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# AUSTRALIAN ETHICS

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome everyone to the Winter Edition of *Australian Ethics*!

I hope everyone is keeping safe and well in these difficult times and that we are all seeing a bit of light at the end of the tunnel.

It seems to me that ethics is more important than ever in times of great disruption. When things are changing quickly, it's no longer enough to operate on moral cruise-control, following our usual habits and relying on our established expectations. Conscious thought is required to work out what our best response must be, and deliberate ethical decision-making comes to the fore.

In this connection, the theme of this edition of *Australian Ethics* is 'Being the best me I can be'. Thanks go to Charmayne Highfield as editor, and to all of the contributors. James Page offers fertile thoughts on the importance of kindness, but also questions whether kindness is morally enough. Alan Tapper explores the nature of rights, and how they emerge from our shared needs for social cooperation. Roderick O'Brien turns our attention to the challenging ethical decisions that the emergence of coronavirus created for those at Ground Zero of the COVID-19 outbreak. And in a piece of special interest to all those teaching practical ethics, Don Clifton and Tanya Weiler describe their innovations in blended learning and flipped classroom methods, including the intriguing use of Mentimeter—an audience response system—to teach business ethics at UniSA.

Looking to the future, while we can't be certain what the future holds in terms of travel restrictions, the strong hope at this moment is that the 27th Annual AAPAE Conference—'Who's watching'—will be successfully rescheduled, taking place in late 2020 (see below). Thanks go to the convenors and the School of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences at the University of New England, Armidale, for their flexibility in these turbulent times.

Best wishes to all, Hugh Breakey, President, AAPAE.

27th Annual Conference to be hosted by the **School of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences** at the **University of New England**, Armidale NSW

As we go to press, the new dates for the AAPAE conference are still on hold, but we are hopeful for an **early December program**.

### WHO'S WATCHING?

Surveillance, big data and applied ethics in the digital age

# IS KINDNESS ENOUGH?

**James Page**

Social movements are interesting, and one such interesting movement is the global kindness movement. In some ways this movement may be seen as a reaction against the perceived divisiveness and inhumanity of the modern world, or a reaction against the loss of a sense of community in modern societies. In the 2009 book *On Kindness,* authors Adam Philips and Barbara Taylor remind us that kindness is that what makes us human. The kindness movement may be neatly summed up in the modern adage that we should practice random acts of kindness.

In terms of ethics, however, it is useful to ask: is kindness enough? Or to phrase the question in more formal terms: is the exercise of kindness both necessary and sufficient for an ethical life?

**Is the exercise of kindness both necessary and sufficient for an ethical life?**

The notion of kindness is very closely linked to the notions of benevolence and caritas, or agape love. It is interesting that in medieval thought caritas was identified as an overarching virtue. Some ethicists suggest caritas is a uniquely Christian virtue, although others have suggested it can also be identified in other traditions under different names. Many anthropologists argue that kindness is a universal trait, and interestingly the 1989 UNESCO Statement on Violence suggests that there is no natural inclination of humanity to violence, and thus a peaceful (kind) world is possible.

It is certainly difficult to deny the importance of kindness. Kindness has a practical social benefit, in that it is the glue that holds societies together. One can enforce social cohesion, through cruelty and compulsion, although this rarely results in a lasting and effective society. Most often kindness is evidenced and experienced through our immediate social group, be this family or tribe. One could argue that, in recent times, the need to articulate kindness as a virtue has come about through pressures on our immediate social group, be this our extended family or tribe.

There is a further strong argument that if we see the world fracturing today, this is because of a dearth of kindness. The fracturing of society may be identified in the increasing polarisation of politics, in the decline of the middle ground in public discourse, in the re-emergence of militant nationalism, in a hyper-individualism which seeks personal advancement at the price of public good, and in simple things such as the lack of civility, such as in social media.

World Kindness Day
13 November

Of course, one could object that the world has been fracturing for some time or that it has always been a world where compassion is not the norm. After all, universal human rights are a relatively recent invention, and for millennia cruelty and oppression have been common. However equally one could argue that all this demonstrates is that there has always been a need for kindness. And it is interesting that there are factors which especially now seem to be emphasising the need for kindness and compassion in the way we interact with each other.

The most important aspect about kindness, however, is that it gives agency to individuals, in a social context where many of us feel disempowered

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## IS KINDNESS ENOUGH (CONT.)

*(Continued from page 2)*

or simply confused as to what is the right thing to do. This is of course the inherent power of virtue ethics, in that it provides an antidote to ethical overload. It is very empowering to say that, in a confusing world, I am resolving to be kind to others in whatever circumstances I might meet them. Such a resolve helps others, and it bestows integrity and confidence on the person taking this action.

Is, however, kindness enough? Or, to put this another way, is kindness sufficient?

I think it might not be. The writings and speeches of Martin Luther King Jr. have been garnering renewed attention in recent years, and a disturbing theme in his work is the idea that passive acceptance of injustice means acceptance of injustice and cooperation with evil. Thus, injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. Further, King argues we have a duty of noncooperation with evil. Evil may be most simply defined as avoidable harm, and King gives as examples extreme materialism, racism and militarism. Inaction in the face of evil means that we are complicit in evil.

What makes King's ideas so disturbing is that this puts distinct ethical challenges before us. It is very difficult to deny that there are fundamental problems and fundamental evils within our world today, along the lines of extreme materialism, racism and militarism. If King is correct, then as individuals we have an ethical obligation not to cooperate with the systems behind these evils. And for King, noncooperation with evil involves more than merely speaking out against evil. It involves nonviolent direct action, wherein the individual refuses to comply with what is demanded of him/her by these systems. For King, this is the only way to lasting social change.

The power of the ethic of kindness is that it functions on a personal level, and powerfully so. The adage that if you want to change the world, then the way to do this is one person at a time, is very relevant. Paradoxically, however, this is also the weakness of the ethic. It is good that we act in a kind manner to those we engage with. Yet we live in societies and have social responsibilities. We need a social ethic as well as a personal ethic. There needs to be a wider commitment to social justice.

Kindness thus may be important and it may be necessary. But equally kindness is not enough, that is, it is not sufficient. Put simply, we need to do more.

**Reference:**
Phillips, A. & Taylor, B. (2009). *On Kindness*. London, UK: Penguin Books.

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## PUBLICATION NOTE

Page, J.S. (2020). Philosophy of Peace. *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy.* ISSN 2161-0002. https://www.iep.utm.edu/peace/. Accessed 8 June, 2020.

Applied philosophy may be thought of as the application of philosophy to specific challenges and similarly applied ethics may be thought of as the application of ethics to specific challenges. Readers may be therefore interested in the recent publication of an entry entitled 'Philosophy of Peace', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (IEP). The entry attempts, through a philosophical and ethical lens, to examine the challenge of thinking about and attaining peace. The full entry is available online, through the IEP link above, or through the UNE research repository. The author welcomes observations and critical comments to the email address below.

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# THE PUZZLING CONCEPT OF RIGHTS

**Alan Tapper**

It is easy to understand how people can have interests. We are biological and social creatures, and our interests flow from our biological and social natures. But it is far from easy to understand how we can have *rights*. In various ways, rights are nothing like interests. They are not grounded in our biology, and yet they must be somehow connected to our well-being. What then are they and where do they come from?

... two sorts of rights:
rights as ***protected interests***,
and rights as ***protected decisions***.

I start with a common worry about rights talk. Talk about rights seems to serve two very different purposes in social debate and discussion. On the one hand, rights symbolise the settled ways of doing things in any given society. The settled way of driving in Australia is on the left of the road, and in Australia drivers have no right to drive on the other side. On the other hand, social reformers (radical, liberal, conservative, or whatever) commonly appeal to rights against the status quo. They want to argue that their society has no right to endorse X (deny free speech, permit slavery, legalise abortion, or whatever), even when X is part of the society's settled way of doing things.

But these two ways of talking about rights seem contradictory. For the reformers are claiming that rights require us to change something that the status quo tells us exists as a matter of rights. Socially-accepted practice X is defined in terms of the status quo's account of rights and attacked in terms of reformers' account of rights. If there is only one concept of rights, they can't both be right. Is one way correct and the other mistaken? Or are there two quite distinct concepts of rights being employed here?

This leads to a second problem about rights: on what are rights based? It seems easy to say what status quo rights are based upon but difficult to say what reformers' rights are based upon. Status quo rights express settled ways of doing things, and are formalised in terms of laws, agreements, contracts, etc. This is their basis. Reformers' rights claims might be backed up with a wide variety of contentions. A reformer might say that X is a right because someone needs X, someone deserves X, justice or fairness or equality or liberty requires X, X is a natural or human or individual right, X serves the greatest good of the greatest number, and so on. The puzzle remains: how can we reconcile such different stories about the basis of rights?

Then there is a third problem with rights. Philosophers sometimes talk of rights as 'trumps'. By this they mean that rights play a conflict-settling role. In a game of bridge, one card suit is 'trumps'—that is, it is deemed to be automatically more valuable than any other suit. So if spades are trumps, a two of spades outranks a king of hearts, even though normally a king outranks a two. Rights are commonly thought of in this way, and sometimes that is how they function. You and I may be in conflict about whether I may do X. If I have a right to do X, then (we commonly allow) my having a right trumps your wish that I don't do X. In this way rights talk serves as a conflict resolution signifier. But this seems a very different sort of conceptual role than the roles described above.

Having stated three problems with rights talk, I now propose that there are three special features of rights claims upon which we might agree. Firstly, the fact that *A wants X* in no way supports A's having a *right* to X. Rights do not follow from desires. Something more is needed to get rights claims off the ground.

Secondly, claiming a right to X is much more than appealing to someone's generosity. Generosity might lead you to give me X, but by its nature generosity is voluntary, and if you don't give it to me then—unless I have a right to X—there is nothing more that I can properly say or do to get you to give it to me. I might resort to violence to get it from you, but then I would be acting as if X were mine by right.

The idea of generosity is interconnected with the idea of rights,

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## THE PUZZLING CONCEPT OF RIGHTS (CONT.)

*(Continued from page 4)*

since a person can only be generous with something that is theirs by right (their time or their property, say). Someone who is 'generous' with other people's time or property is not being generous at all. So the idea of generosity presupposes the idea of rights.

Thirdly, claiming a *right* to X is claiming that X *must* be given to me. It is morally coercive. If you refuse to give it to me, and it really is mine as a matter of right, then I in turn have a right to apply sanctions of some sort. I may choose not to apply any sanctions, I may not even express disapproval, but nevertheless I have the right to do so.

Given these three points, we can see that the justification of a rights claim has to be a special sort of justification, one so strong as to justify the sanctions that may accompany the failure to fulfil the claim. What sort of justification has this sort of force?

The short answer, I think, is that *justice claims* play this sort of role. And the short explanation of how justice claims can do this is that justice claims are about the distribution of benefits and burdens in some cooperative enterprise. Given that A and B are jointly engaged in some common enterprise, they can make claims on each other about the allocation of those benefits and burdens. They are not arbitrarily asserting a *right to X* merely because it would be good to have X. They are asserting a right to X because X is part of their cooperative activity.

Of course, people can make false or unreasonable justice claims. Someone may claim more than their fair share, while expecting others to get little or nothing from the activity. But that is a separate sort of point. The main point is that rights claims are claims which arise within common activities.

In cooperative activities we are not just sharing benefits and burdens. We also have to allocate decision-making rights. In fact, decision-making rights are often more important than the allocation of goods, because he or she who controls the decision-making is in the best position to control the allocation of goods.

Social institutions are structures of decision-making. Having the *right to decide* something typically goes with the occupation of a role. Being a citizen gives one the right to vote in elections. In committees, the chairperson has the final say if the committee vote is split. Being the parent of a child includes the right to make decisions on behalf of the child. This last example illustrates two sorts of rights at once. The child has the right to certain sorts of care; the parent has the right (within certain limits) to make decisions about that care. So the parent has decision-making rights, while the child has the right to have its interests taken care of. Rights thus cover both decision-making and interests.

It is now common to talk of two sorts of rights: rights as *protected interests*, and rights as *protected decisions*. I think this is a helpful clarification. It corresponds to the legal distinction between *agent* (the person who has the right to make the decision) and *beneficiary* (the person in terms of whose interests the decision should be made). Often, of course, the same person has the right to make the decision and the right to have his or her interests protected. Often, but not always. Sometimes the beneficiary is unable to make competent decisions; and sometimes he or she has delegated the decision to someone else.

To return to my opening question: What are rights and where do they come from? My answer is that they come from our social natures. It is in the nature of social life we need to allocate decision-making powers. In social life we also allocate the benefits and burdens that arise from our cooperative activities. These are not matters simply of pursuing our interests; they are matters of allocation and distribution. To express these matters we need a specialised language, the language of rights.

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# ETHICS IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

**Roderick O'Brien**

The easiest time to make an ethical judgement is after the event. By then all the facts are known, the motives of the parties are clear, and there is time to balance alternatives. Perhaps the most difficult time is when the facts are rapidly emerging, the motives of parties must be quickly guessed, and there is no time to balance in a shifting world of options. The circumstances of medical doctor Li Wenliang and blogging judge Tang Xinghua in China give us a kind of case study of what can happen in just a few days. These events took place early in our experience of the coronavirus we now know as COVID-19, an infectious disease caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2.

Even to prepare a timeline is difficult. We can refer to the *Report on the Investigation Regarding Public Feedback Involving the Circumstances of Dr Li Wenliang*, published on 19 March and now available in English on the very useful website *China Law Translate*. What seems clear is that medical personnel in Wuhan reported at least by 29 December to the Wuhan Centre for Disease Control that a new pneumonia from unknown causes had been discovered, and on 30 December this news was circulated on its internal system by the Wuhan Health Committee. That evening, ophthalmologist Dr Li circulated a group of medical friends on WeChat, warning them of cases of SARS, and advising them to have family and friends on guard. On 3 January, Wuhan police called in Dr Li and admonished him for his WeChat messages, and warned him to be careful in the future.

Dr Li returned to his work. There he received an elderly patient who had been infected, and himself contracted the disease. On 10 January he had a fever, and on 12 January he was admitted to his own hospital. Gradually his condition worsened and he died on 7 February. While in hospital, he sent a message on Weibo, describing his experience, and publishing the documents of his encounter with the police. Popular support for Dr Li was widespread, and for many an opportunity to comment negatively on the way in which the government had handled the outbreak. The Wuhan authorities had announced that the virus could not be transmitted person-to-person, and a declaration of an emergency did not come until 20 January.

An unusual feature of this series of events was the intervention of China's Supreme Court. On 26 March, the Supreme Court published a blog by a Beijing District Court judge Tang Xinghua, with suggestions on how to deal with rumour. The blog, also available on *China Law Translate*, suggests a much more nuanced approach to rumour than the heavy-handed and literal method employed by the Wuhan police. He recommends checking both subjective malice and objective impact. Judge Tang is a blogger under the name Tang Yousong, and he notes that China has changed since the days of SARS, especially since social media has become so widespread. And, while Judge Tang lists the kind of rumours that must be combatted by the strict hand of the law, he concludes with the optimistic observation that today's China is based on openness and freedom, so that the regime does not need to control all incorrect information.

We do not yet have the easy way of making ethical decisions, because we are still in the rapidly changing story of the coronavirus.

Before and after his death, praise for Dr Li has become widespread in China. The regime has had to reverse earlier criticism of him, to require the Wuhan police to issue an apology, and to adopt Dr Li as a Party-member medical martyr.

We do not yet have the easy way of making ethical decisions, because we are still in the rapidly changing story of the coronavirus. There is much that we have to discover. Yet we can have sympathy with the protagonists in our short story. Let us check some of them.

For Dr Li, the significant problem is that of deciding to "blow the whistle". Perhaps his motivation was limited to protecting the medical friends in his little

## ETHICS IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING ENVIRONMENT (CONT.)

*(Continued from page 6)*

chat group, and their families. But the internet can be contagious like a virus, and his news went viral. So Dr Li faced a series of dilemmas around his use of social media. Was he to blow the whistle? To whom? And what responsibility does he have if a private chat goes viral?

For the local Wuhan police, the significant problem no doubt did not occur to them at the time of their interview with Dr Li. An auxiliary police officer conducted the interview and issued the admonition. Yet the exercise of state power by the police was then criticised in the Supreme Court for being too literal, and too intolerant or excessive in its censorship. The difficulty can only be resolved at a higher level, where virtues like justice and transparency have to be balanced with virtues such as prudence. These virtues then need to be implemented in administration.

No doubt the health officials who controlled the earliest information about the outbreak are now aware of the ethical dilemmas. Some, along with the city leadership, have been sacked. Balancing the need to truthfully warn about a novel and rapidly changing coronavirus with the need to protect social stability in a city of around eleven million people is no easy task. It is more difficult in the strictly hierarchical Communist Party environment which makes decision-making quite inflexible and dangerous. An element of the solution must be the ancient principle “First, do no harm”, and this requires a subtle assessment of risk.

For Judge Tang, the blogging king, there is an interesting problem of ethics. Judge Tang does not mention that China has its own unique ethics, based in socialism with Chinese characteristics. Perhaps Judge Tang simply takes for granted in his blog that his observations are grounded in the unique ethics being developed by China’s leaders.

And for the observer? Surely there are books and articles already being written to analyse the path of ethical decision making in the pandemic that is shaking the world. But, like scientists and politicians, ethicists also need to be humble when making decisions in situations of rapidly-changing uncertainty. This contribution that you are reading was presented to the Business Ethics and Responsible Leadership group at the University of South Australia. It must be provisional, for surely between the time of writing and the time of your reading, more information will come to light about the circumstances of Dr Li’s life and death, and Judge Tang’s blog, within the much bigger framework of the pandemic.

Note: the website for *China Law Translate* is https://www.chinalawtranslate.com/en/.

**References**: For a full list of references, please contact the author direct.

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***Editor’s note:***
It has been a little over two months since this article was written, but so much has changed during that time. In May, the Chinese authorities posthumously awarded Dr Li Wenliang and 33 others with national May 4th Medals to acknowledge their sacrifices in fighting against COVID-19, and on June 12th, Ms Fu Xuejie, the wife of the Late Dr Li, announced the birth of their second child, a baby boy.

## AAPAE Listserv

If you have any information or notices that you would like us to relay to your peers, please email your request (word format) to: info@aapae.org.au

**The AAPAE’s Listserv has over 740 subscribers locally and overseas**.

# TEACHING ETHICS TO THIRD-YEAR UNDERGRADUATE BUSINESS STUDENTS USING BLENDED LEARNING, FLIPPED CLASSROOM AND AUDIENCE RESPONSE SYSTEM METHODS

DON CLIFTON
TANYA WEILER

International Management Ethics and Values (IMEV, the 'course') is a third-year undergraduate course in the UniSA Business School. Here, we track a three-year development journey to transform the course from one built around traditional teaching methods using lectures and tutorials, to one based on a blended-learning (BL) flipped-classroom (FC) model incorporating the use of an audience response system—Mentimeter.

We began by asking 'what is the purpose of this course and does its design fit this purpose?' We identified that IMEV has an important role to play in developing advanced student skills in problem solving and ethical awareness within an international business context. To aid us in the development work, we adopted Rossouw's (2002) framework which proposes that teaching business ethics has three complementary objectives: cognitive competence, behavioural competence and managerial competence. Rossouw further states that, to bring these objectives together, students need to (a) learn basic ethical theories, (b) apply these theories to ethical situations using cases and class discussion, (c) develop critical thinking skills through reflective activities, (d) be exposed to different perspectives and experiences, and (e) be conversant in the use of managerial tools to analyse and implement ethical practices.

To better align the course to its purpose and to Rossouw's model, we first changed the content to be more practical in terms of the development of personal and professional ethical skills. This resulted in a re-focus on having students understand how various ethical approaches worked and could be applied, as opposed to engaging in extended philosophical discussion about them. We also pitched the business application at the organisational strategy level and aligned content to this.

The outcome is a 10-week course with the first four topics covering ethical principles including virtue, deontological and consequentialist ethics, justice (based on the four-dimensions of justice proposed by Schlosberg (2007), plus intra and inter-generational justice) environmental and animal ethics, and sustainable world principles. These four topics cover point (a) of Rossouw's model—learn ethical theories. Topic 5 covers ethical decision-making and critical thinking, contributing to Rossouw's point (c) of developing critical thinking skills. The remaining five topics focus on embedding ethical and sustainable business practices into organisational strategy, with the final topic using Johnson's (2012) model on how to build an ethical organisation. These last five topics focus on Rossouw's point (e)—being conversant with managerial tools to implement ethical practices.

The assessments were also changed to a more regular submission format—four submission points at weeks 3, 5, 7 and 10, plus a final end-of-course assignment. Designed as a teaching tool, the assessments have shifted in focus from 'assessment of learning' to 'assessment for and as learning' (Mutch, 2012). Each task is based around real-world cases (such as slave labour in supply chains, farming of animals for human use, and how a firm is, or isn't, embedding ethical and sustainable business in its strategies) and applies the course content being covered at the time the task is done. This addresses Rossouw's points (b) of using cases, and (e) in the use of management tools. In addition to their own submissions, students are required to review and reflect on the submissions of their peers to discuss what they learned from both their work and that of the other student. This contributes to Rossouw's points (c): reflective activities and (d): exposure to different perspectives.

The next step was a rethink of the teaching approach. Attendance at lectures (1½-hour sessions) dropped off quickly as the course progressed with attendance even

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at the first lecture being generally less than 50% of enrolments. This raised significant questions in terms of whether lectures delivered meaningful value to the student body. The approach taken was to move to a BL-FC model (Akçayir & Akçayir, 2018; Siemens et al., 2015). Lectures were removed and the 1½-hour tutorials were changed to two-hour workshops. All topic content was modularised and supported by pre-recorded PPT-videos for students to view in their preparation time prior to the workshops. The workshops were refocused to ensure student understanding of the weekly topic content, by them applying this to the assessment case studies in a supportive environment. This is where the move to 'assessment for and as learning' approach becomes evident—the assessments became the teaching tool.

### *Being a better teacher*

The key virtues we try to present in our teaching are: being **authentic**, showing **genuine care** towards students, displaying **enthusiasm** towards students, being **accessible** and **approachable**, and being **responsive**—answer questions, provide feedback, and giving assistance in a timely and meaningful way.

To illustrate: the Ethical Decision-Making Worksheet is a tool we developed that sets out a practical way to apply the different ethical decision-making approaches covered in the first four weeks of the course. For the first assessment submission in week 3, we present two cases to students (such as slave labour in Nestle's supply chain, and advertising to children under age 10) and have students workshop application of the ethical principles to these cases to answer an ethical question about the cases such as "is Nestle morally responsible for what happens in its supply chain?" or "is it ethical to market to children under age 10?".

The next challenge was to make the workshops even more engaging for students and to gain a better understanding of how students were progressing. We tried a number of traditional strategies including team work and team presentations. We found these approaches wanting. First, some students were reluctant to speak up in fear of 'being wrong'. We also found that a number of students quietly defied working in a team—they would sit alone or in pairs and not engage with others. Further, we found that feedback to gauge the level of understanding from the class was limited and difficult to determine. To address these problems, we introduced Mentimeter—an audience response system (Skoyles & Bloxsidge, 2017) as the teaching tool to structure the workshop sessions. We have also now moved classes to collaborative work spaces where the physical environment ensures students sit at tables with others.

How has all of this gone? One of the problems with a BL-FC course is students not adequately undertaking the out-of-class activities (Akçayir & Akçayir, 2018). For IMEV, student access to course materials on assessment task requirements has an almost 100% access rate. Access rates for 'required' weekly content varies between 50% to 80%. Whilst this is better than having a low percentage of students attending lectures, it is still concerning in that the BL-FC method relies on students doing the out-of-class activities (Chuang et al., 2018) which doesn't always happen.

There is also a concern that some students may not be familiar with the BL-FC model and the implications it has for them in terms of self-regulation and preparation. Further, some students may be accustomed to the passive learning of traditional lectures and their study expectations are built around this (Akçayir & Akçayir, 2018; Chuang et al., 2018). Others may avoid the online elements of a BL-FC course through a perception that these are not an integral part of the course and create too much work (Ellis & Han, 2017). A key strategy in the literature to address these issues is to explain to students how the course is structured, the learning goals, the instruction method, and how the online and F2F content connect (Ellis & Han, 2017). We initially did not give this adequate attention. Realising this, we now ensure we give clear instruction covering these points at the start of the

## WILLIAM—THE CONQUEROR

**Michael Schwartz**

As a child my favourite book was Richmal Crompton's '*William—The Conqueror*' (1951). William Brown was a fictional British schoolboy who—with no evil intent—destroyed the serenity of suburbia. No statues exist of William so none risk destruction. Meanwhile statues of James Cook, William Gladstone, Cecil John Rhodes, Winston Churchill, Christopher Columbus, John Howard and Tony Abbott risk destruction. Their statues are at risk because they represent western civilisation. For, as Brendan O'Neill argues, those leading the assault on statues are no fans of western civilisation believing that "racism is ingrained into modern societies such as the US, Britain and Australia" (2020, p. 16).

Christopher Columbus and Captain Cook undertook voyages which led to the discovery of America and Australia—albeit not for the existing inhabitants of those continents. However, those voyages led to the conquest of both continents and, ultimately, both continents being a part of western civilisation. Conquest conquers all.

History is a story of such conquest. For example, we know that during the 6th Century AD the Irish Scotti invaded Scotland. The Picts whom they displaced are now a memory. And we know too that in the 7th and 8th Centuries AD, the Muslims conquered present day Iran, Israel, Pakistan and all of North Africa. Those they displaced are mostly now a memory.

Memory is not history (Collingwood 1994). Instead, what history reveals is that no conquest remains unchallenged.

The current destruction of statues is reminiscent of the Nazi's burning of books. On the 26th of November 1938, Mahatma Gandhi in an article in his newspaper, the *Harijan*, despite events such as the very recent *Kristallnacht* pogrom and the existing concentration camps, failed to appreciate the Nazi threat to German Jews and, furthermore, criticised German Jews Zionism as unjust to the Arabs in Palestine who possessed the land. In 'A Letter to Gandhi' (1939), the philosopher Martin Buber, who was a Zionistic German Jew, argued that the Arabs "attain[ed] the right of ownership in Palestine . . .  by conquest" (1974, p. 144) and asked as to the rights of those "to whom the land once belonged  ... (in) ... striv[ing] to occupy a free part of the land" (1974, p. 144).

A remnant of the Jews always remained in Israel. In the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, the Arab military leader Abdullah el-Tell, who ethnically cleansed the Old City of Jerusalem of its Jewish population after his forces captured the Old City from the Israelis said that "for the first time in 1,000 years no Jews remained there" (el-Tell as quoted by Azaryahu and Golan, 2012, p. 63). Such was the fate of all Jewish communities throughout the Arab world after 1948 (Lukacs, 2018).

On the 6th of December 1938, ten days after Gandhi published his article, an Australian Aboriginal leader named William Cooper (1861-1941) led a delegation of the Australian Aboriginal League to the German Consulate in Melbourne (https://www.theaboriginalwhostooduptohitler.com/) to protest the cruel treatment of German Jews by the Nazi Government. The German consulate refused to receive Cooper's delegation which was the only private protest worldwide against the recent *Kristallnacht* pogrom.

Goldenberg (2009) discusses the similarities between Australian Aborigines and Israeli Jews as to their relationship with their homelands. Regarding size Tasmania alone is more than three times the size of Israel. And much like in Israel in a prior historical period—in Tasmania a remnant of Tasmanian Aboriginals reside. In the 2016 Census 23,000 Tasmanians identified themselves as Aboriginals. Tasmanian Aboriginals have endured terrible wrongs. So would those intent on destroying the Sydney statue of Captain Cook argue—much as Martin Buber did in 1939—that as the island once belonged to the Tasmanian Aboriginals they along with others now abroad —should be permitted to occupy a free part of it?

The question must be asked as if O'Neill (2020) is correct and the protest is fundamentally concerned with addressing racism

*(Continued on page 11)*

## TEACHING ETHICS TO THIRD-YEAR UNDERGRADUATE BUSINESS STUDENTS … (CONT.)

*(Continued from page 9)*

course and at regular intervals throughout.

Our first introduction of Mentimeter software in the workshops to engage students in questions on the weekly content and its application to the assessment cases led to a surprising reduction in class discussion. Rather than fostering engagement, it saw students sitting around tables with their heads in their mobile devices. To address this, we changed the way the Mentimeter was used by first presenting a question to consider and giving students time to discuss this at their tables to come up with an answer. We then opened the Mentimeter quiz and discussion screen for the students to enter their answers. This two-phase approach created rich discussion around the tables.

Overall, the changes have been successful and effective. We can't please every student all the time but feedback is, overall, very positive. Student comments such as "*I was able to learn about ethics and how to apply it in the real world*", *"[I like] the interactions, the way we learn with Mentimeter", "the use of Mentimeter I found very helpful as it allowed me to be more included without feeling judged if I picked the wrong answer", "I very much enjoyed the way you made us engage with the course material….you asked us questions and made us reflect and work together to find an answer"* and *"[the lecturer] brought out real examples that helped us all to grow, and see how relevant the course is to every aspect of life"* are the norm.

One final point. Cranton (2001) discusses how we can become better teachers by being true to ourselves—being authentic and genuine, where being a good teacher is a display of who we are as people. It is this idea that underpins the values approach to our teaching where we strive to model in our own behaviour the qualities we seek to instil in our students. The key virtues we try to present in our teaching are: being authentic, showing genuine care towards students, displaying enthusiasm towards students, being accessible and approachable, and being responsive—answer questions, provide feedback, and giving assistance in a timely and meaningful way**.** We cannot speak highly enough of how important this is or the value it brings to students. Feedback such as "*an approachable, caring, enthusiastic and organised teacher*", "*genuine desire to be helpful*" and "*very caring about our understanding, takes time to make sure we have questions, encourages opinions and participation*" shows the impact this can have.

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## WILLIAM—THE CONQUEROR CONT.

*(Continued from page 10)*

what does that imply for Tasmanian Aboriginals and other such victims? For unless such aspirations exist the destruction of statues cannot achieve anything for anyone including the Tasmanian Aboriginals. Destroying statues makes a political statement. And indeed, is a political act. Ultimately, however, there is as Buber reminds us the need "to give to man what is man's in order to rescue him from being devoured by the political principle" (1974, p. 219).

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The broad purpose of the AAPAE is to encourage awareness of, and foster discussion of issues in, professional and applied ethics. It provides a meeting point for practitioners from various fields and academics with specialist expertise and welcomes everyone who wants or needs to think and talk about applied or professional ethics.

The AAPAE fosters and publishes research in professional and applied ethics, as well as attempting to create connections with special interest groups.

However, the AAPAE does not endorse any particular viewpoint, but rather it aims to promote a climate in which different and differing views, concerns, and approaches can be expressed and discussed.

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