

Institute for Christian Teaching  
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FETTUCINE ALFREDO:

A CORE COMPETENCE FOR ADVENTIST BUSINESS EDUCATION?

by

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FETTUCINE ALFREDO

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My wife and I like to visit Sale e Pepe, a small Italian restaurant located in a well-to-do neighbourhood in West London. As it appears somewhat inconspicuous the restaurant will take some time to find. But it is worth the effort. Try their Fettucine Alfredo. The sauce may seem thin yet is incredibly rich and provides the entire dish with a distinguished flavour. The waiters serve with incredible cheer and noticeable pride. It has been argued that a good Italian restaurant is recognised by the number of native Italians that choose to dine there. Sale e Pepe is usually full of Italians.

The Alfredo sauce serves to illustrate the ethics component this essay sets out to fashion and foster. As for the Fettucine; the restaurant; the natives; and the waiters...they all are relevant to this proposal, although their interpretation is left to occupy the reader's mind.

My premise is a plea: an appeal for the integration of ethics into the entire business core curriculum. Offering a single course in business ethics is no longer adequate. Our Adventist colleges would be better off pursuing the cultivation of moral character as a natural and assessable element of every core business course. Such reasoning makes sense from a strategic, societal, and Christian point of view, as I will soon demonstrate.

The essay consists of several related parts. First, I will provide a definition of business ethics and address its relevance to the complex environment to which it aims to contribute. The discussion that follows links its teaching to Adventist colleges and examines ethics as it relates to institutional mission and goals, society, strategy development, and the Christian world view. I shall address some important criticisms the discipline of business ethics has received and suggest possible solutions. This dialogue would be incomplete without at least an attempt to define a Christian perspective on business ethics. Having recognised the potential of teaching ethics and articulated the Christian distinctive, I will suggest a number of viable teaching techniques and provide a conceptual model demonstrating the concept of integration and its workability.

The scope of the essay does not allow for exhaustive discussions on any one part of the proposal. Any such criticism is readily accepted. The reader should keep in mind, however, that the primary aim of this essay is to provide a rationale for the teaching of a Christian business ethics as an integral part of our core curriculum. It therefore aims to be practical, accessible to different cultural audiences and, above all, readable.

#### WHY BOTHER WITH BUSINESS ETHICS?

The study of ethics concerns itself with issues of human morality; sometimes referred to as good versus bad, virtues, and values, although these concepts have been subject to much debate<sup>1</sup>. Business ethics has loosely been defined as the systematic treatment of values in business and industry<sup>2</sup>. Milton Friedman, for some time, dominated the debate on business ethics as he claimed that the sole responsibility of any firm is to maximise profits, and in so doing it will satisfy the interests of society at large. More recently, academics, such as Donaldson, have challenged this supposition and have departed on a journey marked by research and subsequent publications. In fact, this Georgetown University ethicist has adopted a more philosophical approach to defining ethics as he reasons that business ethics looks at corporate profits not for their own sake but with respect to the achievement of some

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human good<sup>3</sup>. In practical terms this could mean increased investor satisfaction, higher levels of employment, and increased capacity to improve working conditions. As we are concerned mostly with the teaching of business ethics, I suggest we adopt the following usable definition: "education in business ethics is the attempted build-up through instruction, reflection, debate, and the analysis of particular situations, of certain personal sensitivities to the presence and play of ethical values in the conduct of business"<sup>4</sup>.

It is interesting to note that the discipline of business ethics has only fairly recently gained academic acceptance in Europe and the United Kingdom, where lie the origins of the Industrial Revolution. For example, in its issue of 20 May 1989, The Economist, a popular magazine in the world of business, included a 23-page "Survey of Business in Britain" which did not contain a single reference to business ethics. This would have been almost unthinkable in any comparable publication in the United States<sup>5</sup>. There the subject has been given proper attention as there are now more than 25 textbooks and three academic journals dedicated to the field. Endowed chairs have been established at several prominent universities, such as Georgetown, Virginia and Minnesota.

It is perhaps not surprising that in the U.S., the increasing concern with morality and business has attracted media attention, as evidenced by David Horowitz's early morning show entitled "Fight Back!"; and CBS's "Shame on You". The latter TV show operates a "Shame on You" hot line, which encourages angry consumers to make their views public through a simple telephone call<sup>6</sup>. Perhaps the most stunning and visible event in the history of business ethics has been the decision, in 1987, of John Shad, chairman of the American Securities and Exchange Commission during the Reagan administration, to donate \$30 million to endow a business ethics programme at his alma mater, Harvard University.

As for the relevance of business ethics, from the free-market system emerge practices that call for moral judgment. Consider, for example, the case of Robert Maxwell, founder of the Mirror Group, who was accused of defrauding in excess of £500 million of his firm's pension fund; or the well-publicised case of Ivan Boesky who was accused of insider trading. More strikingly perhaps is the story of Manville Corporation (then John Manville) who concealed important safety information from their employees for 40 years. Medical research had shown that asbestos inhalation was the main cause of asbestosis, a debilitating lung disease, as well as lung cancer and mesothelioma, a lasting lung disease. Aware of these findings, Manville decided it would rather pay for workers' compensation claims than to develop safer working conditions. Sadly, the asbestos claimed thousands of lives and eventually killed an industry<sup>7</sup>. This is but a small sample of many illustrations - minor and major - that could be used. Abiding by legal and political systems is *one* motivation for ethical behaviour. And, unfortunately, perhaps the sole incentive for many businesses.

Costs of unethical behaviour, however, extend far beyond the boundaries of legal and compensatory expenses. They frequently appear in the form of forfeited profits. Consumers increasingly demand that corporations assume moral responsibility. "It's not funny anymore", argues Popcorn.

The consumer is fighting back. Confronted every day with shabby quality, irresponsibility, and false claims, consumers take up the banner of protest against marketing immorality. It is social injustice too close to home, and it spawns the next

generation of protestors: the Vigilante Consumer<sup>8</sup>.

This provides a very simple answer to the question of relevance. We bother with ethics because we cannot *afford* not to. Besides, we probably cannot *avoid* not to bother with ethics. For even if we were to try we would still find ourselves operating according to some ethical framework that determines the nature of what we do. More on that later.

At this point we must address the question as to whether it is the responsibility of management education to teach ethics. Some say no, that the faculty is generally not equipped to teach the subject; that the business curriculum is already overcrowded; and that the values of business students are already fully formed and not open to review or correction in the classroom<sup>9</sup>. These arguments appear somewhat unconvincing in their conclusions, as I will demonstrate later, though they may generate a useful discussion on the specifics of teaching ethics. Piper, using the words of Giamatti, argues that

surely business education must be an enterprise of both the intellect and the spirit - an endeavor that engages one's character and values, spurs one's imagination and sense of meaning, and stimulates one's sense of responsibility and accountability and one's desire to lead and create. Pragmatism and professionalism need to be "attached to a purpose, and that purpose to other people in some substantial way, and to larger purposes"<sup>10</sup>

He proceeds with a compassionate plea for the inclusion of a business ethics component in any management curriculum.

But management education can and should be more than the transfer of skills and knowledge; it should be a moral endeavor, a passing-on from one generation to the next of a kind of wisdom about what is worthy of one's commitment. Faculty at professional schools have an opportunity to help students connect their capacity for high achievement to a sense of purpose, to forge a connection between self and social issues, between self and social fabric<sup>11</sup>.

It is not surprising that the elite American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business requires the core curriculum, for schools it accredits, to include a background of the economic and legal environment as it pertains to profit and nonprofit organisations, along with ethical considerations and social and political influences as they affect such organisations<sup>12</sup>.

*A competitive advantage for Adventist business education?*

From a strategic perspective we can build a good case for the inclusion of a business ethics component into the required curriculum. The church has for some time now been occupied with the noble quest of maintaining and marketing the uniqueness of our Adventist educational system, not in the least for financial reasons. Keeping up enrollment figures has become a priority item for most of our colleges in today's stringent economic environment. This effort has resulted in a creative series of endeavors most of which originate in college

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advancement offices or under the supervision of the public relations department. An obvious and, I believe, mostly positive endeavor is the creation of strategic planning committees. Their effectiveness will depend on their approach to strategy development. Using a fairly comprehensive definition of strategy by Johnson and Scholes<sup>a</sup> it appears that identifying the needs of students becomes a prime occupation. These then have to be examined with respect to our resources, our mission, our philosophy, and the demands placed upon us by our constituency, employees, donors, and other stakeholders. In fact, the successful college will be one which creates a distinctive character in these relationships and operates in an environment which maximises the value of that distinctiveness. Needs identification within an educational environment may prove somewhat unconventional as we, based upon our experience, may be more aware of what is good for our students than they are. Consequently, we should consider their needs with respect to the demands of future employers and the needs of society at large. In this respect, it will be useful to recognize that many of our business students will not take up church-related employment. And, I believe, neither would we want them to. Ideally our graduates will make a positive contribution to the secular world of business.

Based upon these data beliefs we should seek to create an educational setting which responds to the needs of students and the perceived needs of their future society, and one which draws on our strengths as a Christian institution. Assuming that students are rational, they base their decision to enroll in our business programmes on a simple cost-benefit analysis, comparing required investment with perceived value. In this context value should not be equated to moral value, although its definition may not exclude morality. But then it may also include peer pressure, parental pressure, average temperature, location, degree of freedom (in the non-statistical sense), and even the opposite sex. Every institution must be able to answer one basic question: What does our college offer students for the extra investment required to attend our institution? Or, put differently, How do we justify our price tag? An ethics component as a distinct feature of the Adventist business curriculum may well provide us with the competitive advantage needed to attract students in an increasingly competitive educational market place and, as importantly, to facilitate the integration of faith and learning and thus articulate our institutional mission. Success is dependent on the degree of integration; the measures of quality control; and, of course, the sensibility with which the new programme is marketed.

If we, on the other hand, fail to recognise the importance of teaching business ethics, we fail in our responsibilities toward society. As well stated by former Harvard president Derek Bok,

the consequences of doing nothing are plainly intolerable. A university that refuses

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<sup>a</sup> "Strategy is the *direction* and *scope* of an organisation over the *long term*; ideally, which matches its *resources* to its changing *environment*, and in particular its *markets*, *customers* or *clients* so as to meet *stakeholder* expectations." - Johnson G. & Scholes K. 1993. Exploring Corporate Strategy. Text and cases. 3rd ed. New York: Prentice Hall. pp: 10

to take ethical dilemmas seriously violates its basic obligation to society<sup>13</sup>.

We will also fail the world at large, for according to Ellen White,

the greatest want of the world is the want of men - men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall<sup>14</sup>

If not for reasons of competitiveness, we must teach ethics due to our obligation to the larger environment in which we operate. We simply have no choice.

#### WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE PROBLEM WITH BUSINESS ETHICS TODAY?

Having pondered on the rationale for teaching ethics as a Christian institution, we shall now depart on a journey of exploration. As I have aimed to construct a component that is practical, appeals to common sense, is reflective in nature, and responds to real needs expressed by those that spend most of their working lives in the business environment, it will have to be rid of problems encountered in traditional ethics courses. Let me explain.

Traditionally, courses in business ethics have focussed on examining different ethical models and applying them to issues that demand moral judgment. As a consequence of this often far too theoretical approach a number of business ethicists have found themselves removed from the real concerns and real-world problems of the vast majority of business professionals<sup>15</sup>. They have been absorbed with a too absolutist notion of what it means to act ethically; with too general criticisms of economic systems; and with a vast amount of theories conceived in sheer ambition, to be of any use to today's manager. This apparent failure of moral philosophy applied to business is all the more disappointing when viewed in contrast to the successes that ethicists in other professions, such as medicine and law, have had in providing real and welcome assistance to their practitioners. Their great moral philosophers have been practitioners like Hippocrates or Oliver Wendell Holmes<sup>16</sup>. Business ethicists, sadly, have failed to keep in touch with the changing needs of the very people they serve, as evidenced by several shortcomings.

First, following Stark's observations, business ethics is perceived as too general in its applications. Rather than focussing on real-life moral dilemmas, many ethicists have chosen to critique the nature of macro economic-political systems. Although challenging capitalism, socialism, or democracy may prove an inspiring and fascinating exercise, it does not address priority issues for business managers and leaves them with little tangible to use in the decision making process. To illustrate this phenomena consider this statement made by University of Kansas ethicist, DeGeorge, as recently as 1986: "Is capitalism ethically justifiable? If so, how? If not, why not? Is socialism ethically...preferable?"<sup>17</sup>.

Second, traditional ethics has been perceived as too theoretical to be of any use. Both medicine and management, not in the least due to the contributions of Frederick Taylor, are referred to as sciences. Thus, it becomes the challenge to ethicists in either field to bridge a gulf between their own preoccupations with morals (philosophical by nature) and the

harder, more scientific character of the profession they study. Whereas medical ethicists seem to have won acceptance within their field by displaying an understanding of the core medical issues, business moralists have failed to gain the same credibility, as they have wrapped their work in abstract moral theory which lacks any understanding of tough business issues<sup>18</sup>.

Third, although business ethics aspires to be practical, its recommendations have often proved unpractical. Many business professionals have simply not been able to act upon the teachings of ethics. For example, the primary objective of any business enterprise is said to be that of maximising shareholder wealth. One way of doing so is by maximising dividend payout, while recognising the need for some reinvestment of net income in the corporation. Ethicists, however, may urge managers to produce more environmentally friendly products, which requires significant resources to be put into research and development and, in the short run, puts a constraint on dividend payout. It may also add risk to shareholders' investments. In other words, ethicists are increasingly asking business managers to alter their commitments to their traditional principals in order to satisfy the competing interests of non-principals.

These three criticisms will have to be taken seriously in any business ethics component to be successful and to gain credibility with business professionals and even society at large.

#### THE NEW BUSINESS ETHICS: PREMISES AND AGENDA

We will now briefly focus on a particular group of business ethicists who have begun to grapple with the shortcomings of ethical theory. Stark refers to their efforts as the "new business ethics". Advocates of this new business ethics can be identified by their belief that the conflict between ethics and corporate interests should be the starting point of discussion, not the conclusion; and their awareness and acceptance of the messy world of mixed motives. According to these "realists", the task of business ethicists is not to linger on the differences between altruism and self-interest but to participate with managers in designing new structures, incentive schemes, and decision making processes that are more accommodating of the whole employee. Although perhaps more pragmatic, this approach makes an attempt to bridge the gulf between moral philosophy and science.

As expected, a continuous conversation with business professionals is crucial, for it is a prime tool to identifying their needs and the kinds of responses expected from the discipline of ethics. For example, currently managers would welcome assistance with two newly emerged ethical challenges<sup>19</sup>. First, identifying courses of action in issues - not of right versus wrong - but conflicts of right versus right. This challenge seems a flip side of the more common dilemma of having to choose the lesser of two evils. Second, guidance in those situations where the morally right course is clear and yet competition is pressing for alternative courses of action. Such is often the reality in this "dog-eat-dog" world of business. Business ethics will have to provide a tangible response to these kinds of challenges if it is to contribute to the decision-making processes of business professionals.

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## TOWARDS THE DEFINITION OF A CHRISTIAN BUSINESS ETHICS

The sad failure of business ethics as a practical tool seems to have created a sense of cynicism within society and established an environment of distrust, as I tried to illustrate in the introduction. Outstanding institutions cannot be created in this sea of distrust. Neither can society resolve its moral dilemmas in the face of pervasive cynicism. It must be replaced by a sense of purpose, worth, responsibility and accountability, and hope<sup>20</sup>. In the context of business this implies a renewed effort to create vision, for, according to the great philosopher Solomon, "where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained"<sup>21</sup>. Furthermore it suggests strong leadership based upon a consistent application of moral values. Interestingly enough, these guiding principles for good business behaviour are essentially Christian. Of course, one could argue that morality preceded Christianity and reverse the statement. Such criticism is really quite trivial and does not alter the critical observation that morality applied to business decision making lies at the heart of Christianity.

The question that must follow from this reasoning is whether business ethics and Christian business ethics are identical. Let me restate the problem using C. S. Lewis' words:

If no set of moral ideas were truer or better than any other, there would be no sense in preferring civilised morality to savage morality, or Christian morality to Nazi morality<sup>22</sup>.

We must be able to differentiate between different ways of moral reasoning. Christians need to articulate a unique set of moral values - based on their unique world view - if they are to differentiate between Christian business ethics and business ethics.

We can take a number of approaches to defining the Christian distinctive. One such approach is rooted in Karl Barth's writings on ethics. Personally I favour a second approach for its simplicity, in particular as it applies to business conduct. A Christian perspective on business ethics incorporates the principles underlying traditional business ethics but its philosophy extends beyond the boundaries of the non-Christian approach. This is best demonstrated with an illustration borrowed from C. S. Lewis<sup>23</sup>.

Think of us as a fleet of ships sailing in formation. The voyage will be a success only if, in the first place, the ships do not collide and get in one another's way; and, secondly, if each ship is seaworthy and has her engines in good order. As a matter of fact, you cannot have either of these two things without the other. If the ships keep on having collisions they will not remain seaworthy very long. On the other hand, if their steering gears are out of order they will not be able to avoid collisions....But there is one thing we have not yet taken into account. We have not asked where the fleet is trying to get to....And however well the fleet sailed, its voyage would be a failure if it were meant to reach New York and actually arrived at Calcutta.

Christian morality concerns itself with three things. First, with the fair play and harmony between individuals. Second, with harmonising and balancing the things inside each individual. And third, with the general purpose of human life as a whole. It seems that

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business ethics has traditionally been concerned mostly with the first, touched upon the second, and ignored the latter. In fact, it is often in dealing with the third that the main differences between Christian and atheist morality come out<sup>24</sup>. I must be careful to differentiate between atheistic morality and non-Christian morality. Although the Christian view on the meaning of life influences decision-making, it is not unique in this respect. Let me briefly illustrate this with two examples. The New Age movement has penetrated the field of business and preaches soul-searching and the quest for meaning in life as a departure from traditional business objectives. Consider the following statement made by Tom Chappell, founder, CEO and president of "Tom's of Maine" and author of The Soul of a Business:

One of the most important messages we [New Age] entrepreneurs can bring to the business world at large is that freedom from all constraint is a temporary joy....No matter how much money you have, or how much free time, the question nags, "What's next? How do I find meaning in the rest of my life?"<sup>25</sup>

The second example pertains to an international ethics code, launched in Switzerland on the third weekend of July, 1994, by the Caux Round Table. This code of ethics consists of seven General Principles for Business and aims to set a world standard against which business behaviour can be measured. The principles are drawn from two moral traditions: "human dignity" which refers to the sacredness or value of each person as an end, and the Japanese philosophy of *kyosei*, described by Canon's Kaku as "living and working together for the common good of mankind"<sup>26</sup>. No reference is made to the Christian moral tradition.

Besides the New Age world view and the Japanese *kyosei*, one could even address morality rooted in world views such as Buddhism, Taoism or Islam. Although none of the above are Christian, they do provide a meaning for life, which determines the moral framework within which people, identifying with these world views, make their decisions. The debate on the similarities and differences of different moral frameworks implied in Christian and non-Christian world views is potentially lengthy and very complex and outside of the scope of this paper, despite the interesting questions it raises. For now it suffices to say that Christianity is unique in its belief of eternal life through Christ Jesus, a living, personal Saviour. And this, as Lewis implies, should have significant implications for business decision-making.

It is not surprising that some have referred to business ethics as that which you can get away with within the law. Christians, however, cannot be limited to fair play only. In this respect, Christianity will stretch the boundaries of business ethics. Different beliefs about the universe lead to different behaviour. Different beliefs about issues such as creation, stewardship, love for our neighbour, and eternal life result in changed attitudes. I will elaborate on two of these Christian beliefs.

As a business professional I may argue that a thing cannot be wrong unless it hurts

some other human being<sup>b</sup>. I understand that I must not damage the other ships in the convoy, but honestly think that whatever is done to my own ship is simply my business. The Christian idea of stewardship based upon the Biblical account of creation, however, raises the question of ownership and responsibility. Does it make a difference whether I am the owner of my ship or merely a tenant, responsible to the real landlord? And if I decide that I am but a tenant - according to the principle of stewardship - I shall have many more responsibilities than had I been the owner. As a matter of fact, we as Seventh-day Adventists ought to draw on this idea of stewardship, embedded in the creation story, as it is amplified in our doctrine of the sabbath. The sabbath is important to us as we remember creation and God's promise to restore its fading beauty.

Adventists, however, would not be the first to bring the idea of stewardship to the world of business. Although motivated by different means, the idea of stewardship has already permeated business operations. Voluntary product stewardship, as it is referred to, implies a responsible and long-term guidance of a product, through the product's life<sup>c</sup>. It implies vision and commitment. A good illustration of such stewardship is provided by Apple Computer, Inc. In 1992, Apple implemented programmes that allow customers to return used computer batteries and laser printer toner cartridges to Apple for recycling or disposal. In October of that same year, Apple began shipping its products in brown, unbleached packaging made with recycled materials, thus reducing pollution and creating a larger market for recycled post-consumer waste. Incidentally, this effort won them the well-deserved 1992 Industrial Design Excellence Gold Award from Business Week magazine<sup>27</sup>. Albeit voluntary at present, these efforts may well become the legal standards of tomorrow<sup>28</sup>. Sells takes the idea of voluntary product stewardship even further by speculating that it adds up to competitive advantage over the short term and a greatly improved chance of survival and profit into the future<sup>29</sup>. Thus, stewardship does not necessarily hamper profitability and may even facilitate the pressing need to maximise shareholder wealth.

Besides stewardship, the conviction that every Christian believer is going to be reconciled with Christ on His return and will enter life eternal, should dramatically alter my thinking. As Lewis points out, there are a good many things which would not be worth bothering about if I were going to live only seventy years, but which I had better bother about very seriously if I am going to live forever<sup>30</sup>. The difference between Christian business ethics and business ethics is the unique Christian world view. The Christian interpretation of ownership, forgiveness, sexuality, and sense of purpose. Thus, in brief, can

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<sup>b</sup> I purposely used human being instead of a generic term. Oddly enough, it seems easier for people to behave ethically when a human being is concerned than when a corporation is affected. We should keep in mind, however, that any corporation is run in the interest of some human being(s), whether these be stockholders or employees.

<sup>c</sup> Expressed in business terminology, product stewardship is product responsibility extending through the entire stream of commerce, from raw material extraction to the ultimate disposal of a used-up or worn-out product (Sells 90).

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the unique distinctiveness of Christian morality be accentuated.

#### ON TEACHING A RESPONSIVE AND CHRISTIAN BUSINESS ETHICS

Prior to suggesting guidelines for teaching business ethics we shall pause at some of the obstacles identified in the traditional instruction in the subject<sup>31</sup>. The first is the question of the effectiveness of a single course aimed at equipping future managers with a proficiency in moral reasoning. This obstacle is overcome by the plea for a full integration of an ethics component in the business curriculum, which constitutes the rationale for this essay. The second hurdle refers to difficulties of measurement. Can any impact on managerial behaviour of a business ethics course be measured? Although certain aspects of ethical behaviour can be observed, such as obeying laws and regulations, other facets such as voluntary action and motive cannot be readily assessed. A third difficulty addresses the fundamental question of whether the aim of teaching business ethics is to promote objective moral standards or whether it inevitably promotes or endorses moral relativism. One suggestion is to be both equitable and critical when presenting competing standards of conduct.

The fourth obstacle to the effective teaching of business ethics demands a creative solution. It seems that business ethics texts and cases are frequently not only too philosophical in nature but in their attempt to apply ethical theory they focus on issues faced mostly by senior management. A common question implied in case studies seems to be: Had you been in charge, what would you have done? Yet, what some ethicists fail to consider is the fact that college students need an opportunity to develop moral skills applicable to the very beginning of their career. Moral standards are not easily acquired. Neither do they come instantaneously. They seem to develop over time through a process of reflection and identification. It is thus crucial for students to be aware of issues, demanding moral judgment, that they are likely to encounter in the beginning stages of their career. Naturally it should never be our objective to teach them pre-conditioned responses to certain familiar scenarios, but to help them think for themselves. Case studies should consequently be drawn, not only from upper - and middle management, but from lower management and entrance level positions in particular. Individuals seeking to avoid major crime should begin by vowing to eliminate insignificant violations of trust from their lives<sup>32</sup>. The basic premise is that if one cannot be ethical in small things, how can one act ethically when larger issues are at stake? I will make a practical application of this suggestion in the teaching methodology.

A fifth concern addresses the adaptation process of morally superior college graduates to their working environments. I recently came across the story of a successful executive of a large corporation, speaking quite seriously about his envy for his associates whose "consciences had never developed beyond the Neanderthal stage and who had no difficulty in accepting things as they were"<sup>33</sup>. Surviving within a potentially uncaring, dog-eat-dog environment demands certain skills that must be dealt with in any business programme.

The sixth and final obstacle is significant in the fact that it provides our educational institutions with a window that facilitates the integration of faith and learning. Current teaching has been criticised with the problem of being too much focussed on solving moral

dilemmas as opposed to cultivating moral character. This episodic, issue-oriented, sometimes knee-jerk approach is ending<sup>34</sup>. Skeptics, like Irving Kristol in The Wall Street Journal, assert that ethics education comes too late, for the moral character of most students has been formed and fixed before they take a course in ethics<sup>35</sup>. As Kristol's criticism was made in conjunction with John Shad's gift to the Harvard Business School, and Harvard is well-known for its ethics education at the outset of their MBA programme, we may assume that Kristol is probably addressing the effectiveness of teaching ethics at the graduate level. He, nevertheless, triggered an important question, namely whether our students, typically in their late teens or early twenties, are too old to learn ethics. "No", argue Piper et al vehemently and I concur. A respectable amount of empirical research into the importance of moral education<sup>d</sup> suggests that moral development continues in adulthood. Piper concludes that

our students are not the problem. Almost all of them are eager to talk about purpose and principle, to explore the systematic causes and consequences of unethical behaviour, to study outstanding leaders and organizations as they grapple with ethical dilemmas, and to identify opportunities to contribute to the larger community. The problem rests with the failure of education to encourage and assist students in their search for purpose and worth<sup>36</sup>.

If we then agree that ethics can be taught we must carefully evaluate the available teaching methods. This exercise propels us to be creative. The techniques ought to be developed in view of the following premise. All of our students are already equipped with a moral framework that determines the nature of their actions. However, they may not consciously be aware of the existence of this set of values. It is then our first task to help students articulate and reflect upon their own moral framework and its consistency of application. As for its origin, Ellen White proves helpful in suggesting that

every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator - individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought<sup>37</sup>.

Our portfolio of teaching methods must be able to facilitate learning through a process of

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<sup>d</sup> E. J. Conry and D. R. Nelson, "Business Law and Moral Growth", *American Business Law Journal* 27 (1989) pp: 1-39; J. Gandz and N. Hayes, "Teaching Business Ethics", *Journal of Business Ethics* 7 (1988) pp: 657-669; J. Rest, "Can Ethics Be Taught In Professional Schools? The Psychological Research", *Easier Said Than Done* (Winter 1988) pp: 22-26; J. Rest et al., *Moral Development: Advances in Research and Theory* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1986); M. J. Bebeau, "Can Ethics Be Taught? A Look at the Evidence", *Practicing Dentist* (Spring 1991) pp: 10-15. These studies were noted by Piper et al. pp: 13 and 67

self-reflection. It should also encourage creativity and independence of thought.

I will now suggest a number of viable teaching techniques, some of which are fascinating in their approach. The overriding aim is to facilitate the development of moral character through an ethics that is practical, usable, and essentially Christian; one that fosters courage and compassion and is rooted in the following thought-provoking question:

Have young adults preparing for careers in business management been enabled to act in ways that are not only legal, but just; not only defensible, but compassionate; not only efficient, but consistent with a moral vision that adequately embraces the complex and interdependent claims of contemporary life?<sup>38</sup>

How may we then respond to this worthy challenge? The following suggestions may not be appropriate to every course. Neither will the professor feel equally comfortable with each suggestion. However, through careful selection, each can put together a portfolio of techniques that fits the classroom environment and maximises learning. Following are some of these suggestions:

- **Storytelling<sup>39</sup>**

Harvard professor and child psychiatrist Robert Coles may well have been the first to structure his teaching of ethics around fiction. At the beginning of every course he customarily hands out to his students a list of paperback novels and a collection of short stories. These become the object of reflection and discussion. Coles aims to trigger moral and social inquiry through reading selected works of fiction; "to reach the mind, the heart, the soul of his readers" and prod an emotional as well as an intellectual response<sup>40</sup>. Students can be asked to write a page or two in which they connect their experiences to those of the characters in a novel. Coles' enormous success is demonstrated by the demands placed upon him not only by Harvard College and the Harvard Medical School, but more recently by The Graduate School of Education, the Law School, the Kennedy School of Government, and even the Harvard Business School. It is also highlighted in the following quotation:

Our [business ethics] class became progressively more relaxed and intimate. We drank beer toward the end. We had a dinner. Months after the course was over and the students had left for the world of business, I received letters with ideas for further reading, and, yes, repeated suggestions that the class have a reunion. Individual readers became members of a particular, inquiring community whose bonds still hold at this writing, almost a year later<sup>41</sup>.

Coles compiled the following reading list for a course in business ethics. The works are ordered in the sequence in which they should be read. F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby, an American classic, provides a good starting point for reflection. This is followed by The Last Tycoon by the same author. From Fitzgerald we move to Flannery O'Connor's The Displaced Person; Saul Bellow's Seize the Day; Walker Percy's The Moviegoer and his essay *The Man on the Train*; various stories by John Cheever; William Carlos Williams'

White Mule, In the Money, and The Buildup; and, finally, Tolstoy's classic Master and Man. The point of reading these stories is to stir students and teachers alike to take stock of what they believe in, what they want to get out of life, how they want to live that life. Considering the vast amount of required reading, the fiction and reflective writing assignments could themselves constitute a successful business ethics component. Much depends, of course, on the teacher; on how comfortable s/he is with this approach, his or her open-mindedness, and willingness to expose him or herself to personal moral reflection. We should at all times avoid becoming self-righteous or a scold, using the books as thinly disguised instruments of assertion or condemnation<sup>42</sup>.

- **Role playing**

Role playing can prove an instructive and thought-provoking exercise provided it is well planned and its intentions are clear. Suggested scenarios have appeared in the *Journal of Business Ethics*<sup>43</sup>.

- **Occasional film**

The occasional film can serve as a good illustration of ethical dilemmas in business. Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby" and "The Last Tycoon" have both been turned into films, as well as O'Connor's "The Displaced Person". A good film to show is "Wall Street", based upon the odious life and final eviction of Ivan Boesky aka Gordon Gecko. Films frequently better reflect the cruelty and harshness of the business world as they do not shy away from exposing the dark side of business life, including promiscuity, corruption, conceit, and use of bad language.

- **(Auto)biographies**

The same point can be made - though perhaps not as effective - by using excerpts from (auto)biographies, such as Lee Iacocca's reflection on his experiences while working with Ford<sup>44</sup>. However, too much reading can discourage students and become detrimental to the learning process.

- **Reflective diary**

A more radical tool is the reflective diary, which consists of a literal diary in which students reflect upon their moral development. The purpose of the exercise is not to keep a day-by-day record of activities, but to reflect upon "critical incidents" that require moral judgment, as they occur during the college period. Having undertaken this challenge myself, I can vouch for its effectiveness.

- **Tutorials**

The diary should really be accompanied by regular tutorials in which the professor can serve as a sounding board and, encourage depth of analysis, and, if needed, help students work through difficult questions. The premise is, of course, that the tutor has "trodden the beaten path" before and can provide a glimpse of light in the "dark night of faith".

- **Case studies**

As was argued earlier, our students need to be equipped with moral skills applicable to the start of their career. Traditional case studies are limited in that they focus only on upper management. For some students it will take considerable time to achieve an upper management position, provided this is even their ambition. Would it perhaps be possible to collect one-page, reflective, yet non-judgmental scenarios on ethical issues that our business alumni have come across as part of their day-to-day activities? My experiments with this have so far, though rudimentary, proved instructive, in particular as the cases have been drawn up by former students. It provides the kind of stuff that real life is made of.

- **Mentoring community**

It is crucial that every business department seeks to create a mentoring community; a group that welcomes and affirms the competence and promise of young adult lives, while at the same time offering a vision on behalf of a larger possibility and an experience of acting together in concert with that vision<sup>45</sup>. In practical terms this community can be a class, task force or working group, department, or even a corporation. This would seem to fit our institutions well as Adventist education prides itself in its concern for the moral development of students. More so, it seems, than their secular counterparts, for obvious reasons. Besides, the Adventist teacher's function as a role model has always been regarded as significant.

These teaching suggestions, however promising, do trigger an important question, namely whether our faculty are willing and equipped to teach ethics. The term "equipped" is used here in its broadest form to include such issues as: knowledge base, personality, confidence, willingness to re-examine own value systems, willingness to try alternative teaching methods, ability to create an environment of trust, familiarity with the case study method, perceptions of faculty role and value in the classroom, feelings about status as personal role model, goal oriented, and clear about institutional mission. Due to the limited scope of this essay, I cannot adequately respond to this challenging question. However, I refer the interested reader to an excellent report - based upon empirical research at Harvard - by Piper, Gentile, and Parks<sup>46</sup>.

#### IN CONCLUSION: THE IDEA OF INTEGRATION

From the inception of this essay I have argued that business ethics should no longer be taught as a single course per se, but permeate every course in the business core curriculum. This makes sense from a strategic, societal, and Christian point of view. It should be drafted so as to overcome the obstacles to the traditional teaching of ethics. In the appendix the idea of integration is conceptualised to fit the business core curriculum. Although the model has been based on the Andrews University syllabus, modifications can easily be made to fit any degree programme. I suggest that every business department appoint a faculty member to conceptualise the integration process as it applies to their particular environment and act as a coordinator of its implementation. S/he will also coordinate the process of establishing standards to ensure quality control. It will be necessary to adjust this faculty member's time schedule so that some of it is allocated

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specifically for this endeavor. Naturally, the concept of integration requires the commitment of all business faculty and the college administrators. Yet, as I have demonstrated, it may well be worth the effort.

A final advantage provided by an integrated component, not yet addressed, is that it is very real to life. It demonstrates clearly that ethical dilemmas are not confined to a single discipline but present themselves throughout the entire organisation.

Because the conventional ethos of this society presumes a split between commerce and values, it is essential that the business curriculum be designed so that ethics cannot be perceived as "a matter set apart"<sup>47</sup>.

It thus allows for the build-up of a wholistic world view as opposed to feeding dualistic thinking. Most importantly, however, it allows the character to cultivate over a longer period of time in an environment which is set up for just this purpose.

In conclusion I shall make one final observation. Sale e Pepe's Alfredo sauce not only enriches the fettucine, but has provided the entire restaurant with an enviable reputation and a loyal customer base. It is a truly competitive restaurant.

#### ENDNOTES

1. See, for example: MacIntyre A. 1993. A Short History of Ethics. A History of Moral Philosophy from the Homeric Age to the Twentieth Century. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.
  2. Donaldson J. 1989. Key Issues In Business Ethics. Academic Press. London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers. pp: xix
  3. Donaldson T. & Werhane P. H. 1983. Ethical Issues in Business. A Philosophical Approach. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc. pp: 2
  4. Mahoney J. 1990. Teaching Business Ethics in the UK, Europe and the USA. A Comparative Study. London: Athlone Press. pp: 41
  5. The example is provided by Mahoney and described on page 45 of his work: Teaching Business Ethics in the UK, Europe and the USA. A Comparative Study London: The Athlone Press. The contrast between the United States and Europe is further illustrated by the general shortage of information and material available in Europe, including Britain, and the lack of interest accorded to the teaching of business ethics. This observation is also made by Mahoney pp: 55
  6. Popcorn F. 1992. The Popcorn Report. Faith Popcorn on the Future of Your Company, Your World, Your Life. New York: HarperCollins Publishers. pp: 70
  7. For details on the Manville case, see: Andrews K. R. 1989. Ethics in Practice. Managing the Moral Corporation. Boston: Harvard Business School Press pp: 19-20, or Sells B. March-April 1994. (What Asbestos Taught Me About Managing Risk). Harvard Business Review. pp: 76-90
  8. Popcorn 69
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9. Piper T. R. Gentile M. C. & Parks S. D. 1993. Can Ethics Be Taught? Perspectives, Challenges, and Approaches at Harvard Business School. Boston: Harvard Business School Press. pp: 4
  10. Ibid. 4. Piper quotes from A. Bartlett Giamatti. 1981. The University and the Public Interest. New York: Athenaeum. pp: 10
  11. Ibid. 4
  12. Mahoney 30
  13. Piper T. R. Gentile M. C. & Parks S. D. 6
  14. White, E. G. 1952. Education. Boise: Pacific Press Publishing Association. pp: 57
  15. This observation and the criticisms that follow have been provided by: Stark A. May/June 1993. (What's the Matter with Business Ethics?) Harvard Business Review: 38-48. pp: 44
  16. Ibid. 44
  17. Quotation is taken from Stark 44
  18. Ibid. 44
  19. Ibid. 46
  20. Piper T. R. Gentile M. C. & Parks S. D. 3
  21. Proverbs 29: 18a (New American Standard Bible) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
  22. Lewis C. S. 1952. Mere Christianity. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company. pp: 25
  23. This story and the line of reasoning that follows is not entirely my own, but has been inspired by C. S. Lewis in Mere Christianity pp: 69-87
  24. Ibid. 73. C. S. Lewis, however, uses the term "non-Christian" instead of "atheist".
  25. Nichols 60
  26. Some details on the international ethics code are found in the management section of The Financial Times, July 22, 1994. The complete code can be obtained from Caux Round Table Secretariat (fax: UK-71-361-7209).
  27. Apple Computer, Inc. 1992. Annual Report
  28. Sells 90
  29. Ibid. 90
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30. Ibid. 73
  31. The first four obstacles are described in: Mahoney, pp: 38. The fifth is entirely my responsibility. The sixth was first brought to my attention in a personal interview with Dr. Arthur Holmes, Professor Emeritus at Wheaton College, Illinois.
  32. Edmonds C. D. April 1994. (The Missing Link in Ethical Training Programs). Management Accounting: 75
  33. Carr A. Z. (Can an Executive Afford a Conscience?) Article originally appeared in the Harvard Business Review and has been reprinted in: Andrews K. R. 1989. Ethics in Practice. Managing the Moral Corporation. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press. pp:26-35
  34. Freeman R. E. 1991. Business Ethics. The State of the Art. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp: 7
  35. Ibid. 68
  36. Piper, Gentile & Parks 148-9
  37. White E. G. 17
  38. Piper T. R. Gentile M. C. & Parks S. D. 49
  39. An inspiring discussion on storytelling as a means to facilitate ethics education is found in: Coles R. (Storytellers' Ethics). Harvard Business Review. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press. This article has been reprinted in: Andrews. pp: 77-84
  40. Ibid. 78
  41. Ibid. 84
  42. Ibid. 83
  43. See, for example, a recent publication by Brown K. M. (Using Role Play to Integrate Ethics into the Business Curriculum. A Financial Management Example) Journal of Business Ethics 13 Kluwer Academic Publishers pp: 105-110
  44. See: Iacocca L. 1984 Iacocca: An Autobiography New York: Bantam Books
  45. Piper T. R. Gentile M. C. & Parks S. D. 51
  46. For a good discussion on barriers to participation of the faculty in the integration of ethics into the business curriculum, see The Barriers Report: Piper T. R. Gentile M. C. & Parks S. D. 79-100. Piper et al also address the perception that a tightly packed curriculum leaves little room for adding ethical material and conclude that this is frequently but a red herring.
  47. Ibid. 55
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## APPENDIX: INTEGRATION OF ETHICS INTO THE BUSINESS CORE CURRICULUM

Based on suggestions by Piper et al (96) and Mahoney (32) applied to A.U. curriculum

ACCT111-3	Fundamental Accounting Principles	Confidentiality Misstating information in financial reporting Fraud Importance of control systems
ECON225-6	Principles of Macro/Micro Economics	Equitable distribution of wealth and opportunity
INSY118	Introduction to Business Information Processing	Impact of expert systems on individual responsibility and opportunity Rights of access to technology
BSAD265	International Environment of Business	Political repression or freedom Jurisprudence Fair vs. unfair competition: cultural perspectives Treatment of Lesser Developed Countries; exploitation; stereotyping Safety standards for overseas operations
INSY305	Management Information Systems	Downsizing: eliminating worker positions through technology Unnatural monopolies through technology Ethics and public policy in information technology
BSAD341	Business Law 1	Relationship of law and ethics Corporate responsibility Moral force of promises
BSAD345	Legal and Social Environment of Business	Issues of corruption and public trust in public policy Ethnocentrism
BSAD355	Management & Organisation	Layoffs and firings; labour unions Discrimination Employee privacy and confidentiality: testing; grievances; whistleblowing Rights of workers and management Executive compensation Honesty in corporate communications Manipulation of information and the media

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manipulating vs. motivating</li> <li>Enforcing of ethical standards</li> <li>Resolving conflicts between employee's value system and that of organisation</li> <li>Creating an equitable, empowering corporate culture for all employees</li> <li>Inside information and insider trading</li> <li>Financial reporting</li> </ul>
BSAD387	Business Finance	
BSAD494	Business Strategy & Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The question of for whom the firm is run</li> <li>Gathering and using competitive information</li> <li>Prioritising criteria used in evaluating competitive strategy</li> <li>Collusion in markets</li> <li>Plant closings and the firm's responsibility to the community</li> <li>Fair vs. unfair competition</li> <li>Stakeholder management</li> <li>Firm's role in politics</li> <li>Corporate philanthropy</li> </ul>
BSAD475	Operations Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Layoffs and firing as a standard operating procedure in managing expenses</li> <li>Impact of technology on employees</li> <li>Responsibility for quality and worker's safety</li> <li>Decision criteria for plant investment choices</li> </ul>
MKTG310	Principles of Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing cultural, gender, and other differences among the work force</li> <li>Decisions to market products of questionable safety or value to the consumer</li> <li>Dual loyalties when competitors cooperate</li> <li>Product design</li> <li>Pricing: questions of fairness</li> <li>Honesty in internal and external communications</li> <li>Responsibilities to distributors</li> <li>Coercive or deceptive sales tactics</li> </ul>