors claimed that "high scores on both Initiation of Structure and Consideration mean positive ethical perspectives for leadership potential."⁵⁰ The subscales would thus theoretically produce a way to quantitatively determine how ethical a potential leader might be, which is relevant to the discussion on how to discriminate between competing ethical standards. It is noted that this research has been the subject of much dispute as well, and to date no further meaningful quantitative measurement of ethicalness has come out of Gable's and Kavich's work.

A final method of determining ethicalness and discriminating between competing ethical standards is found in the recent work of Kenneth Strike, Emil Haller, and Jonas Soltis.

⁴⁸ W.H. Van Hoose and L.V. Paradise, Ethics In Counselling and Psychotherapy (Cranston: Carroll Press, 1979).

⁴⁹ Quinton S. Doromal and Donald G. Creamer, "An Evaluation of the Ethical Judgment Scale," Journal of College Student Development (29 March 1988): 151-158.

⁵⁰ Sherry K. Gable and Larry L. Kavich, Ethical Perspectives: Leadership Subscales Applied to Education (Washington D.C. : ERIC Clearinghouse, 1981).

These authors have proposed the concept of moral reasoning as the key to determining the most ethical standard of conduct in any situation. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the authors draw a distinction between mere preferences and ethical judgments, demonstrating that ethical judgments involve applicable standards of conduct that determine the ethicalness or unethicalness of an action or decision. The authors then seek to show that certain basic a priori principles can be applied to ethical judgments so as to objectively determine just how “right” or “wrong” they actually are. Strike, Haller, and Soltis relegate moral skepticism to being a symptom of simple misunderstanding of the difference between ethical judgments and preferences. Their essentially deontological point of view allows actions and decisions to be judged by the application of several basic ethical principles.⁵¹

Having argued that individual actions can be divided into the ethical and the unethical, and having admitted that individuals are often faced with choices between competing ethical standards, the authors confront the obvious problem that haunts any such discussion: how does an individual go about making the ethically correct decision? Their most recent book, The Ethics of School Administration, directly confronts this issue. The book itself is filled with morally complex case studies (borderline cases, in the Wilsonian vernacular) which are used to illustrate common ethical dilemmas and to serve as teaching tools in the application of moral reasoning to ethical problems. The book is designed for instructors of ethics, who are to use the case studies to Socratically lead their students through the thicket of ethical problems and into the light of ethical decisions. The process they espouse by which to sort through complex ethical issues is called moral reasoning.

Moral reasoning is similar in a basic manner to Beck’s precept of applying abstract principles to individual cases. It involves utilizing several fundamental ethical principles as yardsticks by which to measure and discuss ethical problems inherent in any situation. It requires students to justify the applicability of these principles in individual cases, and then to clarify as much as possible the actual ethicalness of any particular course of action in terms of the applied universal principles and their justified applicability to the situation at hand. Moral reasoning is best done in an atmosphere of ethical inquiry, say the authors.

⁵¹ Strike, 9-19, 36-43.

Ethical inquiry refers to a process of moral discourse, Socratic in method, as the students are led to look into, more deeply consider, discuss, and exchange ideas about the ethical issue at hand before reaching any conclusions, however tentative those conclusions may be. Thus, moral reasoning may be seen as another method of differentiating between several possible courses of ethical action, accomplished by the application of fundamental principles of ethics, justifying their applicability, and using ethical inquiry to clarify what is “morally preferable” in any given case.

One fundamental principle is called “the principle of benefit maximization.” The authors define it as such:

The principle of benefit maximization holds that, whenever we are faced with a choice, the best and most just decision is the one that results in the most good, or the greatest benefit, for the most people. Thus, the principle of benefit maximization judges the morality of our actions by our consequences.⁵²

Such a consequentialist determinant of ethicalness, reminiscent as it is of Bentham and Mill, cannot stand alone, however; the authors’ opposition to a strictly consequentialist-utilitarian view of ethics has been alluded to elsewhere in this paper (8-10). Thus, there is a second principle, the principle of equal respect, which holds equal weight with benefit maximization in the determination of an ethical choice. The principle of equal respect, as stated by the authors, includes the following:

The principle of equal respect requires that we act in ways that respect the worth of (all) moral agents. It requires that we regard human beings as having intrinsic worth and treat them accordingly. The principle of equal respect can be seen as having three subsidiary ideas: 1)First, the principle of equal respect requires us to treat people as ends rather than means...we may not treat them as though they were simply means to further our own goals. We must respect their goals as well. 2)Second...we must regard as central the fact that people are free and rational moral agents. This means above all we must respect their freedom of choice...even when we do not agree with them. Moreover, it means we must attach a high priority to enabling people to decide responsibly. 3)Third, no matter how people differ, as moral agents they are of equal value. (This) means that they are entitled to the same basic rights and that their interests are of equal value. It does not mean that we must see people as equal insofar as capacities or abilities are concerned. Nor does it mean that relevant differences cannot be recognized among people in deciding how to treat them. However, as persons, everyone has equal worth.⁵³

⁵² Strike, 16-17.

⁵³ Strike, 17-18.

The authors add various other subsidiary principles to these initial two as they investigate sample cases of ethical dilemmas, in areas such as intellectual liberty, educational evaluation, equal opportunity, and the role of authority. The subsidiary principles include:

1) The Principle of Equal Treatment -- Noting that benefit maximization can, on its own, produce "morally abhorrent results," the authors suggest the principle of equal treatment: "In any given circumstances, people who are the same in those respects relevant to how they are treated in those circumstances should receive the same treatment."⁵⁴

2) The Principle of Due Process -- People should be judged on standards that are both known in advance and are sufficiently clear, that are consistently applied, and upon decisions that have been made "on the basis of reasonable evidence" and by procedures that have been followed to "make such evidence available on a systematic basis."⁵⁵

3) The Principle of Democracy -- "A decision is made democratically if 1) the interests of each individual are fairly considered and 2) each individual had a fair influence on the decision. Each feature is required...because the first, by itself, is consistent with a benevolent despot...and the second, by itself, is consistent with a tyrannical majority."⁵⁶

It is in the application of these five major principles of ethical behavior through a process of ethical or moral discourse that we can arrive at the most ethical decision possible, according to the moral reasoning model. Note again that the process allows for tension and disparity among the five principles, a tension that will be resolved through the process of ethical discourse. Such discourse will bring each principle to bear on a situation, attempt to justify its applicability in the situation, and then clarify through discussion the most morally preferable course of action. Strike, Haller, and Soltis present numerous cases in their book with which to apply the process of moral reasoning; their work represents one more model by which individuals can determine the ethicalness of various actions and decisions, and discriminate among competing ethical claims.

⁵⁴ Strike, 53.

⁵⁵ Strike, 76-77.

⁵⁶ Strike, 94.

ETHICS AND EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE THEORY

We now must turn our attention to the next issue confronting any researcher in the field of ethics and educational administration, and that, logically, is the relationship between ethics and the educational administrative field.

Literature in the field of the relationship between ethics and school administration follows a similar path as did our original discussion of ethics, a path divided into two separate ways on which to walk. Philosophers have split dramatically in their view of the role that ethics plays in educational administration; one camp, the more dominant positivists, claim that educational administration must follow the route of pure science as it attempts to become "intellectually respectable," as Rizvi puts it,⁵⁷ while a growing number of philosophers are calling for an end to the false distinction between science and values, and an embracing of values and ethics as part and parcel of the legitimate business of educational administration.

Wilf Carr has written a paper entitled "What Makes Educational Administration Possible?," in which he claims that the positivist view of educational administration became dominant only as the result of a false and ill-informed repudiation of the original and longstanding view which embraced values, morals, and ethics. Carr states that education itself, in the original Aristotelian sense, was an "ethical theory of self-realization" whose task was to "indicate those excellences and states of mind, the cultivation of which enable man to transcend the limitations of his nature and to realize his true end."⁵⁸ Such a definition precludes separating the educational end from the educational means, since "good," man's true end, cannot be viewed as "some causally produced end product or some predetermined goal."⁵⁹ Rather, it serves as a means of "giving expression to those

⁵⁷ Fazal Rizvi, Working Papers in Ethics and Educational Administration (Deakin: Deakin University Printery, 1985), 2.

⁵⁸ Wilf Carr, "What Makes Educational Administration Possible?," from Working Papers in Ethics and Educational Administration, Fazal Rizvi, ed., (Deakin: Deakin University Press, 1985), 10.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

values” which are used in “assessing the educative value of whatever means are to be employed.”⁶⁰ In other words, Carr is stating that values in education are both part of the end being sought as well as serving as the guides by which the means are established. This, then, leads to several central features endemic to this form of educational theorizing, according to the author. First, it is a “form of reflective enquiry which presumes that educational judgments ...are always ethical judgments .”⁶¹ Second, it is a form of thinking that requires ethics and values to consider how educational institutions and practices are aiding or impeding the practical realization of educational values and goals. Finally, since ethical judgments draw upon “metaphysical and moral beliefs,” it makes no sense at all to distinguish between ethical knowledge and factual knowledge in terms of educational goals.

Much of the cause of the “fall” of this type of educational philosophy can be traced to the positivism of the late nineteenth century, when men like Spencer, Huxley, and Bain sought to establish a science of education which could replicate the aims, methods , and achievements of the natural sciences, states Carr. A second cause was the skepticism of the 1940’s and 1950’s, in which educational theory was attacked for its over-reliance on value judgments and ethical precepts. Finally, Carr lays blame upon the modern British analytic philosophers for denouncing that which was “value-laden” and separating it neatly and succinctly from that which was “factual.” It is this last concept, the separation of fact from value, that has dehumanized educational administration into a strictly utilitarian, positivist, scientific, and antinaturalist endeavor.

Other philosophers have adopted Carr’s view. The work of Gabrielle Lakomski similarly derides the positivist-antimetaphysical view by attacking the very notion that facts and values can be separated even in the sciences. Values are inherent in any theorizing about the natural world and the social world, thus injecting values into the scientific enterprise before it has even begun. Values are part of why certain projects are chosen; social constraints and personal values that are reactive to them are also part of the choice of certain projects. Man’s social world and his personal values also influence the ways and

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

means by which he categorizes the phenomena he encounters; taken together, this accounts for Lakomski's conclusion that "any social theory subscribing to value-freedom...is a false, and hence unacceptable, theory."⁶²

Max Weber stands most dominant among the educational administrative theorists who subscribed to and promoted the positivist, anti-value position. Weber viewed the work of the educational administrator as something that could be judged scientifically, and without reference to values or ethics. "All serious reflection about...human conduct is oriented primarily in terms of the categories 'ends' and 'means'...the appropriateness of means for achieving a given end is undoubtedly accessible to scientific analysis," he wrote, but even Weber admitted that it is "indisputable" that science cannot answer the "only question important to us: What shall we do and how shall we live?"⁶³ Yet in all other matters, Weber applied the positivist test upon knowledge that was to be acceptable to man, and this positivist imprint created much of the Theory of Bureaucracy that dominated educational administrative theory for decades.

Herbert Simon, who wrote Administrative Behavior in 1958, accepted the validity of the fact/value dichotomy as a "very fundamental one for administration" because it leads at once to "an understanding of what is meant by a 'correct' administrative decision."⁶⁴ Simon concluded that ethical terms cannot be reduced to factual terms, and since truth is grounded in correspondence with facts, Simon found it impossible to accept that ethical statements had any role in educational administrative theory. Instead, he dismissed values as that which is validated only by "human fiat," or consensus.

In opposition to such rampant positivism, T.B. Greenfield arose to write of the "interweaving of fact and value" in educational administration.⁶⁵ Greenfield did not dispute

⁶² Gabrielle Lakomski, "Theory, Value and Relevance in Educational Administration," from Working Papers in Ethics and Educational Administration (Deakin: Deakin University Press, 1985), 35-57.

⁶³ Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, From Max Weber: Essays In Sociology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 77-128.

⁶⁴ Herbert Simon, Administrative Behavior (New York: MacMillan and Sons, 1958), 45.

⁶⁵ Thomas B. Greenfield, "Understanding Educational Organizations as Cultural Entities," a paper delivered at the University of Illinois, 13-15 July 1981, II.

the dichotomy between facts and values, putting him in agreement with Simon and Weber on this concept; instead, he argued the critical importance of values in the process of making administrative decisions. He derided any theory that excluded values, stating that "Facts decide nothing. It is we who decide about the facts."⁶⁶ It was Greenfield who sought to re-accentuate the role of the individual human being in educational administration, terming the Weberian school of thought as "the case of the disappeared individual." Assuming this is so, Greenfield argued for the re-emergence of values and ethics as a crucial part of the human enterprise in educational theory and practice. This author sought for educational administrative theory to be one in which "the individual reappears as thinker, doer, actor, choice-maker, power wielder, and - most importantly - as builder and arbiter of values."⁶⁷ Thus, Greenfield stands in counterpoint to the very empirical view put forth by Weber and Simon; Greenfield attempts to return values and ethical judgments to their rightful place as critical parts of educational administrative theory, and to return the individual who holds these values "onto the main stage" of importance in the study of administration.

It is Hodgkinson who takes up where Greenfield leaves off, arguing for the notion that administration is simply "philosophy in action" and stating that the two are inextricably interrelated because facts and values are similarly inextricably interrelated in educational administration. Hodgkinson rejected the positivism of Weber and Simon because it ignored the critical role of values in human behavior. Hodgkinson hoped to develop a separate philosophy for educational administration, one quite distinct from the philosophies of other human endeavors, by assimilating the many schools of thought in educational organizational theory, and producing a unique philosophy which would be marked by four fundamental features: 1) a concern for language and meaning, 2) some of the disciplines of formal logic, 3) general critical skills, and 4) a major concern with values.⁶⁸ This

⁶⁶ Greenfield, 12.

⁶⁷ Thomas B. Greenfield, "Theories of Educational Organization: A Critical Perspective," International Encyclopedia of Education: Research and Studies (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1985), 19.

⁶⁸ Christopher Hodgkinson, The Philosophy of Leadership (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1983), 196-197.

administrative philosophy would serve to guide individuals into making the right choice as well as the satisfactory one, in other words, allowing administrators to be morally and ethically correct in their decisions as well as being properly and realistically grounded in the facts of the situation. Hodgkinson himself admitted to a dichotomy between facts and values, supporting Moore's concept of the naturalistic fallacy in such statements as "it is ...the quality of truth which most clearly distinguishes values from facts, for value can never be true or false," citing facts as "that which is grounded in reality," and values as "concepts of the desirable, with motivating force" which can exist "only in the mind of the value-holder...(as) a condition which ought to be."⁶⁹ Hodgkinson, then, like Greenfield, stands at the forefront of the movement through which values, ethics, and moral judgment have been returned to their rightful place in educational administrative theory.

ETHICAL CODES AND RESEARCH

Such a review of philosophical literature and how it relates to the role of ethics in educational administration leads to one final area of concern: the codes of conduct and the educational research done in the name of ethics in educational administration.

The two most prominent codes of ethical conduct for educational administrators have been those developed by the National Education Association (the N.E.A.) and the American Association of School Administrators (the A.A.S.A.). They both are codes whose main significance is exhortatory; a relatively insignificant number of educators have ever been officially reprimanded or punished as a result of violating these codes, both of which were written by organizations that are voluntary in nature. Yet both codes address values and ethics as serious and integral parts of the educational profession. Both offer specific precepts by which to make decisions and act ethically as a member of the educational profession. Both, in short, seek to elevate ethics into its rightful place in the educational community. Of the two, the A.A.S.A. code is more instructive in terms of the topic of this paper, as it relates directly to school administrators, whereas the N.E.A. code

⁶⁹ Christopher Hodgkinson, Towards A Philosophy of Administration (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Inc., 1978), 105.

is aimed more generally at all members of the educational profession; as such, we will look at the professional code of ethics designed specifically for educational administrators, whose work is at the center of this research study.

The history of the code reflects the aforementioned struggle of philosophers and theoreticians to restore ethics to a preeminent position in educational administration. The A.A.S.A. had no code of ethics in any formal sense throughout the first century of its existence. In the 1950's, efforts were made by some members to introduce a code of ethics to the membership, but their efforts were never accepted by the majority, and, as Knezevich says, these early efforts "died aborning." (Knezevich also theorizes that the reason for this early failure to adopt a code of administrative ethics was either a "failure to find ways to articulate moral concerns" or simply a matter of "the time was not ripe"⁷⁰; we may also theorize that the rise of positivism, the concomitant downplaying of metaphysical and ethical concerns, and the general unpopularity of ethics legislation as it is viewed by the group it is aimed at may have also contributed to this early failure.) By 1960, however, the efforts of the minority resulted in the formation of the subcommittee in charge of drawing up tentative ethical codes for the association. This subcommittee, made up of Knezevich, Paul Misner, and J.C. Wright, produced a 1962 report recommending an ethical code for A.A.S.A. members. Knezevich was named chairman of a new committee including Dr. James Harlow and Dr. Barnard Joy; this committee drew up the legislation of enforcement of the code of ethics, which was adopted by the full body of the organization in 1964. Thus, the first Code of Ethics of the American Association of School Administrators was born, along with an Ethics Committee to oversee its enforcement.

As noted above, the Code of Ethics, while intended to be enforced, has in fact become an exhortatory document. Knezevich himself states that in his three year tenure as Secretary of the organization, only ten administrators nation-wide were brought formally before the Ethics Committee.⁷¹ Yet the importance of such a document is clear. Ethics in educational administration has moved from positivism into a philosophical and theoretical resurgence, then back into the codified ethical legislation of a major national association of educational

⁷⁰ Knezevich, 17-19.

⁷¹ Knezevich, 21.

administrators. The next step? The resurgence of interest in ethics in research studies being done in the field of educational administration.

In the area of published ethics research, the name of Roy Dexheimer takes precedence in the field of educational administration. It was Dexheimer who, in 1967, launched a massive national research survey to determine the ethical level of school administrators. The survey was inspired by Jerome Carlin's previous study of lawyers in the New York area, and the extent to which they practically adhered to the New York State Bar Association Code of Ethics. Carlin had used a questionnaire method to survey the lawyers; the research instrument contained 13 borderline cases in which ethical issues specifically covered in the Code of Ethics were integrally involved. Carlin had used borderline cases because, as Dexheimer points out, "flagrant violations did not produce the candor so necessary for a reliable study."⁷² The results were disturbing and stark; lawyers in New York were "barely honest, let alone ethical", says Dexheimer, and "there was a material discrepancy between the ethical standards that the lawyers acknowledged were binding upon them, and the standards of conduct that many of them actually observed."⁷³ Furthermore, the research indicated that the presence of an ethical code and its formalized means of enforcement were ineffective as deterrents to unethical behavior; the Code of Ethics seems to have been used most often to punish those lawyers who had broken the civil law, and rarely used to punish those who had transgressed only against the code of ethics itself.⁷⁴ It was along the same lines of research methodology that Dexheimer launched his study of educational administrators' ethics in 1967.

A questionnaire of fifteen borderline cases, drawn directly from ethical precepts found in the A.A.S.A. Code of Ethics, was randomly sent to 443 organization members, of which 242 (54%) responded. Dexheimer found a similar situation to that which Carlin described -- a significant gulf between the proffered code of ethics of an organization and

⁷² Roy Dexheimer, "Administrative Ethics: A Study In Accommodation," from Ethics and the School Administrator, Glenn Immegart and John Burroughs, eds. (Danville: The Interstate Publishers and Printers, Inc., 1970), 30.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Jerome E. Carlin, Lawyers' Ethics: A Survey of the New York State Bar (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1967).

its members' actual day-to-day behavior. The study led Dexheimer to recommend tougher enforcement of ethical codes and increased training in ethical standards at the graduate level.

Dexheimer's study is but the most prominent early study of ethics in educational administration. More recent studies include Drips' 1988 research study at the University of Northern Iowa on the perceptions of Iowa educators of the work being done by that state's board of ethics and professional teaching practices; Glenda Sue Roby Segars' study of "The Administrative Ethics of Mississippi Public School Superintendents and the Executive Educator 100 for 1986," a study which utilized an innovative 15-question, multiple-choice format that also included data on whether the administrators were responding from actual experience, or in a hypothetical manner; Wunderlich's 1985 research at St. Louis University which sought to synthesize the philosophies of Jung, de Chardin, and Luijpen into a "foundation for ethics in educational administration"; and Barbara Ann Murray's 1986 research at Indiana State University on how superintendents viewed the performance of Indiana school boards and their own professional code of standards as expressed in the Indiana State School Board Association Guidelines. And yet, one cannot help but notice that, as welcome as such research is, there remains overall a paucity of research being done in so crucial an area. Less than twenty dissertation/research studies in the general area of educational administrative ethics completed within the last five years were found by a computerized, nation-wide search of dissertations, done at Loyola University of Chicago; it would seem that the aforementioned crisis in national ethics, that the specific charges leveled against education and schools in the area of producing more ethical students, that the resurgence of values and ethics within the philosophy and literature of educational administration, all would combine for a far greater recent body of research in this field than this admittedly random and unscientific survey of dissertations actually produced.

In essence, then, a review of the related literature in the field of ethics and educational administration has revealed a philosophical battle still being fought over the applicability and appropriateness of ethics and values being included in the field; it has shown a resurgence of philosophical and theoretical support for such an inclusion; it has demonstrated the pressures of a so-called "national ethical crisis" in stimulating discussion

of ethics in educational administration; and it has, paradoxically, uncovered a paucity of actual research having been done in this area over the past five years. It is on this final note that the research study proposed herein moves on to an explanation of its methodology.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

THE QUALITATIVE NATURE OF THE STUDY

As stated previously in this paper, the purpose of the study is to determine just what role ethics plays in the normal, day-to-day decisions of a specific set of school administrators, namely high school administrators, and, once determined, to investigate just how ethical these decisions really are. To that end, a qualitative research study has been designed.

The study is not qualitative without reason. Much has been said about the resurgent importance of human values in educational administration; it would be ironic at best and quite paradoxical at worst to design a strictly scientific, positivist-oriented, quantitative study of an area whose central topic is human values. Secondly, the study has as one of its goals the ability to elicit and discover the motivation behind decisions made routinely by high school administrators. Assessing the administrators' motives as often as possible is crucial; it is in discovering motive that we see whether it is an ethical consideration that is at the heart of a decision made from "behind the administrative desk," or if it is some other motive: politics, self-interest, timidity, or blind adherence to organizational policy. It seems quite improbable that motive would surface in a purely quantitative study; in fact, it is for this same reason that this study has avoided the efficient but unrevealing multiple-choice questionnaire methodology employed by Segars in her research among Mississippi school superintendents. The inclusion of room for, and encouragement of, direct and self-explanatory written responses on each question, as well as the follow-up interviews in person of twelve of the respondents, allow for much more exploratory room in which to seek real motivation. Thirdly, such a research design requires honesty and candor in its

responses; such a requirement is obvious, and yet cannot merely be assumed. Both Carlin and Dexheimer, in their studies of professionals done in the late 1960's, wrote eloquently of the need for candor if any research on ethical behavior and decision-making is to be the least bit reliable and valid. This study can do no less. The research design, therefore, is anonymous, to encourage candor; it requires three (3) direct written responses per question, in an attempt to insure that the respondent "reveals" himself or herself as openly and clearly as possible; it employs borderline cases rather than obvious or dramatic cases, for much the same reason as Carlin stated in 1966; and it employs the follow-up interviews, so that those respondents who voluntarily chose to surrender the anonymity and agreed to a meeting could thus potentially be interviewed in person. Such face-to-face interviews would allow the researcher to better clarify the motivation and reasoning with which the responses were given. Quantitative research would not have produced all the effects that this study so critically requires. Finally, it must be noted that the research study design here employed in some ways is responsive to Greenfield's work promoting the re-emergence of the "disappeared individual" in the study of educational administration, and its ethical dimension. It is felt that the real heart and soul of administrative theory will in fact be found in the values and decisions of the individual administrators who make up the profession, and not in the line-and-staff charts and hierarchical structures which make up the administrative organization. Therefore, the research study has been "geared", as it were, to the individual administrator, seeking in-depth and honest responses to routine situations, and following up with face-to-face interaction with a representative body of these same respondents, so as to better delve into the values, motives, and beliefs that make up the individuals we categorize as "high school administrators." In light of all of the above, it would seem that a qualitative research study design is in fact most appropriate, and perhaps quite necessary as well.

Questions might be legitimately raised about the survey method itself. Some might assert that surveys themselves are quantitative in nature, and that pure qualitative research would require some form of ethnographic immersion into the population being studied. It is here argued, therefore, that the survey method employed in this research is not intended to scientifically gather facts about the people involved in it; it is quite conversely designed

to gather feelings, values, beliefs, and motives from the people it surveys. Thus, while the form may resemble that of some quantitative studies, the information being elicited, and its subsequent usage, are far afield from quantitative work. Furthermore, the follow-up interview stage of the research study is in some ways ethnographic, in that it does immerse, briefly perhaps but surely, the researcher into the milieu of his respondents; furthermore, it intentionally allows the researcher to clarify, probe, and judge the values and beliefs espoused by the respondents. Thus, critics of a survey format for a qualitative study must look not just cursorily upon the external form of the research instrument, but much more closely upon the type of questions asked, the actual format within the form, and the subsequent stages of the study after the survey has been completed before judging such a design too harshly.

This is not to say that there are no features of the research design that are quantitative. An analysis of the biographical data gathered has been explicated using numerical averages and ranges, and references to these averages and ranges occur after each case in an attempt to seek patterns among responses by specific personal variables of the respondents. Similarly, results of the analysis of data are occasionally expressed in terms of percentages, to help present a clearer picture of the data. The research study does not depend on its relatively minor quantitative features, however; as such, it remains a study strongly grounded in qualitative foundations.

THE CASE STUDY APPROACH

Having determined the qualitative nature of the research design, it is time to explain its format in more detail. The survey instrument is intended to elicit responses from administrators on how they would handle certain routine decisions in their administrative roles, and, more importantly, what ethical implications they see in their decisions. To that end, three questions are asked after every one of the five cases given to the administrators on their survey instruments. The initial question asks what the administrator would do in the situation presented; this response allows the researcher to eventually gauge whether the administrator is acting ethically or not in making his decision on the situation presented.

The second question asks for reasons for the decision stated in the first response; this second question allows the researcher to delve into the motivation behind the administrator's decision. The third question asks the administrator to tell what, if any, ethical issues he sees involved in the situation as presented. This question produces responses which allow the researcher to gauge what might be termed "ethical awareness," the level of ethical thinking at which each administrator is operating as he makes his decision. (Note that the term "level" here is not intended as a jump to quantitative measurement; it is used as an indicator of how deeply or subtly the respondent sees the many levels of ethical problems within each given situation.) A more precise explanation of each survey question will follow; let us now turn our attention to the five situations, or cases, themselves.

The case study approach is quite in line with the qualitative, humanistic, value-oriented approach employed in this study. It is an approach to the study of ethics that can well be traced back to Aristotelian ethics, and the illustrative stories used to clarify complex moral and ethical issues. It is also an approach well-entrenched in many religions as they struggle to clarify and exemplify man's moral and ethical dilemmas; the use of stories and parables is commonplace in such situations. More precisely, the use of case studies or situations to study ethics is accepted currently as an especially effective and productive methodology. It has already been noted that Dexheimer used fifteen borderline case studies in his classic 1967 study of educational administrative ethics, a format he "borrowed" from Professor Carlin's 1966 ethical study of lawyers in New York. Current research has also employed such an approach. Segars' work in Mississippi similarly employed a case study approach. Eckel has used just such an approach in his book investigating industrial ethics⁷⁵; as previously noted, Strike, Haller, and Soltis employ precisely the same technique in their work⁷⁶, as does Kimbrough in his book about solving ethical dilemmas for educational administrators.⁷⁷ A 1987 article by Mark D. Havens, published in the Journal of

⁷⁵ Malcolm W. Eckel, The Ethics of Decision Making (New York: Morehouse-Barlow Company, 1968).

⁷⁶ Strike, 1-6.

⁷⁷ Ralph B. Kimbrough, Ethics: A Course of Study for Educational Leaders (Arlington: American Association of School Administrators Press, 1980).

Experiential Education, discussed the results of an analysis of 60 case studies involving ethical dilemmas routinely faced by educators.⁷⁸ Thus, the choice of a case study approach to research in ethics is well-grounded in historical precedent and recent methodology.

The type of cases presented are what might be called “borderline” cases, in the vernacular of the linguistic analyst John Wilson. Borderline cases are examples of an issue which approach the issue-at-hand in an indirect fashion. They are not dramatic or prima facie examples of an issue; neither are they odd, or eccentric, examples. Borderline cases are not “black and white” examples, to employ an apt metaphor; they are rather in “shades of gray.” There are several critical reasons to have chosen this type of case for the research study. One has already been mentioned; Carlin and Dexheimer have been quoted as stating their preference for this type of case as an effective means of promoting openness and candor in their respondents. Dramatic, overt, or blatant “black and white” issues are all too often responded to by rote; we “choose” the “right” answer blindly, without thought or insight, without reflection, merely by reflex. “Gray” cases do not allow the quite as much luxury; there is no immediate “reflex” answer and as such, the respondent must fall back upon experience, instinct, or “gut reaction.” As such, the researcher enjoys a much better chance of receiving an honest answer instead of a reflexively “correct” one. Another reason that borderline cases have been employed has already been alluded to above; they actively promote thinking, insight, reflection, and consideration before they can be answered. There are no “easy answers” to a borderline situation; one is forced to stop and think about the ramifications, the complexities, the competing arguments presented by a borderline case. In a qualitative study so interested in motivation and values as is this one, it behooves the researcher to encourage such introspection as much as is humanly possible. Finally, it must be noted that, if the research is intentionally attempting to mirror what might be called “real-life” or common, day-to-day issues faced by educational administrators, is it not logical to choose complex, “gray area,” borderline situations rather than the clear-cut, the “black and white,” the obvious? Borderline cases are more realistic in terms of actual work done by administrators in schools; thus, the choice of borderline examples may well produce more

⁷⁸ Mark D. Havens, “Learning from Ethical Dilemmas,” Journal of Experiential Education 10 (Spring 1987): 5-II.

realistic research findings about the ethical dimensions of administrative decision-making.

How the number and storylines of each case were chosen is another important methodological question. The situations themselves were developed first, from previous research, secondly, from actual day-to-day experiences of the researcher, and thirdly, from the work of an advisory panel which field-tested the situations. Cases from the aforementioned work of Segars, Eckels, Kimbrough, Havens, Strike, Haller, and Soltis were all read through thoroughly in an attempt to familiarize one's self with the types of cases most commonly used in ethical research, and to identify more specific types of situations that fit the researcher's desire for commonplace, day-to-day situations which could correctly be categorized as "borderline" examples. Secondly, the researcher drew upon his own experience of thirteen years as a high school administrator to narrow down the list of potentially usable situations; again, their commonplace nature and their status as "gray area," borderline cases was a preeminent qualification. Finally, ten sample cases were field-tested among ten high school administrators, including seven from the Chicago, Illinois area, and three from the northeastern Indiana region. The field-test committee members were all familiar with the intent of the research study; as such, they used similar criteria to judge which cases would be the most effective in drawing the desired kinds of responses. Length also factored into the field-test committee's selections, as did clarity ; overly-long situations were generally dismissed as "excessively and needlessly confusing" or too likely to "not be answered at all" by administrators who might feel "it takes too long to read this one." Advice on ways to present the situations more simply or concisely, without any concomitant loss of moral and ethical complexity or any shortchanging of the case's borderline nature, was solicited and taken. The result was the five cases presented in the final survey instrument, involving such common educational administrative situations as 1) writing a teacher observation, 2) handling a student discipline case, 3) dealing with a faculty critic, 4) dealing with an angry, influential parent, and 5) giving a teacher recommendation to another principal. It is worth repeating that the method used to select these five cases involved an attempt to present the most clearly written, concise, and simple situations possible, all of which were realistic, commonplace, and yet ethically complex and "borderline" in nature.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

A biographical questionnaire was also part of the survey instrument. The questionnaire asked for such information as 1) administrative title, 2) age, 3) gender, 4) highest academic degree earned, 5) number of years as an administrator, 6) number of years in current administrative position, 7) number of students in the school, 8) public or private/parochial school, 9) membership in the A.A.S.A., and 10) salary range. Respondents were also encouraged to indicate at the bottom of the biographical questionnaire whether they would be willing to submit to a personal interview sometime after the survey had been completed and returned. This last request was, of course, optional, and the biographical questionnaire was anonymous in the sense that the respondent's name was in no way written or indicated on the form. Respondents willing to be interviewed, of course, were instructed to sign their names to the biographical questionnaire, a quite necessary departure from the overall pure anonymity of the survey instrument.

The biographical questionnaire's design was based on the kinds of questions asked by Dexheimer in his 1967 study, and replicated to a great degree by Segars in her 1986 research. Both Dexheimer and Segars used this information to postulate theories after their research had been done; both attempted to correlate various factors such as age, degree earned, salary, and A.A.S.A. membership to the different types and levels of ethical responses they received. Title was not an important category to either, since both researched ethical respondents among school superintendents only; the research proposed here looked at high school administrators in general, and as such there are principals, assistant principals, vice-principals, and deans all serving as respondents. Because of this, title became a potential factor in this research just as it was irrelevant as a factor for Dexheimer and Segars. A.A.S.A. membership was included as an indicator of the respondent's potential familiarity with the American Association of School Administrators' Code of Ethics; this was a critical factor in Dexheimer's research, since his fifteen cases were drawn directly from the precepts of the Code, and his interests lay in finding whether

the Code itself was a factor in encouraging ethicalness among association members; thus, membership in the A.A.S.A. was a must for the Dexheimer study. It was less of a factor in Segars' study, and even less of a factor here; its inclusion only serves as a more general indicator of familiarity with the most "famous" administrative code in education, and its practicality would be determined by the results of the survey itself if in fact membership in the A.A.S.A. seemed to come forward as a critical variable in ethicalness. The public vs. private/parochial school information was also one irrelevant to Dexheimer and Segars; both their target groups were, of course, public school superintendents. For this research study, however, a random sample of high school administrators was solicited, and as such it may have proven to be a critical variable in the survey results; hence, its inclusion on the biographical questionnaire. Finally, it must be noted that the questionnaires themselves were number-coded on the top right corner of the paper, as a fall-back system with which to identify administrators who volunteered for personal interviews. (Remember that the name of the school and its location do not appear anywhere on the biographical questionnaire or, of course, on the survey instrument.) The number-coding was not used in any other way except to identify administrators for interviews if they so volunteered, and to identify schools that had not complied at all with the first mailing, so that a second mailing encouraging their participation in the research study would be possible.

The sample population of the survey was narrowed down to one general category: high school administrators, defined as principals, assistant principals, vice-principals, or deans, who were employed in the southern region of the Chicagoland area and in the northeastern region of the state of Indiana. It seems appropriate to explain just why this qualification was chosen for the sample population in this survey.

The choice of secondary schools as a variable for the members of the sample administrative population was intended to accomplish several purposes. First, the term "educational administrators" had to be defined and narrowed so as to make it manageable for the purposes of this survey. One way to do this was to narrow the survey's focus somewhat: superintendents only, principals only, small schools only, or some similar category. Thus, limiting the sample population to high school administrators only was a means of making the research manageable. Secondly, secondary school administration is a

field that the researcher himself is familiar with, having worked for seventeen years as a high school instructor and administrator both in the parochial and public schools. This familiarity suggested that the secondary schools would be an area where the researcher would have the best possible opportunity to draw upon his background of experience to the benefit of the research study. Practical knowledge of the day-to-day routines, programs, decisions, problems, and activities at the secondary level made the choice of this category for the research study a pragmatic one. Thirdly, the selection of secondary school administrators created a more accessible potential sample population for the survey, as opposed to selections such as "elementary school administrators" or "superintendents." There are often 3-5 administrators in a large urban high school, and as such the chances of receiving an acceptable amount of responses for the purposes of the survey were enhanced considerably by this choice. (Elementary schools often have but one administrator; most districts, of course, have but one superintendent.) It was with all of this in mind that the field of study was narrowed to the secondary schools.

The choice of geographic boundaries for the survey was more a matter of convenience and accessibility than anything else. Since it was crucial to be able to interview any of the respondents face-to-face, it was most expedient, efficient, and practical to limit the boundaries of the sample population to an area easily accessible to the researcher. The southern region of the Chicagoland area, including the South and Southwest sides of Chicago, Illinois, and the suburban region surrounding these areas, was one such area. The northeastern Indiana area, which borders closely to Chicago's Southeast side and is the location of the researcher's current high school, is similarly accessible. Questions may arise as to the validity of the survey, based as it is on so small and select a population, all of whom share a very common geographic area; however, the researcher feels that all the administrators contacted in this area, having been randomly and blindly chosen without any regard to the size, nature, or any other factor concerning the schools in question, do in fact represent a valid sample population from which to draw valid research conclusions. Caution, of course, had to be taken to qualify the abovementioned conclusions; statements had to be worded so that the fact that all the administrators represented come from a close, common Midwestern geographic area is apparent to anyone reading these research study

conclusions and recommendations. With this qualification in mind, however, there seems to be no inherent problems with the sample population chosen.

We now turn to the order and wording of the three questions which follow each of the five case studies in the survey instrument. It is first noted that, in all five of the case studies, the questions are worded exactly the same, are in the same exact order, and even are printed with the exact same space following each one, so as in no way encourage different lengths or degrees of response on any one question anywhere in the survey. The order of the questions was chosen with care, after advice from professors at Loyola University of Chicago and from the field-test committee of ten. The first question, "What would you do in this situation?," was aimed at getting the respondent's initial, "gut-reaction" response to the situation. Suggestions that the third question, "What ethical issue(s) do you see in this situation?," be moved to first in order by several reviewers of the survey-in-creation were ultimately decided against for fear they would put the respondents "on guard" too quickly as to the ethical nature of the situation, and thus color somewhat the candid response as to what the administrator would actually do in such a case. The argument arises that, after the first set of three questions (and, perhaps, after reading the letter of introduction which states the general nature of the research study) the respondent is already "on guard" as to the ethical nature of all the situations, and will automatically become more guarded in his responses. One can only respond that the current order of questions is the best and only means to at least try to counteract such an occurrence, if not a perfect way. (Note also that the choice of borderline cases and the promise of anonymity have been included in this research study as yet other means to assure the most open and candid responses to the situations presented.) Finally, the middle question, "What reason(s) would you give for this decision?," aims for the motivation, the values, the beliefs behind the decision that was made, and explained, in the first response. The great importance of finding the motivation behind these decisions has already been discussed earlier in this chapter; question #2 has as its goal the discovery of motive, as well as clues to the reasoning and logic used in making a decision, and the values uppermost in the respondent's mind as he makes that decision. It is also important to note that the absence of response(s) to the second and third questions could also be revealing; if certain

key values are not mentioned at all in one or a series of second question responses, or similarly if ethical issues listed in the third question are of a dubious nature (or, of course, if the response is "There are no ethical issues in this situation"), then the respondent has revealed himself in another way, and more information has in fact been gathered as a result of significant non-answers. It must also be noted that the process by which the order of questions was determined is not meant to imply any preconceived mistrust of the administrators' responses; it was done only to prevent as much as possible an over-consideration of the ethical nature of the situation before the respondents wrote down what they would actually do in a certain situation. This explains the methodology behind the order and wording of the questions in the research instrument.

As to the number of them (three), it was the reaction of the field-test committee that ultimately decided the final number of questions asked per case. Just as the committee balked at earlier surveys of more than five cases, and just as they balked at case study descriptions that were "excessively long," so too did the committee feel that more than three questions per case would put an undue burden on the respondents, both psychologically and physically. The field testing done suggested that the earlier, longer versions would result in shorter and less responsive answers, and a larger percentage of noncompliance with the survey itself. Thus, it was ultimately the practical work done in field-testing the survey that resulted in a five-case, three-question-per-case format for the instrument.

Having completed the design process, 283 surveys were sent out to 94 different secondary schools in the southern Chicagoland and northeastern Indiana areas. The packet was sent to the principal of each of the 94 high schools, with a cover letter to the principal explaining the survey, and asking the principal's compliance and help in filling out the survey himself or herself, and distributing other enclosed copies to the other administrators in the building, defined as assistant principals, vice-principals, or deans. A cover letter to each administrator participating in the survey explained who the researcher was, what his task was, and what the nature of the research being conducted was. Anonymity was promised without any reservations; no respondent's name would ever be used in discussions of or in the writing of the research study, or at any time afterward (although it again must be noted that a number-code on each survey did allow for determining which

schools had or had not returned any surveys, and that the introductory letter allowed for any administrator to voluntarily surrender his or her anonymity and participate in a face-to-face, follow-up interview). Instructions were given as to how, in general, the survey should be filled out ; the instructions included admonitions to answer each question as much at length and in depth as possible, along with an apology for the “extra workload” being given to anyone generous enough to participate). A return envelope, stamped and self-addressed to the researcher, was supplied for each potential respondent. The surveys were initially sent out in December of 1989; a second set was sent to non-responding schools in late February and early March of 1990, using, of course, the number-code to identify non-complying schools. The second mailing of surveys included a courteous letter asking “one last time” if it would be “at all possible” for that school’s administrators to respond to the survey. The result was that by April 1, 1990, a total of 101 surveys had been returned complete. The 101 surveys returned represent a compliance rate of 35.7%, after two mailings. Of the 94 schools contacted, a total of 49 responded through at least one administrator, for a compliance rate by school of 52.1%, after two mailings. An analysis of the biographical questionnaire revealed that the average respondent was a male Assistant Principal, not an A.A.S.A. member, 41-45 years old, with a Master’s degree, 1-10 years of administrative experience, and 1-5 years at his current job. He earned \$35-45,000 per year and was employed at either a public or private high school of 1000-1200 students.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

With the surveys in hand, analysis of the results was initiated. The methodology used in the analysis of the surveys revolves around the two major research questions to be answered: 1) what role does ethics play in the day-to-day decisions of secondary school administrators, and 2) what findings does an investigation of just how ethical these decisions really are yield? A review of the methodology employed in this twofold analytic process follows.

First, what role does ethics play in the day-to-day decisions made by secondary school administrators? We have already attempted to define ethics in such a way as to make its use

viable in our research; ethics represents the philosophical values held by an individual as demonstrated in his actions or decisions, and ethical decisions and actions require at a minimum elements of universality, impartiality, consistency, a respect for reason and truth, a respect for the value and dignity of others, and a concern for the best possible consequences for others. Using this definition, the first order of business was to analyze each case objectively, using the moral reasoning model proposed by Strike, Haller, and Soltis. (It has previously been demonstrated that ethics can be discussed objectively, as we have laid down a basically deontological foundation for this research paper which proposes several a priori principles which can serve as standards by which to make ethical judgments, and we have dismissed many objections to such an objective discussion by clarifying the difference between moral (ethical) judgments, and mere preferences, which have no real relation to truth, falsity, or objectivity.)⁷⁹ Thus, using moral reasoning, each case was analyzed in terms of discovering the basic ethical premises involved. Having established the basic ethical premises of each case, the researcher analyzed the responses made to questions 1, 2, and 3 by the respondent administrators so as to determine how often truly ethical premises were involved in the decision listed in the first response. This analysis answered the question of the role that ethics plays in common decision-making processes by high school administrators -- in other words, how often and to what degree are ethical premises called upon to make a decision?

Secondly, just how ethical are the decisions that were made? Using moral reasoning, the researcher analyzed the three questions again, this time in an attempt to objectively judge the ethicalness of the decision. Questions 2 and 3 provide important motivational background to the response to question 1; these responses were analyzed to determine the reason behind the decision, the basic values that inspired and fueled it, the type and degree of ethical issues seen in the case itself. By analyzing the second and third responses within the framework of their being the motivating force behind the decision made by the respondent, the researcher was able to judge just how truly ethical the decision really was.

Finally, each analysis of survey data also included a brief discussion of any significant

⁷⁹ Strike, 3-5, 9-19, 32-43, 53-62, 76-84, 93-106.

correlation, if any existed, between the biographical data and the responses elicited by the survey. This use of a basically quantitative methodology was intended only to help clarify some of the results and conclusions drawn from the responses of the administrators in the case-study portion of the survey instrument.

It is crucial to this research that the distinction between the two research questions is clear. The first research question and the methodology utilized to answer it were both intended to determine how often ethical standards are called upon in making a routine decision. The discussion therefore centered on whether ethical notions even enter into the decisions made by the respondent administrators. No attempt was made to judge whether the decision itself was an ethical one or not; research question #1 simply aimed at determining the presence of valid ethical concepts in the decision-making process.

Research question #2 dealt with the final judgment on the decision itself. The second question was analyzed using moral reasoning to decide if the final decision per se was in fact an ethical one. It is more than possible that a decision could be made which at some time considered ethical principles, and yet eventually modified, compromised, or disregarded them. This is the framework within which the difference between the two research questions lies. The first research question simply seeks to determine the presence of ethical standards in the decision-making process; the second research question seeks to determine if the final decision itself was an ethical one.

One qualifying statement is required here. Moral reasoning, as proposed by Strike, Haller, and Soltis, makes no claim to being the final and complete arbiter of ethicalness. It is a process of discourse and inquiry that clarifies and enlightens the discussion of ethics in educational administration. Thus, as we approach the second research question, the researcher makes no contention that the ethicalness of any particular decision has been adjudicated in some final, complete, and unchallengeable way; we do contend, however, that the discussion clarified the issues involved enough so that we could in fact make a general determination as to which decisions were ethical, and which were not. The evidence of motivation found in the second and third questions was utilized here extensively. This is in keeping with the non-positivist, non-consequentialist, deontological foundations of this research, for ethics is seen here as both ends and means, philosophy

and action, and as such, we could not have judged a decision to be ethical merely because of the presence of ethical standards in the decision-making process, nor could we have judged a decision to be ethical simply because its consequences were ethical ones. If the means, or motivating forces, that fueled the administrator to make a decision were in fact tainted by non-ethical principles, then the decision itself could not be judged to be a truly ethical one. Ethics involves the ends and the means, the decision and its antecedent motivation, not just one or the other. It is in this light that the moral reasoning model was used to clarify the presence of ethical standards in the decision-making process of secondary school administrators, and the subsequent ethicalness of the decision itself.

Throughout the discussion, frequent references have been made to the twelve interviews held by the researcher with respondents to the survey. Anonymity required that the respondents be referred to only in oblique terms, most often by randomly chosen two-letter identifiers, such as “Administrator MD” or “Administrator IN”; their words, ideas, values, and standards have been quoted at length, however, whenever they could further clarify the discussion or shed light on the conclusions reached in any of the five cases.

This represents the methodology employed in the research study on the ethical dimensions of secondary school educational administrative decision-making. Our attention now turns to the analysis of the research data, and the conclusions to be drawn from that analysis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

CASE #1: WRITING A TEACHER OBSERVATION

You visit a classroom of a teacher who has been at your school for 36 years, and is only two years from retirement. The situation you observe is “terrible”-- 3-4 students sleeping, others doing homework for another class, one doing a crossword puzzle. The teacher passes out a worksheet and has students reading aloud as the others “answer” the questions. When you mention what you saw to your principal, he tells you that “it’s been like that for years in there” and “he’s so close to retirement that he isn’t going to change anyway.” The principal also tells you that he has been giving this teacher “good” reports for the past three years, for the above reasons. You now sit down to write your report.

ANALYSIS OF THE CASE

We begin by analyzing the case within the structure of moral reasoning, so as to clarify the inherent ethical principles at work in this case, and suggest the most ethical decision possible for the high school administrator involved in this case.

The principle of benefit maximization indicates ethicalness in a decision if that decision “provides the greatest benefit for the most people.” The administrator involved in this situation must therefore weigh the potential benefits for the courses of action that are open to him. One course of action is to follow the principal’s implied lead, and simply write a “good” report. The benefits here to the administrator are obvious, as he has avoided any problems with his immediate superior by neither making his principal’s previous reports look dubious, nor challenging his principal’s authority by disregarding the implied advice to not bother with writing an overly-critical report. The benefits for the teacher, of course, are quite obvious too; he does not have to alter his classroom work one bit, can continue to “take it easy” and run what has been described as a “terrible” classroom, and can approach retirement without any external pressure from the bureaucracy. The benefits for the principal are clear here too; the principal has his previous reports validated by a similar report being issued by his assistant, and he avoids

any conflict with the teacher. For the children involved, however, there are no benefits, save the visceral and shallow “benefits” of being able to sleep, do homework for other classes, and the like. By allowing the older teacher to continue to run a “terrible” classroom, the children are the “losers”; they are not receiving the maximum benefits possible from the educational process in the school, and the offending teacher is the cause of these lost benefits. Since the business of the school, so to speak, is to educate children, then clearly this loss of benefit (educational opportunity) is a most serious loss indeed. The teacher is losing a benefit as well; the teacher is losing the full benefit of the school’s professional development program, which could potentially help him achieve a higher level of proficiency as an instructor, but which apparently has been denied him through falsified and non-challenging evaluations for some years by the principal. The administrator’s lost benefits revolve around his professional integrity, for the administrator is not only losing his ability to truthfully and openly evaluate the offending teacher, but he is also losing an opportunity to personally participate in helping create a better overall learning environment for many students in his school. Taken together, it is clear that the benefit maximization principle weighs heavily on the side of the administrator deciding to write the report honestly and attempt to remediate the teacher as best he can, utilizing this honest evaluation.

The principle of equal respect must also be considered in analyzing this case within the moral reasoning model. This principle requires the individual to treat others as responsible moral agents who are not to be used to further the goals of others, to treat them as being of equal value with all other people, and to respect their freedom of choice. In the relationship between the teacher and the administrator, a case might be made that the administrator is in fact denying the teacher his “freedom of choice” in an attempt to “force” the teacher to change his regular classroom routine through the use of a critical evaluation and bureaucratic pressure. There is no indication that this teacher is being treated differently than the administrator has treated other teachers, and as such this aspect of the principle of equal respect does not seem to be in question here. In the relationship of the teacher to the principal, it seems a case can be made that the principal

has allowed maximum "freedom of choice" to this teacher, having removed even the pressure of a poor evaluation from constraining the teacher's classroom activities. The principal has used the teacher to a degree, in the sense he has parlayed his non-involvement in trying to improve the teacher's behavior into a "means" of avoiding strife, conflict, or confrontation in his school. Again, there is no indication in any sense that the principal has treated this teacher differently than he has treated others, and again this point is a moot one. In the relationship of the teacher to the children, however, the principle of equal respect is being violated handily. The teacher is not treating the children with the full import of their "intrinsic worth" by denying them the full benefits of a maximized learning environment. The teacher is in fact using his status as the person-in-charge of that classroom to make the children a means by which he can accomplish his own ends, that is, an "easy day" by means of a less-than-satisfactory classroom performance. And while the teacher may be characterized as allowing the children a maximum of "freedom of choice" in the classroom, note again that the freedom involves only visceral, non-productive, or inappropriate activity, such as sleeping, not paying attention, doing work for other classes that was not done properly at home, reading aloud to a class not listening in the first place, and so on. Finally, in the relationship between both the principal and the administrator to the children in this class, the principle of equal respect is in serious jeopardy if the problem continues to be overlooked. Both administrators will be failing to recognize the intrinsic worth of their charges if they allow them to be denied the full benefits of education; both will be using the children as means to their own ends of an easier, non-confrontational situation with the teacher in question. In summary, while the principle of equal respect offers some conflicting results when applied to this case, it can be said that this second ethical standard also weighs more heavily to the side of an honest report and an attempt to improve the teacher's performance for the sake of the children involved.

In terms of the three other principles of moral reasoning, it can be summarized that 1) the principle of equal treatment, requiring people who are equal in certain circumstances to be treated equally within those circumstances, does not seem to be involved in this case, based at least on the facts presented; 2) the principle of due

process, requiring others to be judged on the basis of standards that have been made clear in advance, are applied with consistency, and are the result of reasonable evidence made available on a systematic basis, has in fact been violated if the report is not in line with the “reasonable evidence” accrued from the administrator’s visit. The falsified report, if it is done, is neither based on the professional standards of the school (an assumption that can be made implicitly from the principal’s words) nor in line with the evidence in the case; due process is being subverted by a false report by the administrator; and 3) the principle of democracy, which allows each individual fair consideration and influence on decisions made that affect him, and which would only be involved in this case if a true, critical evaluation were not shared with the teacher in the future. Since this is not implied in any way within the scenario, the principle of democracy is a moot one in this case.

Does the teacher have a “right” to go into his last two years without fear of being fired, based on the previous series of reports which judged his performance to be “good?” Certainly it can be argued that the reverse-denial of due process afforded him when his poor performance was overlooked for three years and falsely soothing “good” ratings were awarded him could have convinced him that he was doing the “right” thing as far as his teaching methods were concerned. And yet to accede to such an argument is to deny an individual’s moral duty to himself, that is, to deny that the teacher has any responsibility ethically to judge himself according to the principles of moral reasoning. A reasonable teacher of experience would no doubt realize that his allowance of poor behavior and non-involvement with the learning process is not justifiable in terms of his responsibility to honor the intrinsic worth of his students. A reasonable teacher of experience would realize that he is in fact denying his charges the full benefit of his own ability to give them a good education. And a reasonable teacher of experience would no doubt realize that he is simply using the lack of administrative pressure to satisfy his own ends (an “easy day”) at the expense of the children’s education, thus making them mere means of accomplishing his own goals. Seen in this light, it is difficult to allow the teacher full benefit of the notion he will be “wronged” by an honest and critical report by the administrator. To allow such a notion is to deny an individual’s ethical duty to reflect on his own actions and decisions, and to conversely shift the entire responsibility for

such moral and ethical reflection onto others. However, it must be noted that the “falsely soothing” reports of the past do create a somewhat more sympathetic view of the ethical nature of this veteran teacher’s current behavior; added to the previously-discussed application of the principle of equal respect to this case, there does result a certain level of conflict among competing ethical standards in Case #1.

Having analyzed the case within the moral reasoning model, we now turn to the analysis of the research data in terms of the two research questions, “what role does ethics play in the day-to-day decisions made by high school administrators?”, and “just how ethical are the decisions that are made by high school administrators?”

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

WHAT ROLE DOES ETHICS PLAY IN HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION - MAKING ?

An analysis of the survey results of 101 high school administrators from the southern region of the Chicagoland area and the northeastern region of the state of Indiana revealed that 99% of the respondents, that is, 100 out of 101, saw an ethical dimension to the decision they had to make in Case #1. By looking at the wording of question #2 (which discussed the reason(s) the respondent would give for the decision that was made) and at question #3 (which asked for the ethical issue(s) the respondent saw as being involved in the case), the researcher found that all but one listed or discussed at least one ethical standard as being a part of the decision to be made. Thus, in terms of Case #1, the result shows a 99% “ethical awareness” factor among the sample population.

There is, of course, an etymological difference between giving a “reason” and seeing an “ethical issue.” Thus, the survey results were next reviewed to investigate to what extent ethical standards were simply “seen” as an issue in Case #1 (discussed in this section), and to what extent ethical standards were given as a “reason” for the decision rendered by the respondent in the case (discussed in the subsequent section of the study).

In terms of ethical issues seen by the respondents, 100 out of 101 noted at least one recognizable ethical standard in the case. The breakdown of the most prominent ethical standard given in response to question #3 (note that occasionally more than one ethical issue was given; as a result, the researcher reviewed the other data in the administrator's response to decipher which was the dominant ethical standard perceived) was as follows:

Predominant Ethical Standard: Case #1

Truth/Honesty.....	48
Fairness.....	20
Professionalism.....	12
Justice.....	8
Integrity.....	4
Due Process.....	4
Compassion/Mercy.....	2
Responsibility.....	2
None.....	1

The one survey which did not indicate that any ethical issue was seen as part of the decision-making process in Case #1 mentioned only that the dilemma was one of “the paper chase” and “a documentation issue” that revolved around “not rocking the bureaucratic boat.” The respondent wrote “since when did...chasing paper and not rocking the boat become an ethical issue?” The researcher judged this to be a response indicative of not seeing any ethical issue whatsoever in the case.

The category “professionalism” was a problematic one; one can conceivably interpret it in a strictly mechanical sense and dismiss it as a potential ethical standard because it suggests merely “following orders” or “organizational allegiance” rather than any inner value system. The researcher, however, after analyzing surrounding data in each of the twelve responses which bore “professionalism” as the dominant ethical issue in the case, was confident that the term as used in context referred to many of the singularly ethical standards listed in the other responses, such as integrity, honesty, fairness, justice, and the like. Thus, the term “professionalism” has been used as a term indicative of the presence of ethical standards throughout the remainder of the research study. It is specifically in dealing with this issue that the interview process was of

exceeding benefit. The twelve interviewees, many of whom had referred to the term “professionalism” in their surveys, were asked to define the term itself. All twelve framed it in exceedingly ethical terms -- “doing the right thing the right way,” “being the best person as well as administrator as I can,” “being honest, truthful, caring, fair and impartial with people and issues,” and “living up to ethical as well as legal expectations” were typical definitions. As such, the interview process was a crucial element in validating the researcher’s final decision to interpret the term “professionalism” as an ethical standard, or, at the very least, as a generic term for ethics itself.

The overwhelming awareness of an ethical issue in Case #1 was also reflected within the interview process. Administrator SJ felt that the ethical issue was one of responsibility, stating that “You just can’t overlook the responsibility of the school towards the teacher” as well as the responsibility of the school and the administrators and teacher to the “kids who make up that school.” Another felt that the ethical issue was one of compassion; “compassion for the teacher who has been misled, compassion for the children who deserve a good teacher.” “The ethical issue here is one of plain honesty,” said Administrator CS; “there needs to be honesty in my reporting of the case, honesty in facing up to issues, honesty in admitting that the students aren’t getting a good education.” Administrator UC stated that “what is good for the individual teacher must be balanced against what is good for the rest of the school, and this is simply a matter of being as fair as is humanly possible in weighing competing interests.” Administrator QS was most simple and eloquent in his response: “Fairness to the kids...fairness, fairness, fairness,” he said when interviewed. Overall, the interview process intensified the conclusion that nearly all the administrators did in fact see clearly at least one ethical issue involved in the decision-making process awaiting them; in person, the respondents often listed three and four different ethical issues involved, and how they competed at times for “attention in my mind and heart,” as one administrator put it. In general, therefore, the data in Case #1, buttressed by personal interviews, supported a conclusion that there was a nearly unanimous ethical awareness factor among the high school administrators who made up the sample population.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS
HOW ETHICAL ARE THE DECISIONS MADE BY
HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS?

While there was near unanimity in the ethical awareness factor among the high school administrators surveyed, there was not the same unanimity in the actual decision made by them. It is important here to note that the moral reasoning model indicated that an honest evaluation by the administrator in an attempt to remediate the teacher for the benefit of the children in the school was the most ethical decision possible in Case #1. Yet the results of analysis of the survey data indicated that fourteen (14) of the high school administrators would not write an honest report, and would either write a "good" report at the behest of their immediate superior, or write a "compromised" report in an attempt to remove some of the pressure from the veteran teacher. Of the remaining respondents, another six (6) would agree that the teacher should be dealt with as a result of his "terrible" classroom work, but these six respondents indicated the use of unethical means to accomplish this, mainly along the lines of "forcing the teacher out" of the profession or at least out of the building. The remainder of the sample population, eighty-one (81) administrators, would write the report honestly in an attempt to remediate the teacher. The overall data indicate approximately 80.5% adherence to an ethical decision being made, and 19.5% choice of an unethical final decision, all this despite nearly 100% awareness factor of ethical issue(s) within the problem.

Ethical Awareness Factor.....99%

Ethical Decision Made.....80.5%

Unethical Decision Made.....19.5%

Of those who chose not to write an honest report on the errant teacher, many gave the teacher's age, the previous failure by the administration to try to remediate him, and the authority of the principal as their reasons for not following the ethical standards in this case. One wrote that "it's best to bite the bullet on this one" because "one cannot overlook

the teacher's 36 years of service" and "it's the administration's fault that the situation was allowed to reach this point." Another proposed a "carefully-worded evaluation" that encouraged improvement "without being specific enough to shake up the teacher or get the principal angry at you." Another felt the best course of action was "to cover myself on this one" by talking to the teacher off-the-record about a need to improve while writing an official document that "pretty much said what the principal wanted me to say." Yet another administrator would pick "just one area to mark unsatisfactory" and let the teacher work on that one, so that both the principal and the teacher were "relatively happy."

This concept of a "compromised" report was popular among half of the 14 who would not write the report in an honest and forthright manner. "I'd write an evaluation that was oblique," one respondent wrote. "I'd limit the 'unsatisfactory' checks to just one or two", and "I'd give just one 'U' to him, after all these years he's given the school" were two other representative responses. Four respondents felt that the authority of the principal must be followed; "I'd allow the teacher to bide his time and wipe out my initial evaluation of him," wrote one administrator, "because you must work with the principal." "An administrator must acquiesce to the wishes of his principal" wrote another in response. Another three simply falsified the report out of sympathy for the teacher's veteran, near-retirement status.

Another six high school administrators felt that the teacher should be taken to task for his failure to instruct the children properly, but these six recommended quite unethical means by which to accomplish this. "I'd write the report in such a way that the teacher would want to find employment elsewhere," wrote one respondent, indicating a desire to "force the teacher out" of the school and to do "whatever it takes" to do it. Another followed similar lines; "I'd write the report and tell the teacher 'You teach or get out, you old s.o.b.'," wrote one administrator. This administrator indicated he would proceed to use "other teachers that were allies of mine to put some professional guilt on this guy's back" and then "make life difficult" for the teacher by using "scheduling, room assignments, etc." "I'd arrange to transfer the teacher" and get "another teacher to go in there and do his discipline for him" another administrator wrote.

That these are unethical means of accomplishing a change that would benefit the

students seems more than enough to classify the entire administrative response as being basically an unethical one. The moral reasoning model principle of equal respect requires individuals to treat others with respect for their intrinsic worth, to respect their freedom of choice, and to respect them as moral agents of equal value. The vengeful nature of the six respondents referred to in the previous paragraph is certainly a violation of the respect required to be allotted to all individuals. The proposed treatment of the teacher in an attempt to force him out of the school denies the man the opportunity for freedom of choice, in the sense that he is now rendered nearly incapable of cooperating with remedial efforts to improve his classroom. Most clear is the violation of the concept of equal treatment; there is no doubt that this teacher is being “singled out” by the administrators for burdensome, extraneous duties, for artificially-induced and embarrassing peer pressure, or for falsified documentation overemphasizing his weaknesses all in an attempt to “improve education.” Strike, Haller, and Soltis speak often of the competing ethical standards that an administrator must face; here is a classic case, wherein an administrator, seeking to follow the ethical principle of benefit maximization (better education for the students), resorts to violations of the ethical principle of equal respect in an attempt to accomplish his goals. One is reminded here of Carr’s contention that values represent both the end-goal of education, and the means of assessing progress towards that goal.⁸⁰ One cannot split the ethical end-goal from the need for ethical means to reach it without resorting to a philosophical paradox of the highest order. Thus, the unethical behavior of the administrators towards reaching an ethical goal (better education for children) in itself is enough to preclude categorizing the actual decision as “ethical.”

The eighty-one respondents who would write honest reports were often brief in explaining the reasons for their decision; the discussion of the repetitive references to “honesty and truth, fairness, justice” and so on in the previous subsection of this analysis may be referred to as typical explanations. The interviewees often expounded upon the need to use “the right way of doing things” when confronted with the possibility of forcing the teacher out of the building, rejecting such a method as “unethical to say the least,” in the words of Administrator QS. “No-one has the right to falsify documents, no

⁸⁰ Carr, 10.

matter how good their intentions,” Administrator LS said. Administrator CS called upon the inclusive ethic of “professionalism” in his response to a suggestion of trying to manipulate schedules and room assignments to remove the teacher from the school:

That’s just unprofessional. Professionalism means you do the right thing and you do it the right way. You can’t split professionalism up into two separate worlds, one which allows you to ignore ethics and standards and do what you want, the other that says ‘it’s okay to do that’ because the goal you’re pursuing is an honorable one or a good, an ethical one. It’s all or nothing if you want to be a true professional. I think these administrators who say they’d force a guy out, lie, manipulate, psychologically torture the guy -- I think these administrators are not much better for education overall than the older teacher who’s not doing his job. At least he’s not half as bad an example to the kids as is the unprofessional administrator.

Overall, then, the survey data in Case #1 indicated that while the ethical awareness factor of the high school administrators involved was nearly perfect, the actual decision-making process disregarded the ethical dimensions of the situation nearly one out of five times. The disregarding of ethics occurred most often in an attempt to help the teacher or placate the principal by writing a false or compromised evaluation; disregard of ethics also took a secondary form of using unethical means to accomplish the seemingly ethical goal of improving education by utilizing falsehoods, peer pressure, manipulation of schedules and room assignments, and the like to remove the errant teacher altogether. The majority of respondents, over four out of five, would follow the ethical dimensions suggested by this case, and write an honest report in an attempt to remediate the situation. Interviewed administrators amplified the feelings of both sides, but most often expressed conviction in making the ethical decision, and outrage at suggestions of using unethical means to accomplish even the most seemingly laudable goal.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Analysis of the data from the biographical questionnaire was compared with the mean of biographical data for those who responded ethically or unethically to the situation

in Case #1. In the area of the ethical awareness factor, since almost every respondent did in fact indicate that an ethical standard was part of his or her final decision, there was obviously no reason to pursue a biographical profile on the single respondent who did not see an ethical dimension to the problem at all. In the area of ethical vs. unethical final decision, the only major variance from the average respondent profile was that those who made an unethical final decision tended to have much more administrative experience than the average respondent, with 65% of this group having more than 10 years experience, as opposed to about 25% of total respondents having more than 10 years experience as an administrator. Those choosing an unethical mode of behavior also tended to make either significantly more or significantly less than the average salary range of \$35-45,000 per year; no other variable on the questionnaire produced any significant variance with the average respondent profile.

Administrators With 10+ Years Experience

Of All Administrators.....25%
 Of Administrators Who
 Made Unethical Decision.....65%

Administrators Who Made Unethical Decision

\$45-60,000 salary.....47%
 \$35-45,000 salary.....16%
 \$20-35,000 salary.....37%

CASE # 2: HANDLING STUDENT DISCIPLINE

You have suspended a student from school for making a threat to a teacher-- he said "I'm a Vice Lord, and we're gonna get your car after school." The next afternoon, at lunch, a car pulls up outside school and four of the six young men inside get out with baseball bats and a knife. They identify themselves as Vice Lords, and try to enter your school. You and some teachers go outside, and the six leave -- and your students, who were outside, identify one of the young men who stayed in the car as the student you suspended yesterday. You now know he is in a gang, and led the others to your school, and threatened the safety of your students and staff. You also realize that, to expel this student, you need an adult witness. You know that unless you say that you saw this student positively as one of the young men -- and unless you say that he was one of the boys with a bat in his hand -- you may not be able to successfully expel him. You sit down to write your report , and decide what to do.

ANALYSIS OF THE CASE

The moral reasoning model applied to this case provides for an investigation into the ethical issues present in this situation, and suggests the most ethical decision possible for the high school administrator involved in this matter.

The principle of benefit maximization indicates ethicalness in a decision if that decision "provides the greatest benefit for the most people." The administrator in this situation must therefore weigh the potential benefits of each course of action open to him here. One course of action is to falsify his report in two crucial areas by "providing" adult eyewitness reports on the presence of the suspended student in the Vice Lord car, and the possession of a bat by the suspended student in the car, neither of which the administrator nor any other adult witness actually saw. A second course of action is to report only that which the administrator actually saw, which was four gang members out of their car with bats and a knife; the administrator retains the option of including the student reports of the presence of the suspended student in the gang car, perhaps as affidavits attached to the report; but the administrator here will not be satisfying the requirement for expulsion from the school with this course of action. Other courses of action are basically variances of these two critically different approaches to a major administrative decision.

The ethical principle of benefit maximization seems to weigh heavily on the side of falsifying the report. "The best for the most" is satisfied if the gang member is actually expelled from the school; the expulsion removes a dangerous threat from the school environment, strengthens the safety and security of the staff and the student body, and sends a strong message to other gang members that their presence and activity is not tolerated at your school. A false report provides a maximum of psychological and physical benefit to your entire building and its people; conversely, a true report risks the return of this student to your school environment after his suspension from the day before has been completed. The benefit of the vast majority of those you are responsible for seems to rest on attempting to obtain an expulsion by falsifying the report on the incident.

Questions arise as to the factual basis of the charge itself, however, based on the evidence presented in the case. Lying about seeing the student's presence with a gang, and lying about seeing him holding a bat, becomes quite a different matter if in fact the students are wrong and the suspended student was not even at the school that day. There are degrees in ethical dilemmas, all of which must be measured before a decision is made. It is one thing to say you saw the student if the student actually was in the car anyway; it is a far more grave and troubling matter to say you saw him if in fact he was not even there in the first place. Consideration of this critical issue is a must for the administrator before a final decision is made. One might make the case for safety and security of the school community as a justification for removing a truly dangerous student from the school; one cannot logically use the same argument for removing a student who was not in fact involved with the armed gang invasion of the school.

The principle of equal respect, as previously stated, must also be considered with equal weight and vigor. This principle requires that all individuals be treated with respect as free moral agents with intrinsic human worth. It also requires that individuals not be used as means to further the goals of another, that they be treated as of equal value as all others, and that their freedom of choice be respected. The principle of equal respect, as applied in this case, says much for maintaining an honest report. There are only student reports that the suspended student was in the car; they may well be wrong. There is no

evidence at all that the suspended student had a bat; this aspect of the report denies the intrinsic worth of the suspended student as it unfairly and falsely paints an overly-negative picture of him to those who will consider his expulsion. As a moral agent with intrinsic worth, the suspended student has a fair claim upon an honest and accurate portrayal of himself in any school document; to do otherwise denies his worth and simply “categorizes” him unjustly as a “misfit and a threat” to the community. Similarly, the principle of equal respect demands that equal treatment be given to all in the charge of an administrator, unless the administrator has embarked upon a policy of “equally” falsifying reports on all students involved in similar cases; then, the subsidiary principle of equal treatment has been dramatically violated. (And, of course, a “policy” of false reports is a tremendously dramatic violation of the principle of equal respect, as well as of due process.) It is also worth noting that a falsified report “uses” the suspended student as a means to accomplish the end-goal of the administrator, i.e, a safer school and a message to the community. Such an end-goal is laudable when it is the result of accurate facts and fair judgment; such an end-goal is blackened when it uses the reputation and educational opportunity of a student who may be innocent of a charge as the means to achieve it.

Moral reasoning also requires consideration of the principles of due process and of democracy. The principle of democracy seems a moot point in this issue; the principle of due process, however, is of great relevance. This ethical tenet requires that people be judged on clearly-known standards of conduct which are consistently applied and which are based on reasonable evidence, according to Strike, Haller, and Soltis. It is quite apparent that this moral requirement would be badly violated by a falsified report. The evidence in the case against the suspended student is not reasonable at all in the charge he was holding a bat; no-one actually saw such an incident. The evidence in the case is reasonable as to his presence in the car only to the extent that the student witnesses are reliable, accurate, and unbiased. Since the scenario in Case #2 makes no claim about the students’ veracity either way, we are reasonably prevented from assuming it to be so; and note that apparently a district or state policy exists which de-weights student testimony in expulsion cases, since the scenario clearly states that “to expel this student,

you need an adult eyewitness.” It is therefore ethically difficult to categorize the charge of being present in the car as “reasonable,” and nigh impossible to so categorize the charge that the student was “one of the boys with a bat in his hand.” Thus, the ethical principle of due process weighs heavily against a falsified report.

We are again reminded of the Aristotelian concept of ethics so appreciated by Carr and other philosophers aforementioned; it is the concept of ethics as an enterprise whose end-goal is goodness, and which uses goodness as the means by which to evaluate its progress towards its goal. The interweaving of means and end as applied to the ethical dimensions of decision-making in education requires that ethical principles be applied both in setting goals, and achieving them; it is the concept that Ollman terms as “a relation,” that is, a theory that views fact and value, motive and practice, and in this case, ends and means, as a single relational unit.⁸¹ In this case, while the end-goal is reasonably justified by one ethical principle, the means by which to achieve it is condemned by two others. It is axiomatic that in a case where there is such a dramatic clash of competing ethical standards, there will be parallel dramatic and emotional internal ethical conflict for the high school administrator burdened with making the final decision. The ethical inquiry posed in this analysis, however, suggests that the most ethical course of action for the administrator is to file an accurate report of only what he actually saw occur, that is, with no personal claim of knowledge that the suspended student was “holding a bat” or was even in the car with the Vice Lord gang members. The eyewitness testimony of the students could reasonably and fairly be attached to the report as affidavits, leaving it to the board to weigh them as they would any other student report; but, as difficult a decision as it may be, there is no way in which the knowingly-false report could be filed without violating ethical standards severely.

⁸¹ Bertell Ollman, Alienation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978) , 26-27.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS
 WHAT ROLE DOES ETHICS PLAY IN HIGH SCHOOL
 ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION-MAKING?

An analysis of the survey results from 101 high school administrators in the southern Chicagoland and northeastern Indiana areas was conducted to determine what role ethics played in their reaching a decision in this case. The analysis revealed that seventy (70) respondents indicated the presence of an ethical dimension to Case #2; three (3) emphasized reasons and “ethical” issues that have been judged not to be truly in the realm of the ethical; nine (9) made clear that they saw no ethical issue involved at all; and the remaining nineteen (19) chose not to deal with the ethical problem at all (whether or not to falsify the report) and instead expounded on simply expelling the student for the original threat, with no reference at all to the subsequent occurrences in the scenario. We may look at this another way; seventy respondents indicated the presence of an ethical issue in the case, and thirty-one did not so indicate, leaving the sample population of high school administrators with what might be called an ethical awareness factor of 70% in this case.

The researcher’s analysis again concentrated on responses to questions #2 and #3 so as to determine the most prominent ethical issue perceived by each of the respondents. When more than one ethical issue was mentioned by the respondent, the researcher reviewed the other data in the administrator’s response to determine which was the dominant ethical standard perceived. The breakdown of responses was as follows:

Predominant Ethical Standard: Case #2	
Truth/Honesty.....	38
(Did Not Deal With Issue).....	19
Safety of Others.....	16
None.....	9
Justice.....	7
Professionalism.....	3
Due Process.....	3
Integrity.....	2
Good Example.....	1
(Unaccepted responses).....	3

Let us now look into the breakdown of each of the categories, in turn.

Seventy of the 101 high school administrators responded in a way indicative of a clear ethical awareness factor concerning Case #2. Their written responses echoed the preeminence of the truth/honesty ethic among all others in this case. "You have to be honest," wrote one administrator, "because truth is what we hope to see kids internalize." "Failure to tell the truth leads to your losing your own self-respect and credibility. Lying is a self-destructive habit," another administrator wrote. "It's all a matter of honesty in this case," another wrote. "The ends does not justify the means here, and so you have no ethical choice but to be honest." "Always be true onto yourself," another administrator philosophized, "and if we are to err, let us err on the side of the child." The interviewees provided similar responses ; eight of the twelve had listed honesty or truth as the dominant ethic in this case, and all eight expanded upon this in their interview sessions. "I can only do what I can live with, and so I have to act according to what is the truth as far as I know it," Administrator GL explained. "This includes the realization that my commitment to honesty...may have the effect of keeping an individual in the school who may be a danger to staff and students." Administrator MD was equally direct in his defense of honesty:

I don't believe lying ever really improves a reputation, personal or professional. To me the issue is my personal integrity and commitment to honesty versus removing a dangerous student from the school, and protecting the safety and welfare of teachers and students. I'm confident I could build a strong case against my gang member and that even if I lost I could monitor his behavior closely enough to push him out of school. Lying can also pretty easily lead to dismissal and seriously damage a professional reputation. Isn't that how they got Nixon?

The acceptance of "protecting the safety and security of the students and staff" as an ethical standard was another issue determined by, and validated in, the interview process. Argument could easily arise that "safety" is not in and of itself an ethical standard; one cannot claim ethicalness by attempting to live "safely" in the same manner

as one could claim ethicalness by attempting to live honestly, or justly, or fairly. Therefore, before the researcher reached a final decision on whether to categorize such responses as indicative of ethical awareness, the subject was brought up in all twelve interviews. All of the interviewees framed the concept of “safety” in an ethical framework; typical responses were “We have a duty to care for other people, don’t we? What’s more ethical or Christian than that?” (Administrator QS) and “By safety and security I don’t mean fire alarms and calling the cops and chaining the doors at night. That’s just the outsides of it. I mean the fact that we worry about other people’s lives and health and want them to feel secure and comfortable here. That’s got to be an ethic of some sort.” (Administrator TB). As such, the decision to include “safety and security” as an ethical concern was made, in similar fashion to the previous decision to include the term “professionalism.”

Nineteen of the respondents did not deal with the issues of the case as they were framed within the scenario, and as such, it was impossible to characterize their responses as either being or not being ethically aware. They simply “answered another question,” to borrow the typical phraseology of an instructor. Of the nineteen who were judged to be non-respondents in Case #2, all basically stated that they would expel the student for threatening the teacher the day before, and that was that. No mention was made in any of the nineteen responses about the subsequent occurrences in the scenario; the tone of response ranged from terse (“He would’ve been gone the day he threatened my teacher. End of problem.”) to indignant (“Students aren’t allowed to threaten teachers in my school, and all my students know that, so there would have been an expulsion the day before.”) to condescending (“I know of no such law that prevents student testimony and as such there is not any issue of any type here except to round up written affidavits from the students and expel the student according to district policy.”) All also shared the common trait of avoidance of the questions posed -- should the administrator in the scenario falsify his testimony about the presence of the student and the possession of the bat? However, to characterize these answers as having shown no ethical awareness would not be reasonable nor proper. Had there been an opportunity to interview any of them personally, the issues involved in this discussion could have been explored at

depth, and perhaps a more conclusive statement about these responses could have been made. However, none of this group was among those who had volunteered for interviews, and as such no follow-up was possible. The nature of the responses does not indicate that there was no ethical awareness among any of the nineteen administrators regarding Case #2; their oblique, off-target responses indicate only that they dismissed the case itself because, as one put it, “it would not have come to this” at her high school. Personal interviews might have clarified why such a dismissal was made, and further clarified whether ethical dimensions were in fact seen by any of these nineteen respondents in the aspect of the case they had dismissed, or even in the scenarios they themselves had created to dispose of the case. Lacking any possibility of arranging personal interviews with said respondents, the researcher was unable to clarify this issue any further. A discussion of possible causes behind the dismissal of the issue-at-hand in Case #2 by nineteen administrators is found in the subsequent section of the study; biographical data which also suggests at least one possible cause is to be found in the final section of the analysis of this case.

Nine respondents were quite clear in indicating that they saw no ethical issue involved in the case. Analysis of other responses to questions posed in Case #2, and especially in their responses to question #2 (reason(s) for their decision), also provided no evidence of anything at all indicative of ethical awareness. Three listed “none” for question #3; a fourth left it blank, and a fifth respondent wrote simply, “I don’t know!” A sixth respondent said “Schools should have procedures for expulsion “ in response to the third question; the other three listed variances of the idea “it is a police matter” in response to both questions #2 and #3. The inability to decipher any reasonable ethical standard in any of these responses led the researcher to characterize them as being indicative of no ethical awareness on the part of the administrator in this case; the difference between the previous set of nineteen respondents and this set of nine lies in the simple fact that the nine discussed herein did in fact deal with the totality of the case as presented. They simply answered in a manner that did not project the slightest hint of awareness of any ethical dimensions to their decision.

The remaining three respondents were judged by the researcher not to have given responses to either questions #2 or question #3 that delineated a concept that could be accepted as an ethic of any sort. One such response was "education" as the single unexplained response to both questions #2 and #3. This respondent was not a volunteer for interview, and as such the researcher was unable to obtain any clarification of such a response. One might assume that it indicates a "commitment to quality of education for children," but there was no other data in the responses to either bolster or even suggest that this was the respondent's notion, and as such the response had to be judged as "unacceptable" as an ethic. The second such response "Students should not be witnesses," again repeated with little variation of language in both questions. This is more of a legal point or perhaps a sociological one; it is difficult to explain it as an ethic. Finally, a third respondent skipped question #3 but listed as his reason (in question #2) that "either we run it or they do." As with the above responses, it is difficult to categorize what ethical principle if any that such a response is pertinent to, and the researcher categorized it as the third unacceptable response for determining the underlying ethic of the decision made by these administrators.

As has already been alluded to in this discussion, the interview process also produced a deepened sense of ethical awareness about this issue, as well as the conflicting ethical principles involved and the internal emotion such conflict causes in administrators responsible for similar decisions. Eight of the twelve felt that honesty was the dominant ethic in this situation, while the other four had chosen safety and security as the predominant ethical issue. All, however, spoke eloquently of the difficulty of making any decision in this case. A typical response, from Administrator EH, was as follows:

This kind of decision tears you up inside because you want to protect your kids and you want your staff to feel supported and safe, and for all the right reasons, too. It's because you care about them. And when you decide not to go for it all against this gang kid, and you decide that because of your own personal integrity or principles -- well, it's almost like you sold out on lots of people who depend on you for the sake of your own peace of mind, or for some abstract principle that only you can appreciate. And it doesn't seem fair. And yet how do you do it so you have it all, so you do the right thing and it is the right way? And when do you draw the line on the wrong thing, how soon before you're doing the wrong thing and really hurting people unfairly because you think you're right? Let's face it, this is the kind of

decision that is going to cost you some sleepless nights and a whole heck of a lot of second-guessing....most of it by you!

The analysis of responses both on the survey and in the interview sessions revealed the same recognition of the competing ethical values in this case. Overall, the responses of the sample population of high school administrators from the southern Chicagoland area and the northeastern region of Indiana indicated an ethical awareness factor of around 70%, that is, about seven of ten were cognizant of the the ethical dimension(s) of this situation. Of the remaining respondents, many simply did not answer the question at hand and instead reacted to the aforementioned emotion of the decision by disregarding the occurrences subsequent to the threat, and “expelling” the student unilaterally as result of the threat itself, thus ignoring, intentionally or not, the heart of the ethical dilemma this case. Others gave little or no indication of any ethical issue at all in Case #2.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS HOW ETHICAL ARE THE DECISIONS MADE BY HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS?

Just as the variety of categories engendered by the first research question made for a complicated discussion of ethical awareness among high school administrators, so too do they make for a complex analysis of the actual ethicalness of the final decisions reached by these same school leaders. Of the seventy respondents who were judged to have recognized the ethical dimensions of the situation, sixty-five (65) chose the road that the moral reasoning model suggested was the most ethical, that is, to remain fair and accurate in the report on the incident, and five (5) would falsify the report, based mainly on the ethical dimension of safety and security. Of the remaining thirty-one respondents, nineteen (19) would have expelled him for the threat alone; these are the respondents who have been characterized as having “not dealt with the issue,” making their applicability to this discussion somewhat suspect at best. Of the nine (9) who saw no ethical issue in the case at

all, four (4) would falsify the report in an attempt to insure expulsion; five (5) would give an "accurate and objective report to the authorities at the board and the police station," as one respondent said. Of the three (3) whose responses were judged to be unacceptable as ethical standards, all three would file honest reports, as the ethical discourse mode of the moral reasoning model suggested. To summarize, nineteen respondents did not deal with the issue at hand and thus are inapplicable to this discussion; nine would lie so as to expel the suspended student; and seventy-three would give honest and accurate reports about the matter.

Ethical Awareness Factor.....70%

Ethical Decision Made.....73%

Unethical Decision Made.....8.5%

Did Not Deal With Issue.....18.5%

Of the nine who would falsify the report so as to insure an expulsion of the suspended gang member, eight emphasized "safety and security" as the prime reason for their decision; their responses, both in written form and in personal interviews, were prime examples of adherence to the benefit maximization theory as taking precedence over any other ethical concern in this case. (The other unethical response was based primarily on the ethic of justice, in this case, "justice for the students in school who follow rules and want to learn," as that respondent wrote.) Among the written justifications for giving "false witness" against the suspended student were the following excerpts: "The coincidence of the attack the day after I suspended this gang member would be enough to convince me that he planned it, that he was in the car, and I'd have no compunction about writing up the document so that he was sure to be expelled, " wrote one high school administrator; another wrote simply " I would be the witness. It's important to expel him." A third administrator wrote that she would

...act for the best interests of the majority here. It is a very small lie, and there is not the slightest doubt that he was involved here. I have my credibility among my staff and students to protect here as well. These are greater issues of ethics than the little lie it will take to benefit everyone at school.

"I'd say I saw him," another administrator wrote. "Or perhaps I would see if any of the other teachers would say that they saw him. Safety is the issue of utmost importance here." Yet another administrator attempted to compromise the unethicalness he may have felt uncomfortable with in his response: "I'd try to find an adult witness, and if I could not find one, I would write the report in such a way as to implicate the young man as having been seen by adult witnesses." Such a rationalized approach to creating a knowingly false impression about the incident can only be characterized as on the same plane of unethicalness as the previous responses.

Four of the interviewees were among the nine who would choose to falsify the report. As was noted earlier, their emotional struggle with the complex ethical nature of the question was no less apparent than the similar struggle waged within those administrators who chose to tell the truth in their report. One proposed lying to the suspended student in a personal conference in the principal's office in an attempt to "give the impression to the student that I had indeed seen him." Administrator HR went on to say that

. . . being very careful in the wording of my questions, I would ask him why he sat in the car watching his friends threaten students and staff. I would dwell on the why and not on whether he was present, to reinforce the impression to the student that I had seen him. If I can draw him into the dialogue to explain his actions (then) he has admitted, de facto, his presence. This may sound devious, but sometimes I think we must operate that way to protect that greater good for the greater number. It seems to be a reasonable alternative to lying....which is unacceptable.

Administrator HR is atypical from the others only in the sense he attempts to draw a distinction, fine as it may be, between lying on a report and obliquely lying to the suspended student in an attempt to "deviously" draw him into self-incrimination. And yet the ends-means relation suggests that even such behavior is unethical, for it attempts to justify dishonest means for a laudable end. Administrator HR, surely a proponent of the ethical principle of benefit maximization, is found to be in violation of both the ethical principle of equal respect (since dishonesty, entrapment, and psychological manipulation such as this are hardly consistent with the recognition of intrinsic human worth that the equal respect tenet demands) as well as the ethical principle of due process (which requires "reasonable evidence systematically available," and certainly not manipulated and

misleading statements used exclusively in these types of student-administrator relations).

A similar attempt to avoid blatant "lying" motivated Administrator UC in his interview session. "I would definitely say that he was one of the students observed in the car," he said, "but since he never left the car I couldn't say he had a weapon." When pressed to elaborate, the administrator admitted his motivation here to be as much of "not being able to get away with saying I saw a weapon; everyone knows he was in the car when I walked out the door, correct?" as it was an attempt to avoid prevarication. "I would lie to protect the majority of my students," he said, "and an honest response would just not be in the school's best interests."

Administrator IN echoed the feelings of Administrator EH, quoted earlier in the previous section describing his fear that adherence to honesty was perhaps "like you sold out on lots of people who depend on you for the sake of your own peace of mind." But while Administrator EH could still "steer clear" to an ethical decision, Administrator IN asked "Does it make sense to let the safety of the majority overshadow the rights of one? We must jeopardize our integrity for the sake of all the other students." Administrator IN was forthright and clear in stating that

I would identify that student as being involved. In my report I would write it as an understood statement that he had a bat. If asked in a hearing for expulsion I would say that I saw the student with the bat. I would do whatever it took to get this kid out of the school.

It is important to re-emphasize here that all of the above respondents were among those who were judged to be "ethically aware" in the previous section, that is, administrators who saw clearly the ethical dimensions of the dilemma they were dealing with. This is a critical point at this juncture in the analysis, for the natural propensity for condemnation may lead one to judge these administrators as being "amoral" or "insensitive" or "cruel," as one interviewee said about those who would falsify a report. It is restated here, therefore, that this is indeed a complex ethical question being dealt with; and furthermore, that the moral reasoning model makes no claim at giving the "final, absolute" answers alluded to previously in this research study. The moral reasoning model seeks to clarify the

discussion of ethics and to objectify it to the point that certain behaviors or decisions can be seen as being more ethical than others. It is not meant to be a simplified litmus test of "good versus evil," and it is worth reiterating that point as part of this discussion.

Administrator TB admitted to "stretching the truth" by saying he had seen the student with a bat, but "the safety of my students is worth more than one gang member's rights." Note that the intention is altruistic and the adherence is to a major ethical standard -- the principle of benefit maximization. And yet, previous discussion has shown that two other principles are being violated dramatically, and that the interrelated nature of ends and means in educational administrative philosophy does not allow for a result judged ethical when it is spawned by unethical means. The interviewed respondents helped clarify the intensity of clashing ethical principles in Case #2; in that sense, it mattered not which type of final decision in the case they had made.

The twelve interviewed administrators were also instrumental in providing theories as to why a full nineteen respondents chose to ignore the issue at hand in this case, and to instead simply cling to the original infraction as the "one and only" issue they recognized in this case. Administrator SJ offered that perhaps many of them were private school administrators, who had freer hands in expelling students, and therefore may well not have understood the public sector's more stringent requirements for proof, eyewitnesses hearings, and affidavits. Administrator CS characterized the case as "a really emotional one because of the intense fear there is of gangs nowadays," and theorized that this intensity of anti-gang emotion might well have caused some respondents to react "right from their gut, without reading or thinking the whole thing through." It sheds light upon the administrative decision-making process to so theorize; it reminds the observer that different organizational structures and deeply personal emotions are both powerful motivating forces behind decisions that are made on a day-to-day basis. The intensity of emotion so often noted in the personal interviews on Case #2 lends credence to the theory that similar emotion led so many respondents to stray from the case's true thrust. It was left to the analysis of data from the biographical questionnaire, however, to shed light on the possible influence of organizational structure upon the responses as to how this student was to be dealt with.

Of the nine respondents who were judged as having no ethical awareness in

reacting to this case, five would falsify the document, and four would not. The responses from either camp fell along the same lines as the previously-quoted administrators. Those calling for expulsion by falsifying what had actually been seen spoke of "moral rectitude" and "more than enough evidence in my mind" to justify such a course of action. The others, who would put forth an accurate report and let the authorities handle the matter, spoke often of "following procedure" or "allow (ing) board policy and the police to do their job, and I'll just do mine." As previously noted, the three whose responses to "the ethical issue involved" were judged to be unacceptable as ethical standards all fell into the camp of producing an honest report of the incident, with little note of any significant pattern in their responses.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Analysis of the data from the biographical questionnaire was compared with the mean of biographical data for all respondents in the sample population. In the area of the ethical awareness factor, of the seventy who responded positively, there were no significant variables of note from the average profile of all respondents. In the area of the nine respondents who would make what has been termed an unethical final decision in the case of the alleged gang member-student, three variables were of note since they were noticeably skewed from the profile: 1) five out of nine of the respondents in this area were deans, a percentage of about 55%, as opposed to a 24% presence of deans in the total sample population; 2) five of the administrators were in their first year as an administrator, and another in his second; and seven of the nine administrators were in their first year in their current positions, with an eighth one in his second year, indicating that inexperience in administration may well be linked with the type of response given to this case; and 3) the respondents in this category did tend to be either well above or well below the average salary in the profile, generally \$10-15,000 different than the \$35-45,000 average salary range of the respondents. In the area of the nineteen who did not "deal with the issue" at hand and indicated that the alleged gang member-student would be expelled for threatening the teacher the day before and therefore dismissed the rest of the scenario forthwith -- it is

interesting to note that Administrator SJ's insight seemed to be a valid one, as fifteen of the nineteen were administrators in private or parochial schools, a percentage of 79% in a category where the public/private or parochial split is almost even in the sample population (49 public school administrators and 52 private or parochial school administrators, of which 49 were from Catholic high schools, one was from a Lutheran high school, one was from a Christian high school, and one from a privately owned and funded high school). The possibility that the private schools do in fact maintain a different organizational approach to expulsion from their public school brethren may well have been a factor in the response of the nineteen who did not deal with the issue as it was fully posed.

Administrators Who Are Deans

Of All Administrators.....24%
Of Administrators Who
Made Unethical Decision.....55%

Administrators Who Made Unethical Decision

1-2 Years Experience.....67%
1st Year, Current Position.....78%

\$45-60,000 salary.....47%
\$35-45,000 salary.....16%
\$20-35,000 salary.....37%

Administrators From Private/Parochial Schools

Of All Administrators.....52%
Of Administrators Who
Did Not Deal With Issue.....79%

CASE #3: HANDLING A FACULTY LOUNGE CRITIC

You have been told privately, but often, that a certain teacher is always attacking you, your work, even your personal habits in the faculty lounge. You have confronted the teacher privately, in your office, and the teacher seemed incredulous that you even brought up this topic -- "I have never said any such things at any time," she tells you. Your friends tell you that the ridicule has continued, however, even after the meeting with the critical teacher. You now fear that the unrelenting ridicule is harming your ability to lead the school effectively, and to get your programs approved. Perhaps at the next faculty meeting, you think, you will take this teacher to task publicly, to show the faculty that you are not a weak leader, to protect your leadership role and image, and to "set the record straight" on your ideas about the future of the school. It's the day of the faculty meeting, and you stand up to speak, still undecided about whether to take the critical teacher to task publicly, or lose this public opportunity for another two months.

ANALYSIS OF THE CASE

Under analysis using the moral reasoning model, this case displays several competing inherent ethical principles at work; the moral reasoning model is utilized here to clarify those principles, and to suggest the most ethical possible decision for the administrator involved in the scenario.

The principle of ethics known as benefit maximization suggests the consequentialist view that what is "best for the most" is what is most ethical. The administrator involved in this case must therefore consider just who would in fact be the beneficiaries of the kind of public dialogue he is planning to unleash upon his teacher-critic. For the administrator, the benefits would be obvious: a show of personal strength and resolve to his faculty, a public arena in which to answer and rebut the ridicule he has been suffering behind his back, and the personal satisfaction of "evening the score" with a seemingly hypocritical opponent. And yet the administrator must weigh such benefits against losses he too might accrue: perhaps looking vengeful, spiteful, or petty to his faculty; possible charges of unprofessionalism; the possibility that the teacher might in fact deny the charges and sway the faculty at the meeting, making him look foolish; and, of course, the possibility that the teacher has in fact not been criticizing him at all, something the faculty would implicitly know, and something which would damage his credibility and ability to lead the school

effectively to a dangerous extent indeed. For the teacher involved, there are no particular benefits to having the principal publicly attack her, save perhaps a chance to vindicate herself against the charges in a public forum if indeed it is untrue that this teacher has been ridiculing the principal. The losses for the teacher could be plentiful: public humiliation, ridicule, and shame. For the school at large, the administrator might ponder the possible benefits of a public attack upon his faculty lounge critic: a better atmosphere in the faculty lounge if in fact the public attack "shuts up" the critical teacher; better morale among the "good" teachers who do not approve of the sarcasm in the lounge, and feel both vindicated and supported by such a bold move by the principal; increased confidence, perhaps, in the principal as well. The potential losses are essentially the converse of the possible benefits: a negative and damaging reaction among the staff if the attack is viewed as spiteful, petty, or unprofessional; a concomitant loss of the principal's credibility and ability to lead the school effectively; poor morale among the staff, especially if they do in fact feel that the teacher has been attacked unfairly for something she has not done; decreased respect for the principal. All of the potential benefits in Case #3 seem to be negated by the possibility of equal losses; unlike the first two cases, in which the principle of benefit maximization weighed heavily towards one particular course of administrative action, there is no similar effect by this ethical principle here. Benefit maximization alone does not clarify any course of action for the administrator involved; the potential benefits are equaled by potential losses for all those who would be affected by the administrator's decision.

There are various reasons for this ethical stalemate, but two are overriding issues. First, the administrator does not know whether the teacher has in fact been ridiculing him or not. This issue has a direct correlation with the potential benefits or losses to the administrator, the teacher, and the school as a whole. Secondly, the actual consequences of a public attack are an unpredictable factor in this decision. Unlike more clear-cut action/reaction relationships, in which there is a predictable result of a predicated action or decision, there is no predictability in this situation. It is entirely at the whim of human nature, including the tone the principal takes, the reaction of the teacher at the meeting, the interpretations each of the individual teachers place upon the incident if it occurs, and, as noted above, the unknown factor of guilt or innocence on the part of the alleged critic.

Thus, the principle of benefit maximization is lessened even more as a viable means of making an ethical decision here.

We turn to the principle of equal respect, then, looking for some guidance. As has been noted previously, the principle of equal respect requires individuals to treat each other with mutual respect and as free moral agents of intrinsic worth and value. It disallows using other people as means to a personal end; it requires respect for their freedom of choice; and it requires that we treat people as being of equal value with all other people. This ethical principle has a decisive bearing on the moral implications of Case #3. Is the principal treating the teacher as a person of worth and value by publicly attacking her at a faculty meeting? Surely he is not. Treating another person with respect for his or her worth must surely include a concept of not hurting, offending, or embarrassing a person in the company of others. There is a prima facie case for making such a deduction; it seems clear that such attacks are demeaning to the person who must bear them. And if this were not so -- that is, if embarrassing or humiliating a person was not in any way an offensive or hurtful act -- then the entire foundation of Case #3 would be negated immediately, for is it not a case whose motivation is based on the hurt feelings and fears instilled in the principal by the very thought of having himself been ridiculed or demeaned? The moral reasoning model suggests to us that we deny human worth and ignore individual value when we demean, debase, and inflict pain upon others; thus, an administrative decision that condoned this would most assuredly be an unethical one.

Next, the administrator must consider whether this particular action is one which treats the offending teacher in the same way as other offending teachers, that is, is this the consistent policy followed against staff members who ridicule other staff members? If it is not, then the principal would be violating a second tenet of the principle of equal respect; he would not be treating this teacher in the same way as he has or would treat another teacher guilty, if in fact she is guilty, of a similar offense. If the principal has been consistently attacking his critics at open faculty meetings and intends to continue in like fashion in the future, then at least the concept of equal treatment has been satisfied -- but at what ethical expense? Such a policy, if it did in fact exist, would constitute an official, repeated, and dramatically unethical violation of the principle of equal respect. Thus, the interweaving of

two of the tenets of this moral principle produce damning evidence against such a course of action by the educational administrator involved.

But the adversary position of the principle of equal respect to the public attack being considered by the principal has further strength behind it. This same principle demands that we not use other free moral agents as means to further our own goals. Let us again consider the aforementioned motivations of the principal for even considering a public attack on his alleged critic. Among those listed in our ethical inquiry model were a "show of public strength and resolve," use of a "public arena to rebut and answer the ridicule" he has suffered, and the "satisfaction of 'evening the score'" with his alleged critic. Note that all of the above motivations are in the main personal ones -- image, authority, and vengeance. The only institutional goal alluded to throughout the discussion was "the ability to lead the school effectively, and get (his) programs approved." In general, the motivation behind such an attack would be to satisfy a personal end-goal; the teacher's humiliation would be the means to this end. Thus, another important tenet of the principle of equal respect is violated by such an administrative decision. As noted above, this principle weighs heavily against a decision to publicly attack another human being.

Other ethical principles are also involved in the decision-making process. There is, as discussed earlier, a truth-issue at work here, revolving around the notion that the alleged critic may indeed not even be guilty of what she is alleged to be doing. Note that the teacher in fact denied any guilt with incredulity at the initial meeting with the principal; and it is the principal's friends who are the sole basis for the charges against the teacher. Philosophers such as Israel Scheffler have defined knowledge as resting on belief, truth, and evidence⁸²: the principal in Case #3 may well have belief in the charges, but he most assuredly has not determined a convincing case for truth, and the authority of his friends is all that the charges rest on. The truth-issue is crucial to the ethical principle of due process; this principle requires that we deal with others in a manner based on clearly-known standards which are consistently applied to all, and which are based on reasonable evidence that is systematically disseminated to them. It is in the area of "reasonable evidence" that the truth-

⁸² Israel Scheffler, Conditions of Knowledge (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 21.

issue becomes crucial to this case. Is the principal sure that there is reasonable evidence for his potential attack upon another human being? Philosophically speaking, it seems not. The truth of the charges against the teacher are not yet in the realm of what the administrator could call actual "knowledge." Thus, a serious breach of the principle of due process would occur if the attack were made. Similarly, another breach would occur in the circumstance that such a public attack was not a "consistently applied" reaction to all who are guilty, or even charged with, criticizing and ridiculing the principal. Thus, the ethical principle of due process weighs heavily against such a decision. And the principle of democracy which requires all those affected by a decision to have equal influence on that decision before it is made, may have been violated too by the principal's failure to consult with the critic-teacher before the meeting and at the very least inform her of his upcoming broadside, and listen to the teacher's reaction and thoughts on it before the faculty meeting was held.

Overall, the moral reasoning model has performed admirably as the structure within which to analyze the ethical dimensions of this case. Benefit maximization is severely stalemated as a deciding factor because the potential benefits are all balanced by potential losses, all of which are unpredictable and are further muddled by a lack of evidence against the teacher. The principle of equal respect, the principle of equal treatment, the principle of due process and the truth-issue inherent in it, and even to some extent the principle of democracy all stand quite solidly against the administrator's thoughts of attacking his alleged nemesis. Thus, upon ethical inquiry into the issue at hand, the administrator more clearly sees the unethical basis to such a course of action, and may be strengthened in a resolve not to do it.

Having analyzed the case, then, within the moral reasoning model, we again turn to a discussion of the survey results from the sample population of high school administrators involved in this research study, in terms of the two-fold purpose of the study itself: "what role does ethics play in the day-to-day decisions made by high school administrators?", and "just how ethical are the decisions that are made by high school administrators?"

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS
 WHAT ROLE DOES ETHICS PLAY IN HIGH SCHOOL
 ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION-MAKING?

An analysis of the survey results revealed that eighty-nine (89) of the respondents displayed what has been termed "ethical awareness" in the situation presented in Case #3. This high ethical awareness factor was reminiscent of the results of data analysis in Case #1, and parallels the fact that all five of the basic ethical principles in the moral reasoning model were present in the case, most in clear and dramatic fashion. Eleven (11) respondents felt there was no ethical issue in the case, relegating the dilemma to either an issue of "practicality" or "politics." One response failed to indicate any clue as to the presence of ethical awareness, despite the routine attempt to review the entirety of the answer, that is, all aspects of the responses to questions #2, #3 and, in this case, #1 as well, in an attempt to decipher if any ethical standard was in fact being alluded to in those responses. The researcher used the same type of holistic review of all aspects of all responses to determine the dominant ethical standard expressed by each respondent.

The breakdown of the most prominent ethical response per respondent was as follows:

Predominant Ethical Standard: Case #3

Professionalism.....	40
Justice.....	16
Truth/Honesty.....	12
None.....	11
Respect.....	8
Positive Leadership.....	4
Good Example.....	3
Integrity.....	3
Due Process.....	2
Compassion/Mercy.....	1
(Unaccepted response)....	1

The one survey that was judged not to have an acceptable response to the question of

motivation for the decision the respondent indicated on the survey was a case in which there was no response given to question #2, and only the words "public chastisement" were written in response to question #3. The respondent did choose not to attack the teacher publicly, as noted in the response given to question #1; however, nothing in that response was indicative of any ethic or value that motivated the decision. The blank response to question #2 and the oblique statement in question #3 did not allow the researcher to imply what if any ethical standard was dominant in this respondent's mind; as such, it was judged to be an unaccepted response.

The very high ethical awareness factor in this case, hovering around 89% of all members of the sample population, seems indicative of the fact that all five of the basic ethical principles in the moral reasoning model were at work in this case, with four of them (benefit maximization, equal respect, equal opportunity, and due process) quite prominent. Of these four ethical principles, three weighed heavily towards one side of the issue, lending perhaps a heightened sense of ethical awareness to the scenario itself. Many of the interviewees buttressed this interpretation of the results with references to the fact that "this case was easier because there were so many more reasons not to make the wrong choice (to attack the teacher)," as Administrator UC put it. The written responses were illustrative of the prominence of ethical standards on the minds of the respondents as they considered the case. "We have a duty to try to protect people's reputations and their good name. And another issue is revenge--humiliation can hardly be justified in this case," wrote one respondent. The ethical principle of equal respect surfaced in this response: "The ethical issue involves the fact we must always place the inner worth of another human being as something we can't just shatter to make us feel better." Benefit maximization was on the mind of another respondent, who said that "you must place the interests of the whole organization above the feelings of the leader" as you resist a personal attack "for the sake of the school's program as a whole." Another respondent offered this maxim: "We must be professional when attacking a problem, and not unprofessional by attacking people." Yet another wrote "it's simply not professional to put someone on the spot in front of an entire group."

We have previously discussed this study's acceptance of the term "professionalism"

as an ethic. The decision was based on the surrounding research data in the respondents' surveys, that is, the fact that whenever the term "professionalism" was used in a response, it was surrounded by and often defined in ethical terminology. The decision was validated by the responses of the interviewees, who similarly defined, and often expanded upon, the term "professionalism" as meaning adherence to ethical standards of conduct. Case #3 provides a classic example of how "professionalism," the most dominant term used to explain motivation in this case, is in fact linked to ethical standards and principles.

While "truth" (and "honesty") were also ethical concerns in the case, it is interesting to note that the truth-issue itself was a divisive one in this case. About half of the respondents felt assured that the teacher was in fact guilty of ridiculing the principal, and spoke of "putting up with people like that" or "ignoring those who ridicule you." About half, however, were more attentive to the principle of due process, requiring reasonable evidence; they pointed out that "it is not clear whether the teacher actually was making fun of the principal or not," as one respondent asserted. Another in this camp wrote that "You haven't yet established the fact that the ridicule has harmed your image, merely the fear that it has happened." "Lack of hard evidence," another stated simply. A fourth respondent was less than charitable to the administrator. "I'm surprised the supervisor even confronted the teacher at all. This is hearsay leading to paranoia." One offered a mixed ethical bag, annexing the principle of equal respect to the concept of vengeance: "It's quite unprofessional to humiliate someone in public like that; the score can be settled privately, using scheduling, room assignments, and the like." (Note the combination of an ethical principle and an unethical means in this singularly ironic statement.)

The interviewees in this case underscored the high ethical awareness factor discovered in the research data. "This case was an obvious one," said Administrator QS. "It's never right to attack someone else. It's the Golden Rule Concept -- don't do onto others what you don't want them to do onto you." Administrator TB said "this case had a lot of ethical aspects to it; in fact, they seemed to be running into each other. But almost all of them were really in one direction, and I guess they just carried most of the administrators with them." They were also quite divided on the truth-issue discussed above, and those who had judged the teacher guilty and framed their responses early in the interview on that

assumption seemed chagrined at the suggestion of the researcher that perhaps the teacher did not criticize the principal at all. Most common among explanations for that type of response -- that is, for the immediate assumption of guilt and the subsequent chagrin about having made that assumption -- was the commonness of the experience in the educational setting, especially for administrators. One response, that of Administrator GL, sums up the typical explanation offered by these administrators:

I've got to tell you I feel a little funny that I didn't even think about the teacher not being guilty. You know, it happens to us all the time. I've been an administrator quite a number of years, and it never ceases to amaze me how people have nothing else to do except sit around and tear you up or tear up the kids or the school, or their fellow teachers. You'd think people stay in education because they are idealistic or because they like other people. But some of them, well, it's the opposite. anyway, what I'm saying is that it happens a hundred times a year to me, someone jumping on my back or tearing me up, and I guess I'm so used to it that I didn't even think twice about whether this teacher was ripping his own principal up. I guess it is something we should be more "ethically aware" about.

The other administrators who assumed the guilt of the teacher made similar responses in their interviews. The administrators who did not make that assumption generally listed the lack of evidence against the teacher as one of the most prominent reasons not to attack her, often giving this as their first reason when asked why exactly it was "unprofessional" or "unfair" to do so.

A noticeable percentage of respondents felt that Case #3 had no ethical dimension at all. That is not to say that they would in fact launch the attack; in fact, not one of the eleven were among the two who would in fact act in a way judged unethical. This group of eleven simply felt that it wasn't "smart" or "practical" to make such an attack; "you just get more people mad at you when you act that way," one respondent wrote. "This is a public relations problem; you've got to keep the image going of the cool, confident administrator," another wrote. One administrator said "This is just an issue of practicality if nothing else; her friends won't hear me, and those who know what she is doing, know what she is doing." (It is interesting to note that this administrator was the only one to voice objection to the reference in the scenario to the teacher as "she"; "Why 'she' and not 'he', or neuter?" this administrator wrote. It is herein offered that the scenarios attempted to mix the

genders randomly, with no intent to stereotype certain types of actors in a scenario with specific genders. Upon reflection, there indeed was no intent to inject gender stereotypification into any of the cases.)

Politics was often the reason offered by those who saw no ethical dimension to the case. "This is just a power play, and I wouldn't win a power play under these circumstances" wrote one administrator. "This isn't ethics, it's office politics," wrote another. "I just make a mental note to make sure these people eventually find employment elsewhere. "

The interviewees faced the issue of politics versus ethics. Most agreed that there was a political issue at work when a teacher attacks an administrator (remember, however, that half of these interviewees did not immediately assume that the teacher was in fact guilty of such criticism; thus, they spoke in a more hypothetical sense than did the others, who talked about how "there is a political dimension to this case" because they had already assumed the teacher's guilt) and most seemed to concede that such is "business as usual" in administration. "Teachers want power too, and when they don't get their way, an attack in the lounge is a means of getting even, or building a political audience, or spreading propaganda, as much as it just spouting off" Administrator HC said. "But that doesn't change the fact it's wrong to do the same back to them. It's just another part of the overall problem." "It's an example of office politics when someone snipes at you behind your back in a school building," offered Administrator TB, "but that doesn't mean you should lower yourself to their level of politics just to get even."

Overall, the analysis of responses to the survey indicated a high ethical awareness factor among administrators in the sample population. The presence of several high-profile ethical standards in the case is the likely cause of this response. Several administrators saw no ethical dimension to Case #3, characterizing it as a practical or political problem only; all of these administrators, however, did in fact choose the most ethical response to the problem, as shown through moral reasoning, which is not to make the public attack.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

HOW ETHICAL ARE THE DECISIONS MADE BY HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS?

While the ethical awareness factor was high in Case #3, the final decision made by the respondent administrators was even more overwhelmingly one-sided. Ninety-five (95) of the members of the sample population said they would make no mention of the teacher's alleged criticism in any part of the faculty meeting. Another four (4) would make oblique and indirect references to the problem, but without mentioning the teacher's name or any specific reference to the alleged criticism. Only two (2) of the high school administrators surveyed would stand up and publicly attack the teacher under the circumstances presented in this case.

Ethical Awareness Factor.....89%

Ethical Decision Made.....98%

Unethical Decision Made.....2%

The ninety-five respondents who chose what the moral reasoning model indicated to be the most ethical administrative decision in this case gave varying reasons for their decision. Chief among these reason was the ethic of professionalism; this has already been discussed at length in the previous section of Case #3 . "Justice to all concerned is the issue; treat people justly, and it will come back to you" wrote one respondent who felt justice to be the dominant ethic in the case. All twelve of those who chose truth or honesty as the motivational ethic behind their decision were on the side of the camp which had not automatically assumed the teacher's guilt; this is not surprising, since our previous analysis indicated that the truth-issue, when it was adequately considered as an issue, clarified the notion that the teacher may well have been innocent of any of the charges leveled against her by the friends of the principal. All ninety-five of these respondents were aligned in a decision not to mention the alleged problem at all; some quite directly stated that "I wouldn't even let out a hint that I was troubled by it (the criticism) or the teacher. Even a

hint of it would be a breach of my professional ethics." "Absolutely no public comment about the teacher," wrote another, who interestingly revealed his assumed guilt of the teacher by stating "Begin as a last resort the process to fire her." "Leave it as a private matter," another respondent stated. "I would not bring the matter up publically (sic)," another wrote. "To do so would be a huge error." Yet another, more terse reply was "I would not confront the teacher publicly." All of the above are representative of the manner in which the great majority of respondents chose to handle this case. It has previously been noted that the administrators who were interviewed shared this type of decision .

Also extremely common among this group of ninety-five high school leaders was a proposed next step to the problem at hand. Having already vowed not to mention the matter publicly nor to embarrass the teacher in front of her colleagues, seventy-two of the respondents who made such a choice indicated that they would attempt to meet with this teacher again, privately, to settle the issue or at least confront it. It cannot be assumed that the remaining twenty-three would not also do this as the next step; they simply did not mention it on the survey instrument. There were many variations on the conditions of the meeting, although all were "private" as opposed to the "public spectacle," as one respondent wrote, that the principal in Case #3 had been mulling over. Some of the variations proposed by the seventy-two respondents in this sub-category included: 1) a private one-on-one meeting between the principal and the teacher, 2) a meeting with a third party present as a neutral observer, 3) a meeting with the teacher and one of the principal's friends, so as to clarify the charges leveled at one by the other, 4) a similar scenario in which all the principal's friends were present as well as the teacher, 5) a variant scenario in which the teacher's friends were present to verify her actual behavior in the lounge, 6) a conference involving the principal, the teacher, and the union representative in the building, 7) a conference which would involve the principal, the teacher, and "a religious of the teacher's choice" to serve as an arbiter of the case, 8) a conference that was tape-recorded so that the teacher's words "would come back to haunt her for all to hear" if she in fact turned out to be perpetrating the alleged criticism of the principal, 9) a conference between the principal and several faculty members, privately held, to first verify the teacher's behavior before confronting her again in a subsequent private meeting, and even 10) a

meeting between the principal and the teacher "out of the school building" so as to emphasize the "personal nature of the problem, and perhaps create a better personal relationship between myself (the administrator) and the teacher." The wide variance here is not of concern to this study, since none save perhaps the tape-recorded conference suggests any hint of unethicalness (and the tape-recorder suggestion hints of unethicalness only in the veiled suggestion that the recording would be used in a vengeful way, as seen in the words " . . .for all to hear.") It is interesting to note, however, that so many of the high school administrators who chose the ethical route in this case came up with the same general next-step scenario. Such a private meeting with the teacher, whatever the variant, seems in adherence to the ethical principle of equal respect (in that it recognizes the teacher as a responsible moral agent capable of weighing the words of the principal and perhaps reaching some accord in the issue, and in that it respects her intrinsic worth as a human being in treating her with the same respect that the principal, or any individual, would want himself or herself); it seems in adherence to the principle of equal treatment, in that a one-on-one conference with a critic is much more likely to be an administrative option, or policy perhaps, that is consistently applied to all staff members under similar circumstances; it respects the teacher's freedom of choice, allowing her a more comfortable situation in which to air her differences with the principal, if in fact such differences exist; it is in adherence with the truth-issue, in that it does not presume that there is guilt, and seeks the opportunity to initiate a dialogue on the issue with the teacher so as to verify or reject the allegations; it is even in adherence with the seeking of "reasonable evidence" that is part of the ethical principle of due process. In short, the fact that so many of the respondents decided upon a private, one-on-one meeting of some type rather than a humiliating and unethical public attack on the teacher is further indication of the high profile that ethical standards enjoyed among the administrators who considered this issue on ethical grounds.

Four of the sample population members created a "compromised" position on the ethical dilemma posed in Case #3. These four indicated that they would make reference in general terms to the "problem, but not the person" at the faculty meeting . Following are two responses typical of the four:

I would give a little talk on honesty and forthrightly telling people personally when you disagree with them or their policies, emphasizing that these things have much more effect when they are dealt with calmly, rationally, and as constructive criticism.

If . . . I felt my leadership was being hindered, I would speak to the faculty. I would not identify the teacher, but I would state that it has come to my attention that criticisms are being directed at my programs or my decisions. I would ask that anyone who does not understand these programs should see me and I would be happy to explain the reasons they have been implemented.

The question raised by such a response is obvious: "how ethical is this type of decision by a high school administrator?"

Determination of an answer rests with the application of the moral reasoning model. In short, the principle of benefit maximization applies similarly to the way it does with the more common, "no-mention-at-all" response. This decision risks embarrassing the teacher less directly (to those who understand the reference) or embarrassing the principal less directly (if he is guilty of replying to a false accusation, and some of the staff at least know this.) This decision may portray the principal as a balanced statesman, or a wimpish fence-sitter, dependent on the same unpredictable subsequent reaction to the statement discussed in previous paragraphs. This decision may engender better staff morale (if they view it as a supportive statement stressing more close, personal relations between administration and staff) or poorer morale (if they view it as a critical statement inferring they are all guilty of poor communication with their immediate superiors.) The extra dimension such a decision adds is the "group-think" problem; a general statement always risks interpretation that it is being critically aimed at any or all of the staff. A specific attack on an individual bears no such risk; the opposite is true here, making such a statement practically more problematic, but, it would seem, ethically no different than the other.

The principle of equal respect seems satisfied, if not fully; the oblique references might yet engender some mild group resentment, and could still embarrass the teacher to those who knew whom the reference was aimed at. Still, it is not nearly as severe a violation as a direct attack would be. Similarly, some due process is accorded the teacher, who has not been publicly "charged" without reasonable evidence being accumulated first;

the truth-issue is partially satisfied, since such oblique references do not require the same level of validation as would a specific and direct charge against an individual; and the equal treatment principle is at least somewhat intact, since it is far more likely that this would be a consistent response, or policy, of an administrator towards staff criticism than a policy of direct public attack would be. Note, however, that all the applications of ethical principles require qualifiers in terms of this type of decision; it seems a "compromised" decision produces "middle of the road" ethical dimensions that neither weigh heavily for or against the decision itself. At best, then, we can say that the moral reasoning model neither advocates nor rebukes such a course of action; the ethical dimensions of the decision parallel the compromised, indirect, and non-committal nature of the decision itself.

It is worth noting here that none of the twelve interviewees were among the four who chose this middle-ground administrative response; as such, the interview process was unable to contribute to a clarification or expansion of the ramifications of such a decision.

Finally, we turn to the two high school administrators who were judged to have made an unethical decision in this case. One such administrator wrote "Take the teacher to task. The principal is in charge of the building until his authority has been removed by the Board. Be fair, to the point, but make the teacher pay the price." This administrator was among the eleven who saw no ethical dimensions to the case whatsoever. The other was judged to have made an unethical decision based on the statement that he would refrain from publicly censuring the teacher "because there are so many other ways I can get to this teacher, including scheduling, room assignments, types of students she gets, and so on down the line." The ends-means relation comes in to play in making the judgment that such a decision is still inherently unethical. It is true that the administrator has refrained from the much-discussed unethical decision to attack the teacher publicly; but it is equally true that the implied motivation for this is based on vengeance and the ability to wreak such vengeance in other ways. The proposed vengeance method -- unfair scheduling, unfair room assignments, unfair assignment of students -- was previously analyzed in Case #1, in which one administrator proposed the same methodology for "driving out" a mediocre veteran teacher from his building. Such a course of action was condemned in Case #1, and as such must be condemned again now as being unethical. (See Case #1 for a more detailed

explanation of the inherent unethicalness of such a decision.) Therefore, while the public decision seems an ethical one (no public attack on the teacher), the motivation and the planned subsequent retaliation are blatantly unethical, thus blackening the entire administrative decision. It is worth noting that this second administrator also neither listed nor implied that there was any ethical dimension to this case.

It must again be noted here that none of the twelve administrators who were interviewed fell into the category above; as such, the researcher was unable to further clarify or expand upon the motivations and values that inspired the two decision-makers who were judged to be unethical. The only conclusions that can be drawn are those gleaned from their written responses, as has been done above.

Thus, a discussion of the research data indicates that the high ethical awareness factor discussed in the previous section seems to have resulted in an even higher level of ethical decision-making among the high school administrators in the sample population, in terms of Case #3. The vast majority chose an ethical route; a small group attempted a compromised decision that resulted in somewhat diluted ethicalness; and a minute percentage chose an unethical course of action, one publicly and one secretly, decisions that were also similar in that they both recognized no ethical dimension even being present in the case.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

As is to be expected when so large a percentage of a sample population makes a singular choice in a survey, there is no significant variance between those high school administrators who made the ethical decision in Case #3, and the average biographical data of all respondents. Among the four high school administrators who chose the compromised position, three were in their first year at their current position, and all four made either less or more than the average salary, with two in the \$20-25,000 per year salary range, and the other two in the \$55-60,000 per year salary range. The two respondents whose decisions were judged to be unethical both fit the average profile in every category. It seems unlikely, however, that any valid conclusions can be drawn from so small a portion of the sample population as are the "compromisers" and the unethical decision-makers in Case #3.

CASE # 4: DEALING WITH AN ANGRY, INFLUENTIAL PARENT

Mr. Jack Robinson, father of three alumni and three current students at your school, is president of the parents club, runs the concession stands for you at all basketball and football games, throws two annual appreciation-night dinners for your teachers, and even donates over \$1,000 each year to the booster club. He comes in to talk to you, obviously angry and upset. The drama teacher has not given his youngest daughter, Lois, a small part in the school play -- "It's just a small part, a few lines only, but it means so much to her, and she's distraught," Mr. Robinson tells you. "I've never asked for anything in return for my services, but it's just not fair that my daughter can't have this one small part in the play, when it doesn't even matter who says these few small lines," Mr. Robinson says. You have already talked to the drama teacher -- she told you it was a close decision, but another girl was a little better than Lois, and so the other girl got the part. You now prepare to respond to Mr. Robinson's request.

ANALYSIS OF THE CASE

Case #4 presents a variety of difficult ethical problems, linked as it is to several of the fundamental ethical principles in the moral reasoning model. Within the framework of a discussion using the moral reasoning model, these issues become more clear, and the educational administrative decision which seems most ethical under these circumstances is suggested.

The principle of ethics known as benefit maximization requires an individual to attempt to do that which produces the best possible consequences for the most possible people involved in or affected by the ethical decision to be made. The administrator preparing to respond to Mr. Robinson has had the opportunity to discuss the issue already with the drama teacher; this additional information allows a fuller analysis of the ethical dimensions of the case for the administrator. In terms of Lois, a decision to allow her to participate in the play is surely a beneficial one. She gains something that she covets, and currently does not have, by such a decision. In terms of Mr. Robinson, a decision to insert his daughter into the role in the play would also be a beneficial one for the same reason. It furthermore would seemingly justify, in Mr. Robinson's mind, a particular type of "fairness" -- a fairness most often associated with the maxim "you wash my back, I'll wash yours," implying a reciprocity of kindness and favors that are due to those who are kind

and favorable to you. Such justification seems important to Mr. Robinson in terms of his statement that "I've never asked for anything in return for my services....," in which the clear implication is that previous service now requires reciprocity, of the kind mentioned above. In terms of the drama teacher, the benefits are few, the losses many. The drama teacher would have her freedom of choice taken from her by a reverse decision to insert Lois into the play; the teacher's professional judgment to give the part to another girl would be negated, and she would find herself forced to accept the choice of an administrator as to who gets the role in her production. The drama teacher also loses her sense of integrity; she has made a decision she feels is fair and just, and now must accept a decision made elsewhere that seems unfair, and unjust. Thus, personal integrity has been lost on the part of the drama teacher. Finally, the drama teacher may lose some amount of professional respect from her drama students, other parents, even fellow staff members, if she accepts the reversal of her decision. It is painfully true that others may view the drama teacher as being weak for allowing such a reversal to occur. For the other girl who currently has the role, the benefits are nil, and the loss is plentiful. A role she has tried out for under the rules previously announced now finds those rules overturned, *ex post facto*. Something she coveted and won is now taken away through no fault of her own; a sense of injustice is surely the result of such an occurrence. For the administrator, the objective benefits include a renewal or perhaps even a heightening of allegiance and service from Mr. Robinson; the pleasant feeling of having "returned a favor" to a man who has dedicated his money, energy, and time to the school in tremendous fashion; and perhaps the avoidance of a major political and public battle with an influential community member. The administrator's potential losses in this case are the converse of his potential benefits: he may lose or have lessened the allegiance of his drama teacher, as well as that of other staff members sympathetic to that teacher's position; he may lose a measure of self-respect in making a decision based solely on an appeal to the "washing-each-other's-back" maxim referred to previously; he may risk a different political and public battle with the parents of the other girl, and those sympathetic to her case. In many ways it seems to be a draw; the potential benefits spread over all those apparently affected by the decision seem to balance exactly with the potential losses to others, or to the administrator himself.

Does such an analysis take into account, however, all of those who are actually affected by the administrator's potential decision? Seemingly it does not. A decision in favor of Lois Robinson benefits two people only -- Lois and her father. Others may share in the joy of Lois and her father on her being given a role in the play, but essentially there are only two "actors," so to speak, in this scenario who benefit from such an administrative decision. For the administrator, the decision is a stalemate of competing benefits and losses; for the other girl, her parents, and the drama teacher, there are no apparent benefits at all. And yet, what of the other students in the school? Do they benefit or lose from such a decision? They do not benefit at all, unless they too have influential and occasionally outspoken parents who will parlay their service to the high school into returned favors that will benefit their children. For the rest, the decision is of no benefit, and of great potential loss. The majority of students now find themselves operating under a system which allows the negation of previously-set rules and standards; it is a system in which ability, fair play, hard work, and apparent victory have no set place, at the behest of favors, influential parents, back-door politics, and reciprocal "back-washing." Under such a system, students may become disillusioned with even attempting to participate in activities; they may lose their sense of idealism and their belief in fair play; they may acquire negative traits of cynicism, disrespect for those in authority, an anti-establishment outlook, and a hardened, self-centered, and amoral attitude towards their goals in life, an attitude often summed up in the platitude "looking out for number one."

Should this be of concern to the administrator as he utilizes the benefit maximization principle to weigh his ethical options in Case #4? Most assuredly it should, for the benefit maximization principle relies on the weighing of potential benefits (and beneficiaries) against potential losses (and losers) as a consequence of any administrative decision. Seen in this light, the principle of benefit maximization weighs heavily on the side of denying Mr. Robinson his request. And yet, what of those who suffer if Mr. Robinson denies his services to the school as a result of his being denied the favor he is asking for? The loss of his work as president of the booster club, a loss of \$1000 donated annually to the school, a loss of two appreciation-night dinners for the teaching staff -- these too must be weighed by the administrator within this particular aspect of the benefit maximization principle. One

might argue, of course, that while the cynical reaction of many students is quite likely if the teacher's decision is reversed, the total loss of Mr. Robinson's services is not as likely, if the situation is handled with tact and sincerity. Both the reactions discussed herein are unpredictable ones, although the former seems more likely and irreversible than the latter. But one might also argue that, while money, leadership, and event-sponsorship can be replaced by the work of other parents in the school, a loss of morale among the student body is much harder to just replace. One cannot just bring in new students in the manner that one can bring in a new parent to serve as president of the boosters, or a new parent to assume sponsorship of the teachers dinners, or a new means of raising the lost \$1000. Thus, we must conclude here that the principle of benefit maximization is not conclusive, but does seem to lean towards a denial of Mr. Robinson's request for a favor for his daughter.

The issue of reciprocity assumes a major role in the moral reasoning analysis of Case #4. Reciprocity is most often defined in terms of a mutual exchange of help or cooperation; it is not in and of itself a positive or negative term, as such exchange of cooperation may be for good intentions, or for bad, or neutrally based on matter-of-fact conditions such as contracts, business agreements, and the like. What such a definition implies, however, is that the ethicalness of reciprocity lies in the nature of the act, and not in the act itself. To apply this to Case #4, the ethicalness of the "back-washing" proposed by Mr. Robinson does not lie in whether the administrator does it or not, but in the nature or features of the reciprocal agreement itself. Viewed in this manner, it becomes clear that the reciprocity so desired by Mr. Robinson is not of an ethical nature. First, it is an attempt to barter his own services for the benefit of someone else, an act which may or may not be ethical in itself--one can argue circumstances in which "sacrificing" one's own possessions for the sake of another is quite noble, for instance; similarly, one can argue that benefits should be earned fairly, and that someone else's influence is not fairly employed when it gives to another something that person does not deserve. Secondly, it attempts to use personal influence to deny something to someone who has rightfully earned it, which is clearly unethical. Third, it attempts to parlay goodness done in one human circumstance into power over that which exists in another circumstance, a position violative of the ethic

of equal treatment. Mr. Robinson has done good deeds for the booster club, and for the teachers, and for the athletic program. His good deeds in these circumstances do not of necessity afford him proper influence over other circumstances within the school. One can serve the interests of cancer research, for instance, and work diligently for organizations that combat that disease; this does not of necessity mean that this same person now should be rightfully afforded a say in how high his bank sets its interest rates, even though that decision most surely affects him, and even though he is most surely a generous man. The point is that the circumstances are different; his generosity in one arena does not necessarily grant him influence over another. Fourth, we must consider the ends-means relation referred to frequently in this discussion. Note that in this case, the actual results of such a decision are of a generally negative quality in the sense that the application of the principle of benefit maximization has suggested. A consequentialist view of Mr. Robinson's request shows it to be leaning towards violation of this ethical principle because the consequences of the action he is requesting would not benefit the majority of those involved in the case.

The concept of the ends-means relation has been previously discussed in this research paper. It suggests that since, in education, the goodness of the end-goal also serves as the evaluative process to insure that the proper means are being utilized to achieve that goal, then therefore ends and means are interrelated in a manner which makes it impossible for one to be ethical in nature when the other is not. Mr. Robinson is pursuing an end that is not clearly a good one; as such, the interrelation of ends and means suggests that his very attempt to attain this goal is of a circumspect ethical nature. Finally, it attempts to answer the question "Does the good that one donates freely require payment in turn?" with a positive answer; and yet this is philosophically impossible to do, since the term "donated freely" is contradicted upon any request for payment in return. Mr. Robinson finds himself, then, in a philosophical paradox which must disallow his request, and he finds himself in an ethical quandary that tends also to weigh against his request. Taken together, the issue of reciprocity seems to require that the nature of the mutual exchange be a fair and just one, that the issues involved be of similar circumstance, that the reciprocity not produce an unfair or unjust result, and that the reciprocity be based on non-contradictory terms. In short, Mr. Robinson's request is not an ethically fair or

philosophically consistent one.

Other ethical imperatives must also be considered by the educational administrator about to make this decision. The ethic of equal respect requires that we treat others as moral agents of responsibility and intrinsic worth, not using them to further our own ends and treating all as being of equal value as people. Does a decision to reverse the decision in Lois' favor adhere to or rebuke the principle of equal respect? A decision to replace the other girl with Lois in the play seriously violates this ethic. Such a decision does not treat Mr. Robinson as of "equal worth" with other parents; it puts him in a superior position in that it allots to him a power and influence over the school that other parents do not have. Put in other terms, such a decision does not treat all other parents as of equal value to Mr. Robinson, a clear violation of this fundamental moral tenet. Also, it does not recognize the intrinsic worth of the other girl; in fact, it debases that intrinsic worth by denying her a rightfully-won position in the play through no fault of her own. It turns its back on the pain, hurt, and sense of injustice this other girl will suffer, a further debasement of her intrinsic worth as a human being. Next, such a decision denies the status of the drama teacher as a responsible moral agent whose freedom of choice is to be respected, even if one does not agree with it. It denies that responsibility by overturning a fairly-wrought decision; it denies that respect for her freedom of choice by ignoring her right to make such a decision and replacing it with a decision based entirely on outside interests not relevant to the play itself. Finally, it does not treat all other students in the school as being of equal intrinsic worth as Lois; it allows her a special status above them based entirely on her father's influence and on no merit of her own. Relegation of the student body to a level not the same as Lois enjoys in this circumstance is a dramatic violation of the principle of equal respect, as well as of equal treatment. Thus, the second fundamental principle of the moral reasoning model stands strongly against a decision to award Lois the undeserved part in the school play.

It has already been noted that a decision in Lois' favor violates the principle of equal treatment, in that it does not treat people in similar circumstances in a similar way. Note also that the principle of due process, requiring that standards of judgment be known clearly in advance, be consistently applied, and be based on reasonable evidence that is

systematically made known to those involved, is also gravely infringed upon by a decision for Lois Robinson. The standards of judgment for selection to the play's roster were set before Lois and the other young lady tried out for the part; these standards, applied consistently, awarded the other girl the part based on the "reasonable evidence" of a "slightly better" performance by that girl. To reverse the decision is to negate the standards used, to make their application inconsistent, and to deny the reasonable evidence the administrator heard about when he consulted the drama teacher. This is not to say that the administrator has no ethical right to investigate the standards set, or the consistency of their application, or even the reasonableness of the evidence garnered by the drama teacher in making her decision; rather, the principle of due process encourages such investigation. But once determined, this principle requires that the original decision stand; to do otherwise is to deny almost every aspect of this fundamental ethical principle itself.

The principle of democracy requires that all who have a stake in a decision be afforded a reasonable influence over that decision. This precept has been followed already, in the sense that Lois had a fair attempt to influence her selection (through her performance at tryouts) and that Mr. Robinson had a fair attempt to state his desire to see Lois get the part (he has been afforded a chance to talk to the administrator and voice this view; had he been denied a chance to even speak, the principle of democracy would have been compromised somewhat.) Note that this reinforces the aforementioned point that the reciprocity issue does not become ethical or unethical based on the act itself, but on the nature of the act. There is nothing inherently unethical in Mr. Robinson making his request per se; the unethical qualities of the situation spring from the nature of the request, and the situation can become more unethical depending on the administrator's actual decision in the case. The principle of democracy has been upheld by Lois' chance to win the part fairly, and by Mr. Robinson's chance to voice his request. Based on this alone, the principle of democracy does not stand in the way of the administrator ruling against Mr. Robinson's proposed favor; however, note that the drama teacher, the girl who is losing her fairly-won role in the play, and the student body as a whole are all constituencies affected directly by this decision, and who have not been afforded any appreciable input into its final outcome. As such, overall, the principle of democracy is violated by a decision in Mr. Robinson's

favor.

Thus, an analysis of Case #4 within the framework of the moral reasoning model reveals that the ethical educational administrator must rule against the influential parent's request that his daughter replace the girl who actually won the part in the school play. While the principle of benefit maximization only leans against granting such a request, and the nature of the reciprocity-issue involved fails also to justify it, it is the clear opposition of the principles of equal respect, equal treatment, due process, and even democracy that negates any ethicalness being present in a decision in Lois' favor. The discussion now turns to the respondents in the sample population, so as to gauge what ethical dimensions they observed in Case #4, and how ethical their own decisions would have been judged to be by the moral reasoning method.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS WHAT ROLE DOES ETHICS PLAY IN HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION-MAKING?

An analysis of the responses from 101 high school administrators shows clearly that there was a high ethical recognition factor among them in this case. Ninety-nine (99) of the administrators surveyed indicated the presence of ethical dimensions to this dilemma; only two (2) gave no evidence of any ethical awareness in deciding on how to handle Case #4. The dominant ethic perceived by the sample population of secondary administrators was "fairness."

Analysis of the responses, especially in questions #2 and #3, was used to determine a predominant ethic among those who answered with two or more. The methodology for this has been previously discussed in the other cases. The breakdown of predominant ethical standards culled from the 101 survey respondents was as follows:

Predominant Ethical Standard: Case #4

Fairness.....	50
Loyalty.....	15
Professionalism..	11
Integrity.....	9
Freedom.....	5
Honesty.....	4
Justice.....	3
Due Process.....	2
None.....	2

Of those who felt fairness to be the preeminent ethic in Case #4, many referred to it in terms of “fighting politics from entering into a school decision.” This anti-politics issue was as important a means of defining fairness as were more traditional ways, such as “it is the only right thing to do, the only thing right for the other girl and the drama coach.” Many were more simple in espousing fairness as the ethical standard by which to make a decision in this case: “Fair is fair,” “You must be fair to the girl who won the part,” and “The other girl won the part fairly, and you must now in turn stand up for fairness” were typical responses. The anti-political slant was also a recurrent one in shaping a definition of fairness: “You cannot allow the 'buying' of school officials, ” “Politics must not be allowed to run a school district,” “Administrators cannot afford to compromise what is fair and right by giving in to political influences” and “It’s a matter of clout and how we have to resist it” were typical responses in this sub-category of respondents who saw fairness as the major ethical standard in this case.

This interpretation of the anti-politics issue as essentially being one of fairness was validated when the issue was brought up in the interview process after the surveys had been sent in. Administrator HR stated that “The classroom teacher decided and selected students for the play based on certain criteria; the criteria remain valid and the decision was a fair one. So how can you give in to clout, to influence educational decision-making that is fair?” Administrator HR, whose response echoed many of the tenets of the ethical principle of due process, expanded on the connection between fairness and politics when he related that “It often comes down to that -- being fair versus giving in to political pressure, from parents, from the board, from groups of teachers, you name it. Fairness and politics seem

almost like opposites at times, don't they?" Administrator HC stated that "politics is a dirty word nowadays anyway; a political person is one who schemes and lies and is unethical, pretty much. A politician isn't judged by his ability to be fair or to lead anymore, but by how successful he is, how much he wins. People assume that fairness is not a trait of politicians. "

Of the fifteen (15) respondents who indicated that loyalty was the dominant ethical issue in Case #4, all fifteen framed its definition in terms of loyalty to the drama teacher. "If the teacher made the right decision, you have to be loyal to her and that decision," said one respondent administrator. "Loyalty to your staff," another said more concisely. "Assuming you have investigated her methods of making the choice fully, it would be hypocritical to do anything else but be loyal to your teacher and support her decision," another wrote. One might argue that loyalty is not per se an ethic, in that one can be loyal to a wrong or unjust cause just as one can be loyal to a just cause, or even a neutral one, as in being "loyal to one's work.") However, the manner in which most of the fifteen framed their response indicated that loyalty here was meant as an offshoot, so to speak, of the ethic of justice; that is, they intended loyalty in this case to stand for the notion of "sticking by" a person or decision that has been judged to be a just one. This was later reinforced by the interviewed administrators who were asked to elaborate on this notion.

Administrator TB's answers were typical of this stance. Upon being interviewed, he stated that "By loyalty, I don't mean blind allegiance to something whether it's right or wrong. That's just like being brainwashed. I mean knowing what's out there, judging what's right and best, and then siding up with it. That's the kind of loyalty we owe our staff when they're doing what's right. "

The "professionalism" terminology has been discussed previously in this paper as to its acceptance and definition as an ethical standard. "Integrity" was used in a variety of ways by the respondents, including maintaining the integrity of the administrator, upholding the integrity of the teacher, and even a few who stated that the ethical issue involved supporting the personal integrity and worth of the other girl involved in the case. "Freedom" most often referred to supporting the freedom of choice the teacher was exercising, generally qualified by statements like "... as long as she was fair in her choice."

This freedom of choice ethic is, of course, an integral part of the ethical principle of equal respect within the moral reasoning model. "Justice" as a separate ethical entity was mentioned a surprisingly small number of times; it is assumed that this was caused by the large number of administrators who used the term "fairness", since both ethical standards are interrelated and are frequently used interchangeably in general conversation.

Two administrators indicated that there was no ethical dimension to Case #4. Both simply left the responses to questions #2 and #3 blank in this case. One cannot fully assume that this means they were totally unaware of an ethical dimension to the problem; however, lacking any other evidence, they must be listed under the category "None." It is interesting to note that both of these administrators were among the group of nine who advocated a "compromised" position in this case, a position that is explored more fully in the next section of the case analysis. Similarly, of the five administrators whose choices were judged to be unethical, all five listed "fairness" as the dominant ethical principle in the case; this too will be explored more fully in the upcoming section.

Thus, an analysis of the responses of the sample population of high school administrators from the southern Chicagoland and northeastern Indiana areas in Case #4 revealed a very high ethical awareness factor among them. Of the ninety-nine who indicated ethical awareness in Case #4, nearly half indicated that fairness was the controlling ethical standard in this case, and the term itself was often defined in anti-political terminology. Others chose loyalty, defining it as supporting staff members when they are right; subsequent interviews with administrators reinforced the researcher's opinion that said loyalty could be judged an ethical standard when defined in such a manner. Two administrators saw no ethical dimension to the case, and both eventually prescribed a "compromised" position on what final decision to make in Case #4. It is interesting to note that "fairness" was the standard unanimously invoked by the five who would decide to reverse the drama teacher's position and award the part to Lois. This correlation is expanded upon in the following section of the research study. Other ethical standards invoked by administrators in Case #4 included professionalism, integrity, freedom (of choice), honesty, justice, and due process.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS
HOW ETHICAL ARE THE DECISIONS MADE BY
HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS?

An analysis of the survey responses made by the sample population of high school administrators in Case #4 reveals that eighty-seven (87) of the respondents would decide to support the teacher's decision and disallow Lois from taking the part away from the girl who had originally won it. Nine (9) respondents would attempt a "compromised" ethical decision by taking part of the role away from the other girl, and giving that part of it to Lois, or by creating a new role in the play for Mr. Robinson's daughter. Five (5) administrators would choose the decision that the moral reasoning model suggested to be an unethical one -- taking the other girl out of play entirely, and inserting Lois into the role in an effort to placate her father.

Ethical Awareness Factor.....98.5%

Ethical Decision Made.....86.5%

Unethical Decision Made.....13.5%

Of the eighty-seven who decided to support the teacher's decision and maintain the girl who originally won the part in her role in the play, there were many similar responses. One such similarity was the rejection of the concept that parental contributions, as altruistic and generous as they might be, were cause enough to violate the ethical principles involved in this case. "Donated services and money are just that, charitable gifts," wrote one administrator. "Nothing should be asked for in return." Another wrote that "Sponsors must be able to make decisions based on a student's ability and not on parents' involvement." "Service to the school, no matter how great, has no relationship to parts in a play," wrote another. One administrator offered his comments in the form of advice. "Don't play favorites. If you make accommodations for those who are 'good' to you and your institutions, you become unfair and biased as an administrator."

Another similarity was a genuine concern for Mr. Robinson's feelings in the matter.

While none of the eighty-seven would give in to his request (which one respondent characterized as "greedy and selfish"), many would be sensitive to the fact he has been generous to the school and the staff. Responses typical of many of these administrators follow:

I would state to the father that the teacher's decision is closed, and that I support it. I would also indicate to the father that the entire school appreciates everything he has done for the school, and that I hope he continues to do so. I'd emphasize that the entire community benefits from his generosity.

Clarify with Mr. Robinson the reasons for his great support for the school and all his personal generosity. Nowhere was there ever an understanding of reciprocity. Reiterate the drama teacher's words that the other girl was a little bit better and the roles in the play are given out solely on merit. Thank him and encourage him to continue how he donates freely of his time, energy and money not for personal gain but for the good of the whole school. The message is a very powerful one, and Mr. Robinson deserves to be reminded of how valuable his generosity still is.

Mr. Robinson is guilty of the Little League mentality -- put my kid in even if he stinks. But he's motivated by what he thinks is best for his kid. So I'd be calm and remind him constantly of how much we do appreciate his generosity and help. This is essentially a very good person you are talking to. You can't just give in to him and do what's unfair, but you can be sensitive enough to treat him with respect while turning down his request. And take the time to explain it all to him too, that's also a sign you respect him.

Thus, another similar trait among many of the administrators who made the most ethical possible decision in this case was a sensitivity to Mr. Robinson's past generosity to the school and encouragement to so continue. The researcher found very few of these, if any, to even hint that said sensitivity and respectful treatment of Mr. Robinson was motivated by materialistic considerations; the tone of the responses, later validated in the interview process, was one of genuine appreciation for his help and generosity.

Another similarity among these ethical respondents was an emphasis on the idea that Lois also actually benefits from such a decision. Nearly half of the respondents in this category made some reference to the notion that "this is in the best interests of Lois." Responses centered around the concept that Lois would best learn a realistic lesson and be strengthened as a person by learning to accept her loss of the role. "Students must learn to

deal with failure as well as success” wrote one high school administrator in advocating such a point of view with Mr. Robinson. “This is the real world and Lois will be much better off learning these lessons now than she will be if she grows up thinking she can have someone buy her out of all her problems,” wrote another. “Life has no guarantees; explain to Mr. Robinson what good would it be to teach his daughter that it does? Help him see that his daughter will be stronger and will work harder the next time, and that both of these are good results for her, not bad ones.” Forty-two respondents included a phrase or full statement indicating they would tell Mr. Robinson that acceptance of the failure was in fact better for his daughter, and hopefully help him (and, of course, her) to understand this.

About half also mentioned another similar concept as part of their discussion with Mr. Robinson: urging him to encourage his daughter to stay involved. “I’d investigate with the drama teacher how to involve Lois in the production and how she can learn more about drama for future tryouts,” one administrator suggested. “Then I’d make sure I encouraged Mr. Robinson and Lois too about doing this.” “Meet with Lois and her dad together, and invite her personally to take part in another way (costume design, set design, lighting, publicity, etc.) Keep her involved!” wrote another. Thirty-nine respondents in the category-which chose to deny Lois the part concomitantly displayed an interest in insuring Lois stayed involved in the production.

Of the eighty-seven, two respondents did suggest that the drama teacher also be present at the meeting with Mr. Robinson, or meet with the administrator and the parent subsequent to the meeting described in the scenario. Both felt the purpose of this was to allow the teacher to clarify why the decision was made. Neither indicated any intention of “shifting the blame” onto the teacher, but rather simply attempting to make the decision as clear as possible to the parent. As such, this slight variance in the response was not judged by the researcher to involve any “compromised” position in relation to the most ethical response as determined through moral reasoning. A third respondent’s suggestion that the drama teacher meet privately with Lois after her father and the administrator had met displayed a similar intent, and was accordingly judged to be an ethical response.

The interviewees expanded on several of the strands that were so common among the ethical decision-makers. Administrator CS spoke of how it was important to take Mr.

Robinson's feelings into account during the conference with him:

I think ethics has a lot to do with how you treat people. So the issue here is not just making sure the other girl who deserves the part gets it, although that's an important one. It's also worrying about the feelings of Mr. Robinson, and the drama coach, and Lois too. Mr. Robinson deserves to be treated with respect; he is out there breaking his back for you, you know. We have lots of parents who do the same thing, break their backs for you. I'd never treat them any other way except with respect for all that, and genuine care for their being upset. That doesn't mean doing something wrong just to please them; but it is another form of showing you care about people, and that's what ethics is, that's what this whole job is all about.

Other interviewees expressed a similar rationale for treating Mr. Robinson with "the utmost courtesy" and for "thanking him for his generosity, time, energy, and all of the wonderful things he does for kids," as another administrator said.

Similarly, the interview process illuminated the fact that such courtesy toward Mr. Robinson in the conference was based on genuine emotion, and not a crass attempt to insure future financial donations and donated work. "I couldn't say that we don't want him to continue working and donating to our school," Administrator EH stated, "but I'd be lying if I told you that's the only reason I'd be good to him in the conference. The main reason is that I really do respect people like that."

Nine of the respondent administrators decided upon a "compromised" response to the situation in Case #4. For five of the nine, this constituted having Lois "share" the performances with the other girl, so that Lois performed the part on stage in at least one of the performances of the school play, and preferably half of whatever number of performances were put on at the school. For three of the nine, this constituted having a role written into the play so that Lois had some lines to read on stage without taking any performance time away from the other girl. For one administrator, this constituted giving Mr. Robinson a guarantee that Lois would have a speaking part in the next production put on at the school, and then instructing the drama teacher to make sure Lois got a part in the next play. Each of these compromised ethical positions present special ethical problems unique onto themselves.

First, let us hear the explanation for the administrative decision to "split" the

performances between the two girls from the administrators who decided upon it, in their own words:

I would look for a diplomatic way out. I have never heard of a high school play which did not at least have two performances. I would probably ask the drama teacher to allow the girl already chosen to play the part for one performance, and to allow Lois to perform at another one. The girl who was already chosen has won her right to perform . . . but Lois is capable (close decision.) The purpose of all school activities is to involve as many students as possible. This will bring two students into the play. Do we just respond to an influential parent ? No-- I would do this for any parent and child who wants to be involved.

I would consult with the drama teacher about the possibility of having two performances for this part. . . each to perform on different nights. If that wasn't possible, I'd see if there was another role to be played. Although I don't see "pay-back" as appropriate for school volunteers, I do feel schools should do their best to provide as many opportunities as possible for kids to participate and be involved in school activities. I'd encourage the drama teacher to find alternative roles for Lois to play. . .(and) I'd do the same for any other student who demonstrated an intense desire to be a part of a particular activity.

The moral reasoning model is applicable to this compromised position. First, it is of interest to note that the intention or motivation behind the administrators quoted above is an altruistic one (to open up activities to as many students as want to participate). All five of these respondents shared this altruistic motivation. Now, the principle of benefit maximization as applied to this proposed compromised decision indicates that, if the role was indeed split between the two girls, then the losses for the other girl have been lessened (compared to the consequence of having the part taken away from her altogether), and Lois' benefits have been increased (compared to if she had been denied the part altogether, as the drama teacher first decided and as eighty-seven of the administrators in the sample population had decided to do). Conversely, the other girl has lost more compared to her original position, that is, having the part she won fairly all to herself; and Lois' losses have been increased when compared to the possibility of her completely replacing the other girl in the role. Thus, there is a stalemate from the two girls' point of view -- except that we must factor in that, at this point in time, the other girl already has the part. So in fact there is a "loser" (the other girl) and a "beneficiary" (Lois) in such an arrangement. For the drama

teacher, the consequence is still a net loss -- the same embarrassment, loss of respect, and impingement on her professional judgment has occurred, albeit in a smaller dose. For Mr. Robinson, it is a benefit, as he gains for his daughter something he did not have previous to his conference with the administrator. For the administrator, it remains the same mixed bag of unpredictable potential benefits and losses--it may be a stalemate, it may be a great benefit if he receives plaudits from all concerned for such Solomon-like wisdom, or he may be scorned by all sides for not giving anyone what they felt they deserved.

For the other schoolchildren, however, the situation remains a general loss. While it is true that the intent here is seemingly beneficial to the children -- to get anyone who wants to get involved into the activity they covet membership in -- it unleashes either very problematic and inconsistent application (will every student who now wants to be on the varsity basketball team be given a uniform and equal playing time, regardless of ability? Will and can a school outfit and play so many students in this activity? And if not, where exactly do administrators begin injecting some type of rules, qualifications, or tryouts if they want to prevent such a chaotic consequence?) or it creates a special-case situation for Lois. If the latter is true, then the ethical principle of equal treatment has been violated directly and dramatically. Note then that we are forced to return to the concept that these administrators' altruistic motivation either creates an impossible situation or forces direct violation of another major principle of ethics. Therefore, barring such extension of involvement to all students at all times based merely on their wishes, we must note that the probable outcome is the resentment and sense of injustice that any student body would feel upon seeing special circumstances set up to benefit a peer simply because her parent is influential. The consequences of such a reaction are undoubtedly negative; thus, the principle of benefit maximization again leans against usage of this "compromised" position.

The principle of equal treatment has already been offended by the special-case circumstances that have been afforded to Lois, and not afforded to other students. The principle of equal respect has been violated in that the other girl's intrinsic worth is not being recognized fully by such a position, nor is that of the drama teacher. And due process has fallen by the wayside as well, since the original standards that were clearly known are still not being enforced with consistency, as this ethical principle demands. Thus, while the

sting is perhaps lessened somewhat compared to complete denial of the role to either girl, the ethical dimensions of the case have changed hardly a whit, and this type of compromised position seems to be an unethical one.

Three respondent administrators created another variant “compromised” decision to solve the issue at hand: the creation of a new role to be written into the play for Lois. “I would probably ask the drama teacher to write in another role for the girl; sometimes you must be political,” wrote one. Another would not ask, but order. “Direct the drama teacher to build in a part for the daughter. A student in a course on drama (note: the scenario does not indicate that the girls were in a course, simply that they were competing for a part in a play) should be in a cooperative, and not competitive, situation. It’s an issue of clout versus freedom, and freedom loses, probably rightly so.” Such responses present their own ethical problems as well.

In terms of the principle of benefit maximization, the other girl lose nothing, nor does she benefit. Lois benefits from the new part she has in the play, and Mr. Robinson benefits to a large extent insofar as he has attained a part for his daughter, although it is admittedly not exactly what he asked for. The drama teacher still suffers yet another impingement on her professional judgment, loses some respect quota among students and peers, and loses some of her ability to control her own play. The administrator is faced with the same unpredictable reaction from the constituencies involved, and thus cannot be said to definitely benefit or lose. The student body still sees an unfairness occurring, as the daughter of an influential parent is treated differently than they would be; as such, the feelings of resentment and injustice, with whatever negative consequences that has among them, must again rise up. In terms of equal treatment, Lois is still being given something that makes her treatment “unequal” to all others and creates an unfairly “higher” status for her as compared to her peers as a result of the influence of her father. The principle of equal respect is still violated, as the drama teacher still loses proper freedom of choice; note that the other girl no longer is a factor here, however, since her intrinsic value and worth are not debased by such a decision. Finally, the principle of ethical due process is violated in that previously-announced standards are still not being enforced with consistency and a new category has again been created to afford a special status upon Lois. Thus, while the

violations are fewer, it must be concluded that such an arrangement still violates the ethical principles of the moral reasoning model.

We will briefly point out that the last suggested decision, by one respondent -- to “personally guarantee a part equal to that which she lost out on in this play...in the next play” -- is violative of benefit maximization for the same reasons listed above; is violative of equal respect, in that the intrinsic worth of some unknown student has now been denied, in the sense that some more talented student may well have been robbed, as it were, of a role in the next play simply because one less exists, that is, the one guaranteed to Lois; is excessively violative of equal treatment, since another special status category has been arbitrarily created for Lois simply because of her father’s influence; and is violative of due process, in that previously-set standards are again being altered with inconsistency to benefit one student only. The respondent administrator justified this decision “based on the fact that the call was so close, that the girl is distraught over the situation, and that he has always been so supportive of the school without asking for special consideration. This one case offers us an opportunity to show our appreciation.” Such a rationalized approach to administrative decision-making is quite clearly unethical, as the moral reasoning model reveals.

Five administrators made decisions that were judged to be more clearly unethical under scrutiny of the moral reasoning model. Four of the five would have simply overturned the decision of the drama teacher and inserted Lois into the role that had been fairly won by the other girl, thus displacing the other girl entirely from the play; one offered a variant, stating that “If I had known about Lois trying out for the part beforehand, I would have met with the drama teacher and encouraged her to give Lois the role straight out, thus avoiding the entire mess.” (Note that his variant still effectively displaces the other girl, although she is an unknown person at the time of the displacement, and that it is based upon the same violation of ethical principles as are the other four more patently unethical decisions.) Among the five responses judged to be unethical, however, it is interesting to note that all called upon “fairness” as the dominant ethic in this case. But their interpretation of fairness was framed in terminology of being fair to Mr. Robinson, much as the administrator quoted above had done in an attempt to rationalize a guaranteed next-

time role for Lois. It was an attempt to be “fair” to Mr. Robinson for all his contributions to the school, a common thread in all five administrative responses in this category. Much has already been made of the multitude of violations such a decision creates against all five ethical principles of the moral reasoning model; it is unnecessary at this point to state them again. Suffice it to say that such a decision refutes benefit maximization in its effect upon the student body, refutes equal respect in its treatment of the drama teacher and the other girl, refutes equal treatment and democracy in creating a special status for Lois above all other students, and refutes due process with the inconsistency inherent in creating such special statuses that are in opposition to previously-set standards. There is no doubt about the very unethical nature of such an administrative decision.

While none of the interviewed administrators was part of the compromised category (and as such were unable to clarify or expand upon that brand of ethical decision-making), two of the five who chose to reverse the drama teacher’s decision (albeit one’s decision attempted this “a priori,” so to speak) were in fact among the twelve interviewees in this research. Their comments re-emphasized an altruistic motive -- to be “fair” to Mr. Robinson for so much generosity shown to the students and staff of the school -- but each, in his or her own way, openly admitted an ethical “breakdown” in their argument.

Administrator LS told the researcher that “the reality here is that all parents are not equal. Some put in more, and fairness requires they get something back. And it’s not like they’re getting back all they put in, far from it in fact. They’re getting back just a fraction. We just can’t deny them everything just to look like ‘Mr. Fair’ to the world.” Administrator LS admitted this was more of a gut reaction rather than one he had thought out much; “It seemed like the right thing to do,” he surmised. “But we need to keep parents supportive of the schools, or the system will break down. Then more people suffer, kids and parents alike, all because someone wanted to look good downtown.” This administrator was willing to admit that the principles of equal treatment and equal respect were severely compromised here, and he attempted to use a variant of the benefit maximization principle to justify it (although it must be noted that he of course never used these specific terms. The point is that these are in fact the ethical principles that his quotes above represent, and which he expanded upon in the interview.) Administrator LS waxed philosophic about his

decision later in the session: “All things are not equal, even though they are supposed to be; to paraphrase Orwell, ‘some parents are more equal than others,’ but they earned it, it’s deserved.”

Administrator HC emphasized the fairness issue on behalf of Mr. Robinson’s many unsolicited contributions. “He helped a hundred kids or more with his work. Maybe hundreds have benefited. To refuse to help just once as repayment seems unethical if you’re looking at it from his point of view, wondering why he gets so little for so much he has given.” Administrator HC spoke of the professionalism issue as well, saying that “It is always important to attempt to compromise when there is a conflict between parent and school, and it really doesn’t matter whether the parent contributed money or not. It’s a professional way to handle things.” Asked about the possibility that a policy of always compromising probably insured inequities, “special case” statuses for students and parents, and a lack of consistency, the high school administrator responded with “There is no need to think life is inflexible, either. Life is always changing, and maybe fairness, maybe ethics is really something that is always changing too, just like the different circumstances in every single decision you face in real life.” Such a position is philosophically much more teleological than deontological and much more aligned with ethical relativism than are the more fundamental assumptions of this research study. Yet it may well be worthwhile to re-emphasize a previously-made point: the personal interviews do much to suggest that even those decisions judged to be unethical are often the result of administrative motivation that is in and of itself altruistic, well-intentioned, even idealistic at times. This is an important point in attempting to avoid wholesale condemnation of administrators whose decisions are judged to be unethical in nature by the moral reasoning model.

Thus, the results of an analysis of survey results from the 101 high school administrators in the southern Chicagoland and northeastern Indiana region seem to indicate that a large majority (eighty-seven) chose to make an ethical decision in the circumstances presented in Case #4; nine chose a compromised decision that is seemingly unethical, and five made decisions that seem more clearly unethical under scrutiny of the moral reasoning model. The more clearly unethical decision-makers uniformly chose fairness to the parent as the ethical standard employed to justify their decision. Three

different scenarios decided upon by the “compromisers” did little to change the essentially unethical nature of their final decision. The eighty-seven ethical decision-makers often displayed similar patterns in the responses including a sensitivity to Mr. Robinson, encouragement for Lois to remain involved in the school’s activities, the notion that Lois would truly benefit from facing up to failure, and a rejection of the notion that parental contributions were grounds for violating ethical standards.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Analysis of the data from the biographical questionnaire unveiled little of note in Case #4. Those five respondents whose decisions were judged to be unethical showed no significant variance from the average profile of all respondents; similarly, the high school administrators who decided upon the “compromised” positions which were judged to be unethical also showed little significant variance from the average profile, save for a tendency for their average salary to be slightly above or below the average. Overall, however, all three major categories in Case #4 - ethical decision-makers, compromised decision-makers, and more clearly unethical decision-makers - displayed no significant variance from the average respondent who participated in the survey.

CASE #5: GIVING A TEACHER RECOMMENDATION

The contract at your school makes it very difficult to remove a teacher once he or she has been granted tenure. You have tried hard to remediate a particularly poor teacher in your building for six years, yet the classroom remains noisy and the teaching remains mediocre at best. Late in May, you are surprised to receive a phone call from the principal of a nearby school. She asks you about this teacher -- telling you that the teacher has applied for a job in her school, and wanting to know what kind of teacher this person is. It's a golden opportunity to help improve education for your students in your own school - all you need to do is give a "glowing" report, and the teacher will leave your school and be hired by the neighboring principal. You'll then be free to hire a new, better teacher, and your students will be the "winners" as a result. You prepare to describe the mediocre teacher to the neighboring principal on the phone.

ANALYSIS OF THE CASE

Analysis of the case using the moral reasoning model serves to clarify the ethical principles inherent in such a situation, and to suggest the most ethical potential decision for the administrator faced with this dilemma.

The benefit maximization principle requires individuals to do that which is best for the most possible people affected by a decision or action. It is a consequentialist-based principle; the administrator must weigh the potential benefits and losses for himself and others before making a final choice. In terms of the teacher, it may well seem that there are several benefits to having the administrator give a falsely "glowing" report. First, it must be noted that the teacher has in fact applied for this new job, indicating that the teacher desires to "move on"; a false report over the phone would aid the teacher in attaining her desire for a new job. Secondly, it is possible that the teacher may in fact rejuvenate his enthusiasm and teaching ability at a new school; it is a maxim that sometimes a "new environment" has a positive and refreshing effect on professional drive and productivity. An accurate report, however, might well impede or end the chances for the new job, and a "new start," so to speak; thus, an inaccurate report seems to lean towards the benefit of the teacher. For the other principal, however, the converse is most likely true; the neighboring principal will bear several types of loss through an inaccurate report by the administrator in

question. The principal's goal of attempting to hire the best possible teacher for her own schoolchildren will be compromised, impeded, and perhaps even subterfuged if she accepts and acts upon the false information, and hires the teacher in this case. There is certainly no guarantee that "things will change for the better" if this new teacher begins employment at the new school; in fact, the teacher's past record indicates a high likelihood of continued mediocrity in the classroom. The principal serves to lose heavily, therefore, if she accepts a false report from her neighboring administrator.

Moreover, the principal may lose some measure of respect in her community for making a poor choice, if that is how things turn out to be, which, as noted before, is more likely than not; the principal will have to bear the burden of community and staff scorn for having made so poor a selection. Furthermore, the principal will have lost respect and trust for the administrator in question; a working relationship will have been damaged and perhaps permanently tainted with mistrust. Thus, the neighboring principal will be in a very non-beneficial situation if in fact an inaccurate report is given. For the schoolchildren of the administrator's school, however, the potential benefits seem enormous. The school will be rid of a teacher whose instruction was mediocre, whose classroom management skills were poor, and whose situation was irremediable for six years. The loss of such a teacher means a removal of a poor learning environment, the removal of a poor situation in which to learn discipline, and the opportunity to replace this teacher with one who is competent as an instructor and classroom manager. Such possible benefits are very appealing to the administrator; what could be more enticing to an educator than the possibility of improving the quality of education offered to his or her schoolchildren? Furthermore, the time lost in six years' worth of attempts to remediate a situation will have been lifted from the administrator in question, freeing his time to do even more to make a better school for all the children in his building. For the schoolchildren at the administrator's school, therefore, it seems there is a tremendous benefit to giving the inaccurate report and allowing the teacher to leave, so that the opportunity for a new instructor and a better overall learning environment becomes a reality for the children.

Seen in this light, the principle of benefit maximization seems to suggest that the administrator should in fact give the falsely "glowing" report over the phone. But have all

the constituencies in this situation actually been factored into the decision-making process? Most assuredly not. One major constituency still unheard from is the children at the other school. The results of an inaccurate report are dramatically non-beneficial to them. A false report which led to the hiring of this mediocre teacher could well produce a poorer and weaker learning environment for them; it could well lead to their own principal spending less time on their behalf because she is working extra time attempting to remediate this new, mediocre instructor. Less learning, less discipline, less respect for authority all may result from the injection of this poor teacher into their school and their classrooms. There is little doubt that an inaccurate report would most likely not be beneficial at all for the schoolchildren of the neighboring school.

And what of the administrator himself? He may well benefit in the sense he has removed a poor teacher from his building and has helped improve the learning and discipline environment for his own schoolchildren; he may improve upon it even further if he makes a good hiring to replace the mediocre teacher, and removes the frustration of six years' worth of trying to remediate this particular instructor. It seems to be a very beneficial move for the administrator. Yet what losses may he well accrue? Certainly the loss of trust, respect, and perhaps an entire working relationship with the neighboring principal once the truth comes out, as well it will eventually. A concomitant loss of respect in the professional community might also be borne by the administrator if word "gets around" about his unprofessional recommendation. And the administrator will have to bear the burden of knowing that he damaged the learning environment for perhaps hundreds of other schoolchildren in a nearby area. Looked at in this light, the principle of benefit maximization no longer suggests so strong a case for an inaccurate report; the consequences of such a decision seem to hold about as many losses as benefits for those involved in it.

Yet another issue must be considered within the framework of benefit maximization, however. Many people subscribe to the idea that "you have to take care of your own first"; this idea seems in line with many noble virtues, such as loyalty to friends, family bonds, and loyalty to country, to name a few. If "taking care of your own first" is in fact an ethical principle, then its inclusion in the discussion of benefit maximization would seem to tip the

scales in favor of a false report. Remember that the false recommendation would benefit the administrator's schoolchildren greatly, so that he would in fact be "taking care of his own" and showing what might be termed a strong loyalty to his school's student body. Is such a notion truly an ethic? It is a difficult one to deal with on a human level; friend, family, and patriotic ties are very emotional ones, and often deeply rooted in the individual. It is at this point that the ethical principle of equal respect must enter the equation. The principle of equal respect requires that we treat every individual as a responsible moral agent of intrinsic value; that we respect their freedom of choice; that we resist using them as means to accomplish a personal end-goal; and that we consider each individual as being of equal value with all others. Most assuredly, an inaccurate report violates this principle of ethics in terms of the administrator's relationship with the other principal. False information given to that principal does not show any respect for the intrinsic worth of that individual; it relegates them to an inferior status by denying the facts to them and by placing them in a situation where a loss or losses are most likely to accrue for them. False information shows no respect for the other principal's freedom of choice; rather, it impedes it, in the sense that having not been given all the facts, the choices are now falsely and artificially limited for the neighboring principal. Her freedom to truly choose the best possible candidate has been limited and perhaps taken away from her by this false information, if in fact she relies on it; as such, falsehood here violates the freedom of choice tenet of the principle of equal respect. Finally, it does not treat the other principal as a person of equal value to the administrator. The administrator's falsehood places him in a superior position in the situation, insofar as he now has more knowledge than his colleague, has foisted inaccurate information onto that colleague as well, and stands to benefit while the principal loses. Note that the principle of equal respect weighs heavily against an inaccurate recommendation in terms of the administrator's professional relationship with the principal.

But what of the idea of "doing what's best for your own?" This maxim affects most clearly the relationship between the principle of equal respect and the administrator's own schoolchildren. The administrator may be swayed by this argument to make the inaccurate report so that those closest to him benefit; the maxim above suggests that this is a virtue, much like loyalty. Yet the principle of equal respect stands most squarely against such a

simplistic explanation. If in fact all schoolchildren are of intrinsic worth, does it not violate that intrinsic worth to purposely attempt to foist a mediocre teacher and a weaker learning environment upon them? If in fact they are not to be used as means to accomplish a personal goal, are they not being so “used” when a falsehood is employed to try to get a poor teacher out of one’s own building so as to make things “better” at that first school, at the expense of the second? Most certainly the children are but “means” to the personal and professional ends of the administrator if he lies on the phone, no matter how altruistic his motivation seems to be. Finally, if all human beings are of equal worth and value, is it not true that a decision to give a false recommendation implies that the other schoolchildren are of “lesser worth” than their counterparts at the administrator’s school -- that it is somehow acceptable for that set of children to have a poor teacher, as long as one’s own do not? If this is true, then another major tenet of the principle of equal respect has been violated, and the maxim of “doing what’s best for your own” has been placed in serious ethical jeopardy.

This is not to say, of course, that one cannot love one’s friends, family, or country more than he loves another. To do so would be to fly in the face of all human experience, and to make the principle of equal respect’s application to practical problems in life a nigh impossible task. The principle of equal respect, however, does require that we ascribe equal value onto all other people and groups of people. It does not mean we cannot have a special love and relationship with our family; it does mean that we must afford all others the same basic respect and value upon which we have built that special family love. It does not mean that we must love all countries in the same manner in which we are patriotic to our own; it does mean we must respect the patriotism that others may have for their own country, and that we must offer other countries the same basic respect as that which we have built upon to achieve the particular patriotism to our own nation. Equal respect and equal value suggest that we have no right to impede or damage the integrity of other people, other groups, other nations. Seen in this light, the application of equal respect to Case #5 is clear. Equal respect does not stop the administrator from working harder for his own schoolchildren than he does for children at other schools in his state; equal respect does, however, prevent him from showing disrespect to those children by impeding or damaging the educational processes that they also have a right to. Thus, the principle of

equal respect stands squarely against the administrator giving the kind of false recommendation he is mulling over in the scenario.

Other ethical principles come into play as well. The principle of equal treatment states that, under similar circumstances, all individuals within those circumstances have an ethical right to be treated similarly. Note that this principle has two major applications to Case #5. First, both administrators in this case must be seen as being in similar circumstances. Both have similar jobs, responsibilities, and obligations. If this is so, then it is most assuredly violative of equal treatment to afford one administrator the advantage of “inside knowledge” and “truth”, which he parlays into an advantageous position over the other so as to create an even more unequal situation -- the benefit of being rid of a mediocre instructor versus the loss to educational quality suffered by the administrator who hires the teacher. In short, an inaccurate recommendation knowingly attempts to create unequal treatment for the two administrators, who are in fact in similar circumstances and do in fact deserve to be treated equally within those circumstances.

This same principle impacts upon the schoolchildren even more dramatically. Both sets of schoolchildren are also in similar circumstances -- all are enrolled in classes and programs at a school, all expect to be taught well and disciplined fairly, and so on. Yet an inaccurate recommendation relegates the neighboring schoolchildren into an inferior position, despite the similar circumstances they share with the administrator’s students. They now stand to suffer mediocre instruction while their counterparts enjoy a rise in educational opportunity at their school. Thus, the principle of equal treatment is now violated again, this time a hundredfold times or more based on the number of schoolchildren affected. The ethical principle of equal treatment, then, stands in opposition to a decision to give a false recommendation.

The principle of due process is also involved. Due process requires that people be judged based on clearly-known standards which are consistently enforced and which are based on reasonable evidence that is systematically available to them. In Case #5, an administrative decision to give an inaccurate recommendation is violative of this ethical principle. First, the “clearly-known standard” applicative to this case is of a professional nature. It is implicitly understood that the two professionals in this situation will exchange

honest and accurate information with each other. To assume otherwise would put one in the position of having to ask “Are you sure that is true? Is that a lie?” after every response; such is not the implicit or general standard upon which such requests are made, or given. Therefore, a clear standard of professionalism is violated when one administrator purposely lies to another in such a matter. Secondly, a false recommendation is in no way adherent to the concept of “consistent application,” unless, of course, the administrator does in fact make a consistent policy of giving false information in similar circumstances. If this were so, then at least one could say that a minimalist application of consistency is being applied in the case; however, note that it would dramatically increase the extent and depth to which the principle of equal respect was being violated. In either case, the concept of consistency presents serious ethical problems to an administrator who would give a false recommendation to a colleague. It is most clear that in the area of “reasonable evidence,” the principle of due process is under fire here. False information is the antithesis of reasonable evidence, since it impedes and damages the reasonableness of that evidence by its very nature. Evidence cannot be balanced, fair, or reasonable if it is tainted by falsehood; thus, an inaccurate recommendation knowingly violates the reasonable evidence tenet of this ethical standard. Overall, the principle of due process is severely compromised by any decision to lie to the principal on the phone.

There is a truth-issue at work in this case as well. It has been noted in this research paper that there is a *prima facie* case for the ethicalness of the truth; truth is at all times preferable to falsehood in the moral framework. To think otherwise would be to strike at the very heart of educational philosophy, which seeks truth, knowledge, and goodness as the end-goals of the educative process. Thus, we might point out that the clarity with which honesty, or truth, is at work as an issue in this case also weighs heavily against an administrative decision to falsify his recommendation. Similarly, much has been made of the ends-means relation throughout this study. In essence, this relation states that the values and ethics that are the goals of education are also the values which comprise the evaluative means by which we assess progress towards those goals; as such, the ends and means in education are irrevocably interwoven, and dependent upon values, or ethics, for their meaning. Note, therefore, that even if the end-goal of the administrator was to

improve educational opportunity in his school -- a goal which, upon reflection, is admittedly disrupted by a thoughtful application of the benefit maximization and equal respect principles in tandem - still, the unethical nature of the means employed (i.e., lying) would of necessity taint the ethical nature of the goal itself. Thus, both these ethical issues also weigh heavily against the administrator's consideration of not telling the truth to his fellow administrator.

The principle of democracy is also involved in this case. This principle requires that all those who are affected by a decision have a fair influence upon that decision before it is made. The violation of this ethic in this case stems from the usurping of a fair influence over the decision to be made from the principal seeking advice on who to hire. False information impedes any real influence upon that decision; it steers the decision unfairly away from any realistic influence for the person who has been lied to, and gives undue influence to the person who has manipulated the situation to his advantage. In this case, a false recommendation takes away fair influence from the principal, and gives undue or excessive influence over the situation to the administrator who knows the true nature of the teacher involved, but chooses to lie about it. Thus, the ethical principle of democracy is also violated by such an administrative decision.

Finally, what of the administrative choice here to "color" the truth by "stressing only the positive and avoiding all mention of the negative"? This is not an uncommon course of action among professionals in similar situations. Is such a "withholding" of some of the truth unethical in the same sense that giving a patently false recommendation would be? Summarily, the principle of benefit maximization would be violated in the same manner, although the likelihood of the teacher's hiring at the other school is diminished somewhat; the principle of equal respect is still being violated, as the purposeful withholding of information from the principal still does not recognize the intrinsic worth or equal value of that person, while it continues to impede the freedom of choice the principal is entitled to, albeit more subtly, and also shows little respect for the intrinsic worth of that principal's schoolchildren, who will be "saddled" with an inferior teacher and thus lose valuable educational opportunity; the principle of equal treatment is violated again, since even such shaded avoidance of the truth places both the principal and her schoolchildren in an inferior

position to the administrator and his schoolchildren, despite the fact that both sets are operating under similar circumstances; the truth-issue, of course, is still compromised and the ends-means issue is compromised as well, although in a less obvious fashion; the principle of due process is still denied in terms of a clearly-known and implicit standard of honesty being violated at the same time that the withheld knowledge damages the concept of “reasonable evidence” within the due process system; and finally, the principle of democracy is also again tainted, as this tactic merely serves to deny the principal proper and equal influence over the hiring of the teacher , although it it done in a more subtle fashion. Thus, the principles of ethical conduct in this case do not seem to support even the common approach to such a dilemma, that is, the attempt to “tell some parts of the truth” which are positive while knowingly “not saying” other aspects of the truth, because they are negative.

Thus, an application of the moral reasoning model to the situation in Case #5 has clarified the ethical issues involved in this case, and seems to suggest that the most ethical course of action for the administrator is to give a truthful, accurate, and full picture of the teacher to the principal asking for his recommendation. We now turn to the actual responses of the sample population of high school administrators who participated in this research study on ethics in administrative decision-making.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS WHAT ROLE DOES ETHICS PLAY IN HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION-MAKING?

An analysis of the survey results of 101 high school administrators from the southern region of the Chicagoland area and the northeastern region of the state of Indiana revealed a high degree of ethical awareness in the situation presented by Case #5. A total of ninety-seven (97) respondents indicated the presence of an ethical dimension to the decision to be made in such a case; only four (4) respondents gave responses which indicated no ethical

awareness. The high level of ethical awareness in this case seems attributable to the high-profile status that the ethic of truth or honesty enjoys within it, as well as the high level of competing ethical principles involved in the case (as seen most clearly in the discussion of the benefit maximization variant maxim of “Doing what’s best for your own first.”)

Questions #2 and #3 were analyzed so as to determine the dominant ethical principle perceived by the respondent administrators in this case. Many gave a single unitary response to these questions in terms of the ethical standard used to justify their response; some, however, gave two or more ethical standards they perceived to be at issue. In such cases, the researcher looked at all the responses to all the questions in Case #5 in a holistic manner so as to determine which ethical standard was the dominant one in their response. The breakdown of dominant ethical standards as perceived by the administrators who participated in this research study is as follows:

Predominant Ethical Standard: Case #5

Truth/Honesty.....	45
Integrity.....	21
Professionalism.....	12
Responsibility.....	12
None.....	4
Objectivity.....	3
Fairness.....	2
Justice.....	2

There were no responses in which the answer(s) to questions #2 and/or #3 were judged to be unacceptable as ethical standards.

Truth/ honesty stood as the dominant ethical principle in this case. One reason is the obvious one: honesty most assuredly enjoys a high profile in the situation as it is presented. “It’s obviously a question of being honest or not,” wrote one high school administrator; “the honesty issue just jumps right out of this case.” “It is better to be honest now than to regret your dishonesty later” warned another respondent. “I won’t be dishonest” another answered concisely. “Without honesty, your word means nothing now and even less in the future,” wrote another. “It is wrong to give false information to

another professional, who expects your honesty” another high school leader stated. “I just don’t believe in lying, it always catches up with you in the end” stated yet another. One administrator stated emphatically how realistic a situation this was for administrators: “I’ve been in situations like this before, and I’ve been burned by administrators who won’t tell you the full truth over the phone. That’s a crime against the kids of the other school, because kids are involved when you lie like that. It’s a question of honesty.” Another administrator also referred to the consequences of dealing with dishonest colleagues: “I’d be honest. Payback is hell, and who wants to get stuck with a crummy teacher?”

One high school administrator wrote that “I would be evasive. Not volunteer any information. But I wouldn’t lie. I can’t be dishonest.” Such a rationalized approach was not atypical of the respondents, and reflects the “compromised” decision discussed in the closing paragraphs of the previous section. A fuller look into those administrators who saw an honesty-ethic in this case but chose to define it as the above administrator did will follow in the next section of the analysis of Case #5, on “how ethical are the decisions made by high school administrators?”

“Integrity” was an oft-perceived ethical standard as well in this case. The term itself was framed in a variety of ways by the respondents, but always contained words and phrases indicative of an ethically-framed definition of the term as used. “My integrity is on the line here, and integrity demands that you do the right thing in situations like this,” was one comment especially illustrative of the ethical framework in which the term seems to rest. The term “integrity” was often wrapped in reputational definitions as well; “My word is my reputation, and if I lose my reputation for integrity, then what do I have left?” was a typical answer in this category. It is noted here that the term “reputation” in and of itself was not judged to imply an ethic, since “having a reputation” is neither good nor bad per se. When the term “reputation” was intertwined with terms relative to “integrity”, however, as in the above quote, it was accepted as indicative of ethical awareness.

The study’s acceptance and definition of the term “professionalism” as indicative of ethical awareness has previously been discussed in other cases; suffice it to say that both the written responses and those evoked during interview sessions served to reinforce the ethical nature of this term. However, the term “responsibility” was more problematic; it is a

term that has been used only one other time throughout the research study, as it was the dominant ethical standard of two (2) respondents in Case #1. It was its greater use in Case #5 that prompted the researcher to question its ethical nature, a process which was greatly aided by the interview process.

Many of the written respondents had used the term as in the phrase “a responsibility to my school” or “a responsibility to education” or “being responsible to the kids.” Clarification of whether this was meant as simply a duty or “job”, which would definitionally indicate it to be ethically neutral, or whether it was something more than that, was addressed with the interviewed administrators. Nearly all (eleven of twelve) felt that the term was meant to be ethical in nature, indicative of “caring” or “concern for those you have around you.” Administrator TB’s words do well as a summary of this majority view:

I’m sure no-one means just doing a job, like I’m just here to do what’s on the letter of my contract and nothing more. That’s not what it means to be responsible. Being responsible for the kids and the school means caring about what happens to them. If it was just a job, you wouldn’t care, and if that were true, you wouldn’t see administrators working late at night or at football games or working weekends. Responsibility in education means caring about the people you work with. I think it’s definitely meant in an ethical way.

Other administrators framed their responses to this issue in a similar manner; as such, the term “responsibility” was accepted as being indicative of ethical awareness in both Case #1 and the case at hand.

“Objectivity” as an ethical standard is most linked with the concept of impartiality that is part and parcel of the due process concept. The relatively low amount of references to “fairness” or “justice” seems the result of the high profile that the ethic of honesty enjoys in this case, as well as the ethically and emotionally confusing nature of the competing ethical standards in the case itself. “Without question, this was my most difficult decision,” Administrator MD stated. He continued to describe the competing emotional and ethical standards in the case:

I could see justifying to myself that this might be the one and only opportunity I would have to remove the person from the profession, not just my school. If

the person was putting himself in tenure-jeopardy by going to the new school, I would be very tempted to support him to the receiving principal. If, on the other hand, my problem was simply going to become someone else's permanent problem, I would not be able to allow myself to hedge in the recommendation. Again, I struggle here with the question of being honest -- does that mean telling it all, or just answering questions truthfully but narrowly? Tough issue.

This response is not only indicative of the deeply emotional competing ethical standards in Case #5; it also helps explain why "fairness" and "justice", generally rather well-used ethical perceptions in the other cases, become so difficult a pair of concepts in Case #5. It is not immediately clear what is "fair" or "just" when ethical standards are competing in such a high-profile manner, and as such administrators must turn to other ethical standards within the framework of the moral reasoning model to help clarify the turmoil, and establish at least a suggested course of action which seems most ethical.

Administrator MD's response was typical of the difficulty that the high school administrators in general seemed to have in defining the term "honesty" in such a situation. As mentioned in a preceding paragraph, many administrators advocated a somewhat compromised version of what honesty involved in such a case, limiting it to "avoiding the negatives" or "just answering whatever questions are asked of me and offering nothing more" or "being honest but vague." An analysis of the case has indicated that there remains a very strong taint of unethical behavior in such a purposely narrow definition of honesty; more will be made of this in the discussion of "how ethical are the decisions made by high school administrators?" Suffice it to say, however, that the concept of honesty/truth, in and as it was perceived to be an ethical issue in this case, remains high in Case #5.

Thus, an analysis of the responses from the sample population of high school administrators involved in this research study indicate a high level of ethical awareness in the situation presented in Case #5. Truth and honesty were the dominant ethic perceived by the administrators, despite the fact that the terms were often defined in a narrow and rationalistic sense. Integrity was a dominant ethic as well, often defined in terms of reputation, but judged to be ethical in its operant definition by high school administrators. Responsibility was similarly judged to be apparently ethical, in that both the written

responses and interviewed administrators framed the meaning of the term in a manner indicative of “care and concern for others.” The high profile of the honesty-ethic in such a case, as well as the emotional nature of the competing ethical standards in the case, made a judgment as to what was truly “fair” or “just” problematic, leading to sparse usage of these terms as perceived ethical standards in the case.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS HOW ETHICAL ARE THE DECISIONS MADE BY HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS?

An analysis of the survey responses from the 101 high school administrators who made up the sample population in this research study revealed that sixty-three (63) would be completely honest in giving their colleague a recommendation on a mediocre teacher who has applied for a new teaching position; thirty-four (34) would adopt what has been termed a “compromised” position throughout this study; and four (4) would give a full, false, “glowing” report on the mediocre teacher, in hopes of getting that teacher “out of the building.”

Ethical Awareness Factor.....96.5%

Ethical Decision Made.....63%

Unethical Decision Made.....37%

Those advocating a completely true verbal evaluation of the teacher gave a variety of reasons for their decisions. Some of the reasons were philosophical in nature; “It is simply wrong to lie,” wrote one respondent. “Honesty is a way of life and it transcends your work, or your golf game, or whatever,” wrote another. “Honesty has to be a habit or you fall out of it quickly. Being honest in this situation is as personally important as being honest in any situation.” Some of the responses took as a motivation the professional concept of mutual respect: “You owe it to the other principal; she’s got a tough job to do too,” or “It is always understood that administrators will be honest with each other on

issues like this” or the somewhat enigmatic “It is the code of the brotherhood of administrators.” A third motivation seemed to lie in the concept of reciprocity, or, more often, in the concept of “pay-back”: “What goes around, comes around, and if you don’t want it to happen to you, don’t do it to someone else,” or “Don’t expect other administrators to be up-front with you very long if you develop a reputation for lying to them ,” or even the previously quoted “Pay-back is hell.” Other administrators quoted a “teacher-as-exemplar” model for their decision to be honest: “We are trying to teach children about morals and values as well as geometry and geography. We cannot preach and teach what we do not do ourselves,” penned one such proponent of this view. Yet a fifth strand of reasons for an honest recommendation of the teacher was one of concern for the other children, a more global view that was discussed at length in the “Analysis of the Case” section of Case #5. As one member of this category wrote:

I don’t believe I would lie or give a glowing report. This involves all students, not just those at your school. We’re members of the educational field, and not just members of one school’s faculty or another. If that were true then we would have no responsibility at all to anyone in the world except 300-400 kids and I’m sure our dedication is to education, not some specific people.

Although it was not the most oft-quoted reason of the five major strands of motivation behind honest responses in this case, such a view did reinforce the major arguments of the equal respect and equal treatment segments of the moral reasoning model analysis of this case.

Interviewed administrators who also made this most ethical decision echoed many of these same motivational strands in their sessions. Administrator TB put it this way:

I would be honest. I would not want to send my trash to someone else and I would want them to be honest with me. If I get a reputation of messing over other administrators, I am going nowhere in my career. Honesty is important in anything you do; people treat you the way you treat them. Anyway, we have to be role models to our staff and students, and being known as a liar sure isn’t much of a role model.

Administrator IN picked up on several different strands of reasoning behind why an

honest recommendation is critical in such cases:

I would not recommend the teacher to the principal. Passing on problems does not make education better. I would continue making recommendations for dismissal and stay on the teacher's back about remediation. I have to develop a rapport, a reputation, a working relationship with other principals around the state. I want to be fair with them so they'll treat me the same. Educational administrators have to work together to remove ineffective people from our ranks; it is our duty to the profession and to all kids to do so. So I think this whole issue really involves improving education as a whole, the integrity that must exist between administrators, and probably any kind of contract that protects poor teachers -- the old "us versus them" theory, instead of the "all of us together" reality of good education.

Administrator IN was one of very few who brought up the issue of the contract which protected the teacher from dismissal at the administrator's school, both among written responses and later in the interviews. As it is a critical part of the scenario as a whole, it is surprising that so few administrators identified it as a role-player in the situation. It is surmised that, again, the high-profile status of the "lie or don't lie" honesty-issue in this scenario overshadowed some of the other concerns, issues, and potential ethical standards that may well play a critical role in such situations.

The unusually large percentage of administrators who chose a "compromised" position in this case is also testament, it seems, to the conflicting ethical standards within it. The conflict, which was so eloquently addressed by Administrator MD above, involves "the benefit of my school and my kids" versus "the abstract principle of honesty" in many of these thirty-four responses. While it involves a simplification of the actual complex ethical issues involved here, there remains a pattern of allegiance to one's own charges, and a pattern of viewing the ethical principle involved as either an abstract concept or as somewhat self-aggrandizing among this set of high school administrators. "I wouldn't lie, but I can't just ignore what's best for my kids," said one such respondent who would be "very general and not offer too much information" to the nearby principal. "When it comes down to it, my kids can learn from a good new teacher, but I can't send my personal integrity down the hall to teach them for 188 days," said another. (This administrator chose to "stress only the positives and answer whatever questions the principal asks, and no

more.”) In these quotes, we see the two strands mentioned above: a tendency to compromise their self-avowed ethical awareness for the educational benefit of the schoolchildren in their building, and a tendency to downplay the importance of ethical standards as being too abstract, or somewhat too personally motivated, within the framework of such a decision. Both strands frequently appeared in various forms among those administrators who made the “compromised” decision in this case.

Another strand among these so-called “compromisers” was the presence of one of two schools of thought on how to frame their answers, loosely categorized as the “neutrals” and the “only positives.” “I would not lie, but I would answer each question as neutrally as possible,” said one respondent, who later wrote that “my intention here is to allow the other principal to take the teacher off my hands.” “I would probably be vague without being dishonest,” said another in a variant form of the same school of thought. “I would perhaps decline comment on certain questions or answer them indirectly,” suggested another administrator. “I would give no details” and “I’d avoid specifics” were other common responses in this “neutral” camp. “I’d find a middle ground, stay on the fence here without actually lying,” another typical response read. “I couldn’t give the teacher a glowing report, but I’d be reluctant to admit she was a dog,” yet another administrator colorfully replied. The concept in these types of answers is an attempt at moral neutrality, that is, an attempt to avoid what they conceive of as “lying,” which involves direct and forthright falsehood, by covering themselves in a blanket of generalities, avoidances, vaguenesses, and oblique replies. The ethical consequences of such a decision have already been covered in the analysis of the case itself; let us again note, however, that any such avoidance of the truth creates a false picture of the teacher involved; as soon as that occurs, there are violations of the principles of equal treatment, equal respect, due process, and democracy, as well as of the crucial issues of truth and the ends-means relation in educational administrative philosophy. Thus, the “neutral blanket” does not seem enough to hide educational administrators from what seems to be unethical behavior.

One respondent of the 101, however, did attempt to pass the onus for such moral neutrality onto the principal on the other end of the line: “It’s her job to pick up what I’m really saying about the teacher (when I am vague and general),” this administrator

theorized. "If she doesn't, that's not my fault. I sent her a clear message."

The converse side of this ethical coin involves the "only positives" camp. Rather than wander about in vagueness, these administrators strike a compromised ethical pose by stating only "accurate and true" positive qualities or awards or performances of the teacher in question. Many more of the compromisers fall into this camp than into the "neutral" camp. "I'd dwell only on strengths. She needs a new start," wrote one administrator. "Couch everything in positive terms, no matter what the topic is," advised another. "Report the positives only. Give negatives only when asked specifically to do so. I would not lie. This teacher needs a new environment," stated another in this camp. "I'd give the best picture possible to this teacher, and I'd say the teacher will benefit from a change. I wouldn't offer any comments except the positive ones, and I'd respond to questions in as positive a way as possible," wrote another high school educational leader. "State the positive, wave the negatives" advised another. "Paint a pretty face on this lady and don't show the other principal the warts unless she asks specifically to see them" wrote another respondent, metaphorically. "I'd be positive. I'd state the downside only if pressed" yet another member of this school of thought responded. "Speak only of strengths and acknowledge weaknesses minimally," advised yet another. As above, the moral reasoning model's use of ethical inquiry suggests that such a "positive only" train of thought is still evasive of the truth, and as such similarly denies the other principal and children their ethical rights under the principles of equal treatment, equal respect, due process, and democracy, as well as violating the truth-issue and the ends-means philosophical relationship in administration. All told, such a response remains characterizable as rationalized, compromised, and unethical.

Yet another strand that characterized the compromised decision-makers was a reliance on the phrase "I will respond to questions only." It is a phrase oft-quoted in various responses above. "I would not address this teacher's mediocrity unless I was asked a specific question about some aspect of it" was a typical response among the thirty-four compromisers. Such an evasive tactic is of dubious ethical quality. Note that its initial assumption is to purposely and willfully "leave out" all negatives; such a decision is clearly violative of all the ethical premises discussed above. Secondly, such a stand

relegates honesty to an inferior position in the administrator's response; honesty or truth is not an "all pervasive" aspect of the means by which the administrator hopes to accomplish his end-goal, which is to be rid of the teacher. Honesty is instead an inferior partner in the transaction; it is "in the wings" and appears on stage "only if the audience demands it," so to speak. Since we have repeatedly made a prima facie case for the ethical importance of truth throughout this research study, it becomes an affront to the primacy of truth to relegate it so to the "background." Finally, note that such an administrative stance relegates the responsibility for honesty onto the "asker" and places none of the responsibility for honesty at all upon the "speaker." Such an imbalanced ethical transaction can hardly pass muster under the moral reasoning model, and as such, it too must be rejected as an unethical compromised position.

A fourth strand prevalent among this group of thirty-four administrators was the justification offered by "the teacher's need for a new environment." These "new environmentalists" seek to apply one aspect of the benefit maximization principle (the other prominent applicable aspect is, of course, the much-discussed benefits for the schoolchildren at the administrator's school) at the exclusion of all the other principles. It is in this narrow application of moral reasoning that their justifications crumble. While it is true that a new environment may well serve the teacher well, and is also in line with the teacher's own request, it is also true that many more ethical principles than just the benefit maximization of a few chosen constituencies must be applied to the case if it is to be fairly judged. Thus, the "new environmentalist" notion is another strand of the compromisers' position that moral reasoning must reject.

Finally, a fifth commonality among these respondents was the ironic phraseology of "I can't lie," "I must be honest," "This is not lying" and "It's important to stick to the truth (in what you actually say.)" This type of response was extremely common among the thirty-four respondents in this category; in fact, a full twenty-seven of them made mention of just such a narrow definition of truth somewhere in their response to Case #5. Much has already been said about why their compromised position must be rejected by moral reasoning as being essentially unethical; an appeal to "being honest" is not enough to actually be honest, it would seem. However, it is interesting to note how often the

administrators characterized any or all of these variant tactics as “being honest” and “not lying.” Of the twelve interviewees, only (3) fell into this camp. Asked about this seeming irony in their stance, they responded as follows:

I have no intention of being dishonest. Lying means telling someone something that's not true. I would never tell someone, anyone, something that is not true. All I'm saying is that I would answer any question that the principal asked with the truth. And if the right questions were asked, then the right answers would be given. I'd set this up as a ground rule right from the start; you know, when the principal calls, just respond to the initial question with a question such as “Well, what do you want to know?” If the other principal doesn't know the right questions to ask, then that becomes his or her problem. (Administrator CS)

You're trying to define truth as telling everybody about everything. But if someone asks me what time it is, am I lying to him if I don't tell him the time in Budapest and the time in Hong Kong and maybe the weather forecast too? He didn't ask for those things -- he asked for the time, and the implication is what time is it here. That's all he is interested in. So I answer the questions that your principal asks me. Am I lying just because I don't tell the principal things that he didn't want to know, didn't even ask me about? (Administrator EH)

You can be vague without being dishonest. I told no lies and would not tell lies. Partly, my reputation is at stake here. It is still a matter of personal integrity. But don't confuse speaking in generalities with telling a lie, there's really no logic in that. (Administrator QS)

The points here are well-taken; but within the moral reasoning model, as already applied to these positions, there remains room for degrees or levels of unethical behavior, without changing the general characterization that the decision is basically an unethical, as opposed to ethical, one. The position of these three administrators, along with the other thirty-one that comprise the “compromised” position-takers, reflects an unethical decision that is not as dramatically in violation of the five fundamental ethical principles of moral reasoning as would be a flat-out, blatant lie. However, despite such protestations, the moral reasoning model still characterizes such a compromised position as fundamentally unethical.

One other note of interest among this group: two of the administrators predicated the

amount of truth or honesty that the principal would receive on the principal's personal and/or geographic proximity to the administrator in question. "My willingness to volunteer the whole picture and my honesty would increase with my systemic, geographic, professional, and personal closeness with the principal," wrote one. Another was more specific about the geographical requirement:

I'm sorry to say that the key word here is "neighboring" principal. I would not ship a poor teacher to a neighboring district where I would be in contact with those administrators on a regular basis. I would give a neutral report to an out-of-state reference, and an honest report to a neighbor, although I would not give a "glowing" report to any bad teacher.

It goes without saying that such ethical relativism, based as it is on geographical proximity, personal relationships, and an implied fear of reprisals, is inconsistent with that which is judged ethical in the moral reasoning model.

In summary, then, five common strands of justification appeared within the compromised ethical position adopted by thirty-four in Case #5. Many of these strands appeared concurrently in the same response given by a single administrator as that administrator attempted to explain his or her position. Numerically, 29 out of the 34 administrators cited the interests of their students to justify their compromised position; 17 of the 34 contended they would give either neutral or all-positive comments on the teacher; 17 said they would respond only to the direct questions asked by the principal on the phone, and would offer no other information on their own; 14 administrators indicated they could justify their actions on the teacher's potential benefit from a new environment; and 27 of the 34 contended in some fashion that their compromised position was "not really a lie" and that they remained personally committed to truth and honesty.

Administrators Taking a Compromised Position

It's in best interests of students.....	85%
Give neutral/positive statements only.....	50%
Respond only to questions.....	50%
Teacher needs new environment.....	41%
It's not really a lie.....	80%

Finally, it is of interest that the compromised position group generally called upon

“honesty” as the dominant ethical principle in this case. Such is not surprising; it reflects the same tendency among the respondents in general. It also reflects the feeling garnered from the three interviewees in this camp, a feeling that there was a sincere and stubborn belief that “honesty” and this compromised position were not antithetical at all; that in fact their position reflected a “type” of honesty, so to speak, but honesty nonetheless. This is in line with previous notations that the educational administrators involved in the survey most often were operating from what they perceived to be altruistic and ethical motives, even when the final decision itself was an unethical one as determined by moral reasoning. It further suggests that one must not be too quick to condemn such administrators as being “evil,” since in fact the motivation seems so often to be “good”; and that, at the same time, increased knowledge of, and use of, ethical inquiry procedures within the moral reasoning model would do some educational administrators well, allowing them to better clarify the ethical issues at work in each situation, and thus make more enlightened ethical decisions as a result.

Of the four administrators who indicated they would lie to the principal in question, two were among those who saw no ethical dimension in the case (one left questions #2 and #3 blank: the other left question #3 blank, and answered #2 with only the words “You do what you have to do”; this response was too cryptic for the researcher to characterize it as indicative of “responsibility” or “professionalism,” and added to the unethical nature of the decision made in the response, it seemed most likely to indicate a lack of ethical awareness.) One of the others quoted “fairness” as the ethical reason for lying to the principal: “You’ve got to be fair to your kids, they have suffered enough, now it’s somebody else’s turn,” he wrote. The fourth administrator who indicated he would not tell the principal the truth wrote that “I’d give a glowing report to the other principal; perhaps a change would benefit the teacher. Since she requested the change, she may be better off. The issue here is telling the truth versus ridding myself of a troublesome individual!” Note that, despite the invoking of honesty as the ethical standard perceived to be present in this case, this administrator seems to be operating from a stance most interested in making things “easier” for himself by “ridding” himself of some trouble while, of course, “benefiting the teacher” as well. No mention is made of either set of schoolchildren. In

summary, then, the very small percentage of administrators in the survey who chose the clearly unethical route did so for consequentialist reasons, generally attempting to improve conditions for their school, the teachers, or themselves. Two indicated no ethical awareness at all; the others utilized “fairness” and “honesty” as perceptible ethical standards in the case.

Thus, approximately 63% of the respondents in the research survey would follow the most ethical route as determined by moral reasoning, that is, would tell the whole and complete truth about the teacher to the neighboring principal, for reasons ranging from the philosophic to personal integrity to mutual respect among administrators, from fear of “pay-back” to a “teacher-as-exemplar” mentality to a holistic view of educators as being responsible to all children. Thirty-four respondents chose a compromised course of action, which often involved being vague, stressing positives and ignoring negatives in portraying the teacher to the other principal, responding only to questions asked and offering no more information than that, a reliance on the benefit of the administrator’s own schoolchildren and the potential benefits of a new environment to the teacher, a dismissal of the honesty-ethic as too “abstract” or “self-aggrandizing,” and a rejection of the view that they had reacted unethically as a result of an overly-narrow definition of what honesty represents. The four who would make a clearly unethical decision represent a small minority of the sample population (about 4%), and there was no single strand or pattern among the reasons given for their unethical choice.

ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Among the sixty-three respondents who made decisions judged to be ethical by the moral reasoning model, there was no significant variation from the average profile of the respondents in the research study; this is not surprising with so large a percentage of the population being included in this first grouping. Of the thirty-four respondents who chose a “compromised” decision that was eventually judged to be unethical by the moral

reasoning model, the only significant difference from the average profile was in the realm of highest degree held; five of the nine respondents who held bachelor's degrees in the total population were among the compromisers (thus, compromisers were 34% of the total population while 56% of the population with bachelor's degrees chose to compromise.) No other variance of significance was found. Among the four who chose to lie to the neighboring principal, a decision that was judged to be unethical by the moral reasoning model, the only variable that differed from the average profile was age, with two of these four respondents noticeably below the average age range of 35-45, and two noticeably above that range; the total number of respondents involved in this category remains much too small to draw any meaningful conclusions from, however. No other significant difference from the average profile of respondents was found in this group

Administrators With B.A. As Highest Degree
Of All Administrators.....34%
Of Administrators Who Made
Unethical Decision.....56%

Thus ends the analysis of the five case studies using the moral reasoning model proposed by Strike, Haller, and Soltis; the analysis of survey responses from 101 high school administrators from the southern region of the Chicagoland area and the northeastern region of the state of Indiana so as to answer the first research question, "What role does ethics play in high school administrative decision-making?"; the analysis of the same sample population so as to answer the second research question, "How ethical are the day-to-day decisions made by high school administrators?"; and a brief analysis of the biographical data supplied by all respondents, comparing the average profile of the entire sample population to the average profile of selected subgroups as determined by application of the moral reasoning model to each of the five cases. What general conclusions can be drawn from these analyses, and what recommendations for the future they suggest, are in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Ethical leadership is a critical issue in every area of American society today, including education. Strong ethical leadership seems to offer great promise for meeting what critics have called “the American ethical crisis,” and the nation’s educational system has become the focal point of much of the national debate on ethics. In light of this, it seems crucial that we begin investigating the current status of ethical leadership in our schools. Such investigations could serve two important purposes: 1) to ascertain whether current school administrators are in fact attuned to the ethical dimensions of their actions and decisions, and 2) to determine just how often their actions and decisions are in fact ethical in nature.

The purpose of this research study, then, was to determine what role ethics plays in the day-to-day decisions made by high school administrators, and, once the role was determined, to investigate just how ethical those decisions really were.

As a result of this study, an analysis of the survey data from 101 high school administrators from the southern region of the Chicagoland area and the northeastern region of the state of Indiana has generated several conclusions for the high school administrator specifically, and for all those involved in the various fields related to education as well. Among the conclusions drawn from the research study are the following:

1) There is a generally high level of ethical awareness among high school administrators. The results of the study indicate clearly that an extremely high percentage of administrators were able to perceive at least one ethical dimension to every case they responded to in the survey. Determination of the presence of such an ethical awareness factor among the administrators stemmed from analysis of their responses to question #2 (“what reason(s)

would you give for your decision?") and question #3 ("what ethical issue(s) do you see involved in this situation?"); reference was also made to question #1 on occasion to help determine what was the predominant ethical standard perceived by the administrator in each case. In four of the five cases, between 89% and 99% of those administrators surveyed indicated they were aware of at least one ethical standards in the situation; only in one case, Case #2, where differential organization treatment of expulsion seems to have impeded some administrators from dealing with the case in a holistic fashion, was there a lower amount of ethical awareness. Overall, the study has indicated that high school administrators are in fact "ethically aware" as they approach the routine, day-to-day decisions that are part and parcel of their jobs.

2) Ethically aware high school administrators tend to decide issues based on a single, predominant ethic. Despite the great breadth of ethical awareness among the high school administrators, it must be noted that the study indicates that their ethical awareness is also somewhat shallow. Typical written responses gave, or indicated, the presence of only one (1) ethical dimension or ethical standard in each case; this single ethical standard was what the administrators employed to make the decision at hand. Far fewer gave two ethical dimensions or standards by which to judge the case, and a mere handful of the 101 indicated awareness of three or more ethics. The interview process reinforced the view that often, a single ethical standard was involved in the initial decision-making process used on the case. Thus, high school administrators seem to utilize a single ethical standard, presumably the most "high-profile" ethic they perceive, as they enter the decision-making process.

3) Truth or honesty represents a noticeably important ethical standard among high school administrators. The truth ethic was the dominant ethic in three of the five cases and was evident in all of them. Professionalism and fairness were the other two ethics which were seen as dominant in a case. Care must be taken not to generalize these statements excessively, since, admittedly, they might simply be the result of the specific case selections the high school administrators had to deal with in this particular research

instrument. However, it can be broadly stated that these three ethics, led by honesty or truth, are important ethics among high school administrative decision-makers.

4) Organizational characteristics may occasionally impede ethical awareness in a situation. The only aberrant case in terms of high levels of ethical awareness was Case #2, in which the interview process and the analysis of biographical data both suggested that the reason a large minority of respondents ignored or dismissed the ethical situation as a whole was because of their affiliation with parochial schools, where the parameters of the situation as described are generally inapplicable. Rather than deal with the case as a whole, many of the parochial high school administrators dismissed most of it, and responded instead to an early detail in the case. As this type of response was ethically non-illustrative, it became impossible to determine if any ethical awareness at all existed among these administrators. Thus it can be concluded that specific organizational characteristics may well impede ethical awareness in situations that are foreign to that organization.

5) The presence of a high-profile ethic in a situation increases overall ethical awareness. Such a statement may seem banal; however, it is noted that the level of ethical awareness rose in all five cases in general correlation to the number of respondents who noted one specific ethical standard as being dominant. The lowest dominant ethical standard perceived (Case #2, Truth/Honesty, 38 respondents) was also the lowest case for ethical awareness (70%). The fourth and third highest ethical profiles (Case #5 and Case #3) were the fourth and third highest in terms of numbers of administrators who chose one ethic as being dominant (Case #3 , Professionalism, 40 respondents; Case #5, Truth/Honesty, 45 respondents.) The first and second highest cases for ethical awareness were also the cases in which the first and second highest number of high school administrators chose a specific dominant ethic in the case (Case #1, first in awareness at 99%, second in ethical choice (Truth/Honesty, 48 respondents); Case #4, second in awareness at 98.5%, first in ethical choice (Fairness, 50 respondents).) While not an exact correlation, it is a noticeable connection that seems to imply that the presence of a high-profile ethic in a situation increases overall ethical awareness among administrators in that situation.

Comparison: Predominant Ethic vs. Ethical Awareness Per Case

Predominant Perceived Ethic	Overall Ethical Awareness
Fairness.....50%	98.5% -- Case #4
Truth/Honesty....48%	99 % -- Case #1
Truth/Honesty....45%	96.5% -- Case #5
Professionalism..40%	89 % -- Case #3
Truth/Honesty....38%	70 % -- Case #2

6) The presence of emotionally-charged competing ethical standards in a situation increases ethical awareness among high school administrators. Cases which tended to have a higher level of competitiveness between ethical standards tended also to have increased ethical awareness; similarly, cases in which the moral reasoning model indicated a low level of competition (or, to put it in another way, where all the major ethical principles tended to lean one way in the issue) had a lower amount of ethical awareness. Discounting the results of Case 2, tainted as they were by organizational characteristics, Case #3 had the lowest ethical awareness factor; concomitantly, Case #3, dealing with how to handle a faculty lounge critic, was without any controversy among the ethical standards applied to it in its analysis in the moral reasoning model. Cases #5, #4 and #1, however, had much higher levels of ethical awareness (96.5%, 98.5%, 99%); all three of these produced noticeable and emotional clashes between competing ethical standards upon their individual analyses in the moral reasoning model. Thus, we may conclude that the presence of dramatic competing ethical standards in a situation tends to heighten the ethical awareness of high school administrators as they prepare to make a decision in that situation.

7) Ethical awareness does not seem to be linked to any particular demographic variable. Only in one case, where school affiliation (public versus private/parochial) seemed to impede ethical awareness in a holistic sense, was any biographical variable of any impact at all upon the ethical awareness factor. Age, gender, level of education, number of years as an administrator, number of years at the current position, salary range, even affiliation with the national administrative organization most well-known for its ethical code -- all seemingly had little or no effect on ethical awareness in general.

8) Ethical decision-making among high school administrators is of a generally high level in all situations. The actual decision made by the respondent administrators was ethical in a range of 63% of the time (Case #5) up to 98% of the time (Case #3). This range excludes those “compromised” decisions that the moral reasoning model suggested to be essentially unethical. With ethical decisions having been made on the average 79.8% of the time, a case might be made that this in fact is a disappointingly “low” average response; however, rather than characterize it as such, we will conclude that in general, there is a high level of ethical decision-making by the average high school administrator in day-to-day situations.

9) “Compromised” decisions are often made by high school administrators. While the number of times such a “compromised” decision was made is noticeably less than the number of times a truly ethical decision was made, there was a significant enough amount of such decisions to warrant a conclusion acknowledging their existence. “Compromised” decisions are defined as those which seek to settle an issue with both ethical and unethical elements in the decision. The moral reasoning model and the ends-means relationship in educational administrative philosophy both eventually characterize such decisions as unethical, however, though perhaps not to the same degree as more clearly unethical behavior.

10) “Compromised” administrative decisions tend to be unethical. As noted above, the moral reasoning model and the ends-means philosophical relationship both tend to characterize such decisions as being essentially unethical. Thus, we can conclude that a noticeable portion of high school administrators make unethical decisions in an attempt to reach a “middle ground” between competing ethical standards or specific conditions within a situation.

11) The number of compromised decisions among high school administrators tends to grow as the competitiveness of conflicting ethical standards grows within a situation. The

interview process was especially illustrative of this point; compromised positions were more common, and were defended with more intensity at interviews, in cases where there were more emotional and dramatic competing ethical standards in a case. Cases #5, #4, and #1 led all cases among compromised decision-makers, with 34 compromised positions taken in Case #5, 9 compromised positions taken in Case #4, and 7 compromised positions taken in Case #1; all three cases featured highly-charged ethical competition (Case #5, the benefit of the schoolchildren versus the personal reputation of the administrator; Case #4, doing a favor for a hard-working and influential parent versus supporting a drama teacher's decision; and, with an admittedly less highly-charged level of competing ethical standards, Case #1, the benefit of the schoolchildren versus sympathy for a veteran teacher near retirement.) In the case where there was less such competition among emotional ethical issues, that is, Case #3, far fewer (4) compromised positions were taken by any of the administrators in the survey.

12) There is a relatively low amount of unethical decisions made by high school administrators. When only those decisions that were patently unethical are taken into account, a mere 7% of all high school administrators made such a choice on the average. In three cases, the percentage was 5% or lower. (Cases #3, #4 and #5.) One might again hear an argument made that such an average number is unacceptable, especially if it coupled with those taking a "compromised" position in these same matters. The total of "compromisers" and more starkly unethical decision-makers in the survey comprised about 20.2% of all those in the sample population.

13) Altruistic reasons are often at the root of what has been judged an unethical decision by a high school administrator. The interview process was especially illustrative of this conclusion, as it buttressed a similar pattern noted in the written survey responses. Among respondents who chose either a compromised or more clearly unethical decision in these cases, it was extremely rare if not non-existent that the motivation behind that decision was a selfish, greedy, or insensitive one. Conversely, the motivation behind these decisions almost always was altruistic -- concern for an aging teacher in Case #1, concern for the

safety of students and staff in Case #2, concern for the parent's generosity in Case #4, and a strong feeling of concern for the educational quality given to one's own schoolchildren in Case #5. It is an important conclusion to keep in mind while interpreting these results; allusion to this fact has been made throughout the research study. It was rare indeed that even the most unethical decision possible was made for any other reason than a narrow but altruistic clinging to a single ethical principle, to the exclusion, unfortunately, of many others. As such, one can see the connection between this conclusion and the previous conclusion that most administrators did in fact tend to make their decisions based on a single ethic, to the exclusion of the presence of multiple ethical standards present in the situation.

14) Unethical decisions among high school administrators were not consistently linked to any specific demographic variable. Although minor correlations with age, salary range, number of years as an administrator, and number of years at current position did occasionally appear, in general there were no conclusive links seen between a demographic variable and unethical decision-makers. This includes membership in the major national administrative organization most known for its code of ethics, the A.A.S.A.

15) Strands of sub-decisions made along with the major decision required in each case tended to be very similar among all high school administrators. Case #5 was especially illustrative of this point; both among the ethical and compromised decision-making groups, there were similar, "smaller" decisions made about how to handle the situation, what aspects of it to address to the people involved, and so on. Such similar strands of sub-decisions suggest a conclusion that high school administrators make similar decisions in much more depth of detail than is obvious to the eye; that is, that their decisions go beyond similarity of general conclusions, and go more deeply into similarity in the details as to how the problem would be handled. A pattern of similar sub-decisions by high school administrators faced with ethical dilemmas was also noted both in Case #3 and in Case #4.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Now, based upon these conclusions, what recommendations for the future can be reasonably made? Among the recommendations that seem to be suggested by the research study and its conclusions are the following:

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1) There is a need for training in ethical perception models among high school administrators. As noted throughout the research study, high school administrators tend to perceive ethical standards in a somewhat “one-dimensional” manner, that is, they tend to note one specific high-profile ethical standard to the exclusion of the moral and ethical complexity of standards present in the case. As such, it may be theorized that increased ability at ethical perception might allow high school administrators to see more deeply into the ethical complexity of a situation; the use of the moral reasoning model here suggests that, armed with an ethical perception model, an administrator who sees more deeply into a situation will be more able to make an ethically sound decision (and not be “more confused than ever,” as some might argue.) The moral reasoning model of Strike, Haller, and Soltis is but one of several ethical perception models that have been formulated by administrative theorists; training in some or all of the available models may well increase the amount of ethical decisions actually made day-to-day by high school administrators, as well as make such ethical decisions easier for these administrators to perceive.

2) High school administrators need to be aware that frequently-adopted compromised decisions are also often unethical in nature. Such an awareness can also be facilitated by the adoption of ethical perception training for high school administrators, as advocated in recommendation #1.

3) More awareness of the exceedingly high level of altruistic motivation among high school administrators, even in situations where unethical decisions have been made, is needed. As noted early in this research study, much blame and criticism has been heaped upon education and educators for being “value-less” and for engendering a culture that is suddenly lacking in ethics and values. It is important to disseminate to that same public the fact that research studies such as this one do show an extremely high degree of ethical awareness and a high level of ethical decision-making among administrators, and that even in those decisions that are seemingly unethical, the motivation of the administrator is almost universally altruistic in nature. This information is needed to balance the scorn being aimed at the educational administrative community, and to prevent the human tendency towards abject condemnation of the entire profession based on the seemingly small level of administrative decisions that were in fact essentially unethical.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

4) More research into the cause of ethical awareness among high school administrators is needed. It is one thing to note that there already exists a high level of ethical awareness among high school administrators; it is quite another to explain how and why this high level exists. Research is needed to attempt to pinpoint just how this ability to perceive ethical standards in administrative decision-making situations has come about -- is it the result of childhood training, parental values, educational level, religious affiliation, the type of person attracted to educational administration, graduate school training, or some other unknown variable, or set of variables? Research into this question would be invaluable in helping maintain and deepen the ethical awareness factor among high school administrators.

5) More and better research in all areas of educational administrative ethics is needed. The paucity of research that now exists has already been noted; increased research in such areas as development of ethical standards, ethical perception models, application of ethics

to daily situations, perceived barriers to ethical decision-making, and the like all would greatly benefit the educational administrative community, and, per force, the children and the nation it serves. Attempts should be made to study and redefine the role of ethics both in the philosophy of educational administration, and in its day-to-day practical usage; the intertwining of fact and value, of ends and means, of motivation and action has been a common theme throughout this research study, and as such the further study of ethics must apply both to its philosophical place in educational administrative theory and to its practical application to the routine work of the administrator.

It is hoped that this study has contributed in some small manner to the enrichment of the field of educational administration and to the total body of knowledge that will be needed to improve ethical decision-making among high school administrators, and all educational administrators, in the future. However, a great amount of further research in this same field remains critically needed if the schools and the nation are ever to meet the challenge of the “ethical crisis” that so tragically grips our children, our society, our nation, and our world today.

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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

Dear Principal:

Enclosed you will find several copies of a survey I need to have completed to finish my doctoral dissertation at Loyola University of Chicago.

I have worked in administration at St. Rita High School of Chicago for 16 years, and am now an administrator at George Rogers Clark Public School of Hammond, Indiana -- so I am aware that different school systems have different numbers and types of administrators.

Administrators include principals, assistant principals, vice-principals, and deans (which may include directors of school-wide programs at your school, such as a director of special education programs, for instance.) Administrators eligible to participate in this survey should have a fairly wide range of administrative responsibilities; I leave it to your discretion as principal to judge who adequately meets these criteria in your own building.

I need your help, not only in filling out the survey yourself and mailing it back, but also in **DISTRIBUTING THE SURVEYS TO ALL THE APPROPRIATE ADMINISTRATORS IN YOUR SCHOOL.**

Therefore, I have enclosed several surveys in addition to one for you, and I ask you to please pass a copy of the survey on to each of your administrators, along with the explanatory letter for each, and one of the enclosed return envelopes so they can mail it back to me.

I deeply appreciate your help in this, and thank you in advance for helping me in my research study.

Any questions, call me at Clark -- 219-659-3522.

My thanks,

Mike Kisicki

EXPLANATORY LETTER TO PARTICIPATING ADMINISTRATORS

Dear Administrator:

My name is Mike Kisicki, and I am completing my doctoral dissertation at Loyola University of Chicago. The subject of my dissertation is the role of ethics in administrative decision-making -- how much does ethics play a part in the normal, day-to-day decisions we make in our roles as high school administrators?

I need your help in completing the dissertation. Attached is a series of short descriptions of situations that an administrator generally has faced, or which are at least similar to situations that have been faced by most administrators. I would like you to simply:

- (1) READ THROUGH the brief account, and then
- (2) ANSWER, AT LENGTH IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, the three short questions that follow each account.

I know how busy you are, and how valuable your time is; I am sorry to add to your workload, and hope that the shortness of the accounts and the brief number of questions following each will allow you to help me in this survey.

After completing the questions, please FILL OUT THE BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE; then simply mail the questionnaire and the survey back to me in the enclosed, stamped, self-addressed envelope.

YOUR ANSWERS ARE GUARANTEED COMPLETE ANONYMITY, and YOU WILL NOT BE IDENTIFIED IN ANY WAY, SHAPE , OR FORM THROUGHOUT THE REMAINDER OF THIS RESEARCH, IN THE DISSERTATION DOCUMENT, OR IN ANY CONVERSATION OR DOCUMENT RELATING IN ANY WAY TO IT. Please be assured of this fact as you honestly approach each case in the survey.

If you have any questions, please call me at Clark School -- 219-659-3522. I deeply appreciate your help in completing these surveys for my dissertation, and hope I can similarly help you in some way in the future.

Thanks again,

Mike Kisicki

NOTE: If you would choose to also volunteer for a personal interview on these cases, please just write your name and a phone number on the bottom of the biographical questionnaire. This is not needed, however, to participate in the survey.

FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO NON-COMPLYING SCHOOLS

Dear Principal:

Several weeks ago, I sent you some surveys on the topic of ethics in school administration. These surveys were needed to complete my doctoral dissertation at Loyola University of Chicago.

Records of the surveys sent to you show the following:

Number of Surveys Sent: _____

Number of Surveys Returned: _____

SURVEYS STILL OUT: _____

I know how busy you and your administrative staff are, but I cannot complete my dissertation without the completed surveys. So, if you could please help me out by asking your administrators to fill them out and mail them back to me in the stamped, self-addressed envelopes enclosed, I would deeply appreciate it.

For your convenience, copies of the explanatory letter for your administrators, as well as a few spare surveys, are also enclosed.

Many thanks for your patience and help in completing and mailing these surveys ---

Respectfully Yours,

Mike Kisicki
Clark Middle School/High School
219-659-3522

APPENDIX B

**BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE
ADMINISTRATOR**

- 1) Your Administrative Title: _____
- 2) Your Age: _____
- 3) _____ Male or _____ Female
- 4) Highest Degree Earned: _____
- 5) Number of Years As An Administrator: _____
- 6) Number of Years In Your Current Administrative Position: _____
- 7) Number of Students in Your School: _____
- 8) _____ Public School or _____ Private/Parochial School
- 9) Are You a Member of the American Association of School Administrators (the A.A.S.A.) ? _____ Yes or _____ No
- 10) Your Salary Range:
 - \$15,000 to \$19,999 _____
 - \$20,000 to \$24,999 _____
 - \$25,000 to \$29,999 _____
 - \$30,000 to \$34,999 _____
 - \$35,000 to \$39,999 _____
 - \$40,000 to \$44,999 _____
 - \$45,000 to \$49,999 _____
 - \$50,000 to \$54,999 _____
 - \$55,000 to \$59,999 _____
 - \$60,000 + _____

(Optional): If you would like to volunteer for a personal interview on the cases covered in this survey, please write your name and phone number below. This is optional and is NOT a necessity for participating in the survey!

PLEASE RETURN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE WITH YOUR SURVEY!!!!

CASE #1: WRITING A TEACHER OBSERVATION

You visit a classroom of a teacher who has been at your school for 36 years, and is only two years from retirement. The situation you observe is “terrible”--3-4 students sleeping, others doing homework for another class, one doing a crossword puzzle. The teacher passes out a worksheet and has students read it aloud as the others “answer” the questions. When you mention what you saw to your principal, he tells you that “it’s been like that for years in there” and “he’s so close to retirement that he isn’t going to change anyway.” The principal also tells you that he has been giving this teacher “good” reports for the past three years, for the above reasons. You now sit down to write your report.

1) WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN THIS SITUATION?

2) WHAT REASON(S) WOULD YOU GIVE FOR YOUR DECISION?

3) WHAT ETHICAL ISSUE(S) DO YOU SEE INVOLVED IN THIS SITUATION?

Use back of sheet if needed.

CASE #2: HANDLING STUDENT DISCIPLINE

You have suspended a student from school for making a threat to a teacher-- he said "I'm a Vice-Lord and we're gonna get your car after school." The next afternoon, at lunch, a car pulls up outside school and four of the six young men inside get out with baseball bats and a knife. They identify themselves as Vice-Lords and try to enter the school. You and some teachers go out, and the six leave -- and your students, who were outside, identify one of the young men who stayed in the car as the student you suspended yesterday. You now know that he is in a gang and led the others to your school and threatened the safety of your students and staff. You also realize that, to expel this student, you need an adult witness. You know that unless you say that you actually saw this student positively as one of the young men -- and unless you say that he was one of the boys with a baseball bat in his hand -- you may not be able to successfully expel him. You sit down to write your report, and decide what to do.

1) WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN THIS SITUATION?

2) WHAT REASON(S) WOULD YOU GIVE FOR YOUR DECISION?

3) WHAT ETHICAL ISSUE(S) DO YOU SEE INVOLVED IN THIS SITUATION?

Use back of sheet if needed.

CASE #3: HANDLING A FACULTY LOUNGE CRITIC

You have been told privately, but often, that a certain teacher is always attacking you, your work, even your personal habits, in the faculty lounge. You have confronted the teacher privately, in your office, and the teacher seemed incredulous that you even brought up the topic -- "I have never said any such thing at any time," she tells you. Your friends tell you that the ridicule has continued, however, after your meeting with the critical teacher. You now fear that the unrelenting ridicule is harming your ability to lead the school effectively and to get your programs approved. Perhaps at the next faculty meeting, you think, you will take this teacher to task publicly, to show the faculty that you are not a weak leader, to protect your leadership role and image, and to "set the record straight" on your ideas about the future of the school. It's now the day of the faculty meeting, and you stand up to speak, still undecided about whether to take the critical teacher to task publicly, or lose this public opportunity for another two months.

1) WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN THIS SITUATION?

2) WHAT REASON(S) WOULD YOU GIVE FOR YOUR DECISION?

3) WHAT ETHICAL ISSUE(S) DO YOU SEE INVOLVED IN THIS SITUATION?

Use back of sheet if needed.

CASE #4: DEALING WITH AN ANGRY, INFLUENTIAL PARENT

Mr. Jack Robinson, father of three alumni and three current students at your school, is president of the parents' club, runs the concession stands for you at all basketball and football games, throws two annual appreciation-night dinners for your teachers, and even donates over \$1,000.00 each year to the booster club. He comes in to talk to you one day, obviously angry and upset. The drama teacher has not given his youngest daughter, Lois, a small part in the school play -- "It's just a small part, a few lines only, but it means so much to her and she's distraught," Mr. Robinson tells you. "I've never asked for anything in return for my services, but it's just not fair that my daughter can't have this one small part in the play, when it doesn't even matter who says these few lines," Mr. Robinson says. You have already talked to the drama teacher -- she told you it was a close decision, but another girl was a little better than Lois, and so the other girl got the part. You now prepare to respond to Mr. Robinson's request.

1) WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN THIS SITUATION?

2) WHAT REASON(S) WOULD YOU GIVE FOR YOUR DECISION?

3) WHAT ETHICAL ISSUE(S) DO YOU SEE INVOLVED IN THIS SITUATION?

Use back of sheet if needed.

CASE #5: GIVING A TEACHER RECOMMENDATION

The contract at your school makes it very difficult to remove a teacher once he or she has been granted tenure. You have tried hard to remediate a particularly poor teacher in your building for six years, yet the classroom remains noisy, and the teaching remains mediocre at best. Late in May, you are surprised to receive a phone call from the principal of a nearby school. She asks you about this teacher -- telling you that the teacher has applied for a job in her school, and wanting to know what kind of teacher this person is. It's a golden opportunity to help improve education for your students in your own school -- all you need to do is give a glowing report, and the teacher will leave your school and be hired by the neighboring principal. You'll then be free to hire a new, better teacher, and your students will be the "winners" as a result. You prepare to describe the mediocre teacher to the neighboring principal on the phone.

1) WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN THIS SITUATION?

2) WHAT REASON(S) WOULD YOU GIVE FOR YOUR DECISION?

3) WHAT ETHICAL ISSUE(S) DO YOU SEE INVOLVED IN THIS SITUATION?

Use back of sheet if needed.

