

# Lesson 1



## ***Ethical Decision Making***

***“All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men (and women) to do nothing.”***

Edmund Burke, 18<sup>th</sup> Century English Philosopher

*A lecture series on ethics by Professor Bonnie Black*

# IN NEWS

**“Workers steal more from office?  
Employee Theft 46%, 11% higher  
than Shoplifting”**

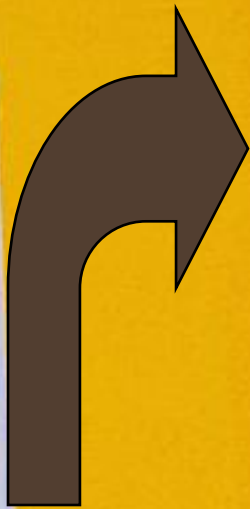
**“Average American  
lies 13 times a day.”**

**“Is cheating ever okay?  
Sometimes it is excused;  
teachers set up a need to  
cheat by making tests too  
hard or not explaining things.”**

SOURCE: Arizona Republic and Parade Magazine, 2000-1

# The Cheating Justification

***“Everyone cheats. I need to so I am not disadvantaged.”***



- 74% H. S. students admit they've cheated.
- 90% of college students say they would lie to increase chances of getting job.
- 50% of resumes contain lies.

Source: Parade Magazine 3-28-04

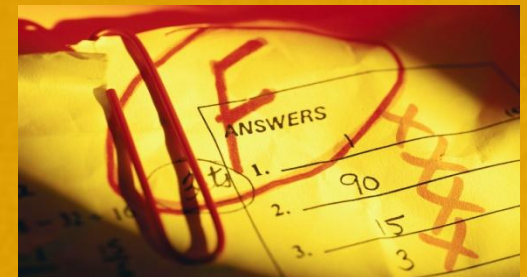
# The Cheating Nation

- Based on approx. 30,000 high school students:
  - 64% cheated on exam in last year
  - 30% stole from a store
  - 23% stole from a parent or relative
  - 36% used the internet to plagiarize

**Only 2% got caught and only half punished!**

Source: Parade Magazine 10-15-06  
AZ Republic 12-1-08, pg. A3

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# Despite these responses.....

- 93% said they were satisfied with their personal ethics and character
- 77% affirmed that “when it comes to doing what is right, I am better than most people I know.”



Source: AZ Republic, “More kids say they cheat,” 12-1-08, pg. A3



# Lying



**“Study: Nearly half of job applicants lied on resumes”  
(Source: Tribune Headline)**

- #1 area misrepresented? **# Yrs on Job**
- #2? **Accomplishments**
- #3? **Size of Organization**
- #4 **Degree**

**Is exaggeration or embellishment lying?**





# Society Tolerates Unethical Behavior

- **CASE:**

- Teacher in Kansas City, Kansas flunked 28 high school sophomores for plagiarizing their semester reports.
- Parents complained.
- School board demanded teacher go “easy” on cheating students and change grade.
- Teacher resigns.

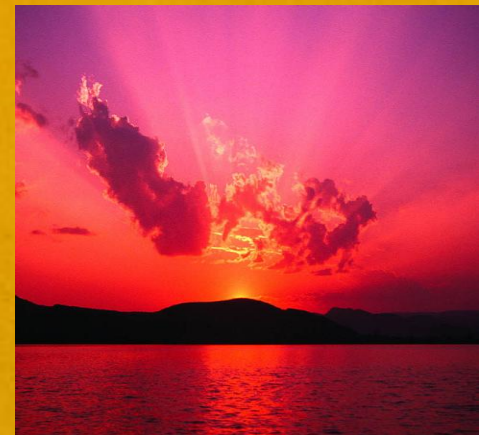
<http://www.sabri.org/CheatWave.htm>

Source: 2-14-02 AZ Republic



# Why Is It Important To Be Ethical?

- Moral behavior is a “**duty**” of civilized society.
- Develops **strength** and courage to resist.
- Personal **honor** and integrity is a measure of human worth.
- **Quality** of life - character.



# Good Character

- **Good Principles - Guides Actions**
- **Conscience – Internalized Principles**
- **Moral Courage – Acts on Them**
- **Moral Consistency – Habit**



# Why Study Ethics?

- Professional status
  - What is a Professional?
- Gain personal responsibility
- Awareness of ethical consequences/issues
- Better decisions
- Expand “wholesight” – use of heart and mind
- Acquire analytical skills
  - What is critical thinking?



# What is Critical Thinking?

- Evaluate viewpoints, facts and behavior objectively.
- Assess information or argument to determine merit.
- Determine value of statement, position or behavior.



# Think About It!



**Twenty years ago, a plane was flying at 20,000 feet over Germany. If you will recall, Germany at the time was politically divided into West Germany and East Germany. During the flight, TWO of the engines fail. The pilot, realizing that the last remaining engine is also failing, decides on a crash landing procedure. Unfortunately, the engine fails before he has time and the plane crashes smack in the middle of “no man’s land” between East Germany and West Germany. Where would you bury the survivors? East Germany or West Germany or “no man’s land?”**



# The Way To Proper Behavior

**Critical Thinking + Ethics**

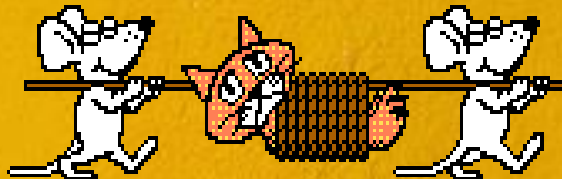
**= Proper Behavior**





# Limitations of Ethical Judgment

- Must have “act”
- Must have free will
- Intent/motive important
- Behavior must significantly affect others
  - Victimless Crimes?
- Specific to human beings



# MORALS

- Good conduct
- How they should behave
  - **Permissible behavior**
- Knows difference between right and wrong



# Being Realistic:

## Moral Relativism

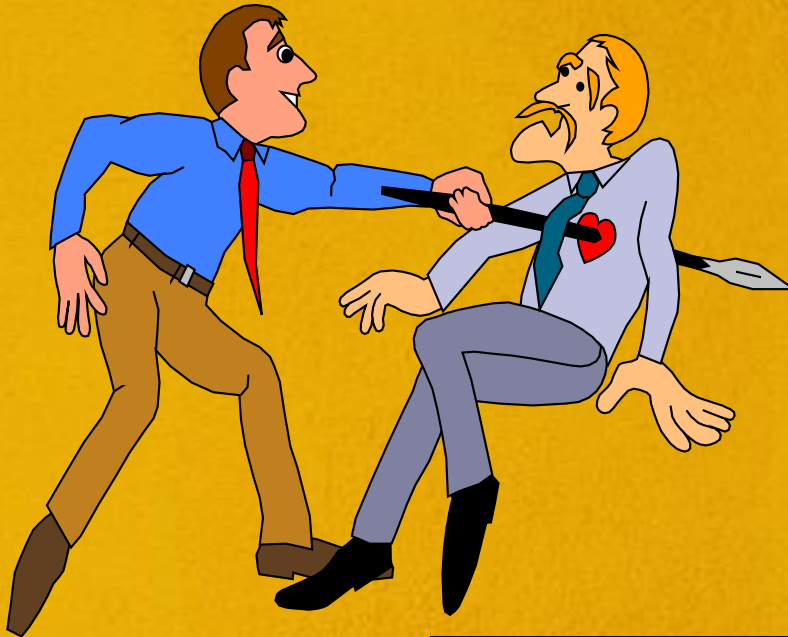


**Absolutist**

- Depends on Situation
- No Universal Standards
- Justifies the Way People Behave



# ETHICS



- What constitutes good and bad behavior?
- Standards

**How do we know something is good or bad?**

# VALUES

- Elements of worth/importance
- A belief
- Values are:
  - individual
  - form value systems
  - shape behavior
  - basis of moral standards



# Values Shape Decisions

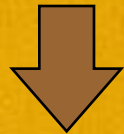
CULTURE/EXPERIENCES



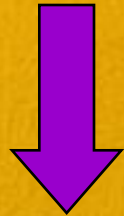
VALUE SYSTEM



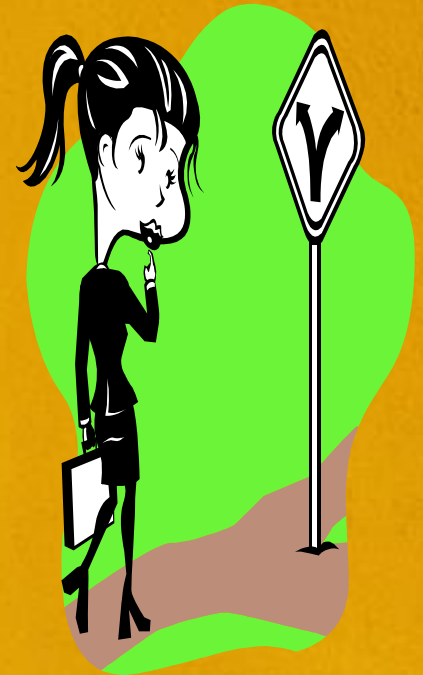
MORAL BELIEFS



JUDGMENT



**DECISIONS**





# Choosing To Be Ethical

- **Religious Influences**
- **It is Right-Conscience**
- **Self-Interest**
  - Earn respect
  - Happiness
  - Avoid sanctions, punishment, loss
  - Get along with others
  - Gain



# Questions Remain About Morality

- Belief it is wrong doesn't stop us from doing it!
- Why people are immoral or criminal is still unclear!



Evil is a mystery!

# Why is Ethics Important to C.J. Professionals?



- Unique position to protect and violate rights of citizens
- Powerful
- Position of public trust

**Who are the key players?**



# Legislators

- Define illegal behavior and set punishment
- Should laws impose morality?

**LAWS**

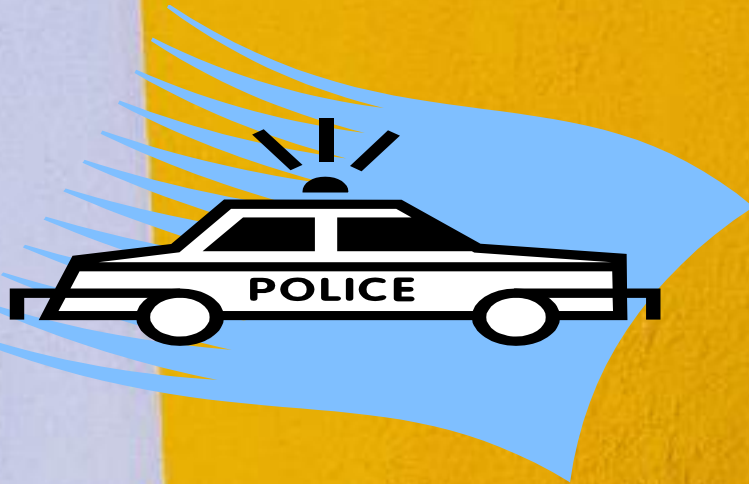
- Abortion
- Gambling
- **Cohabitation\***
- Statutory Rape
- **Sodomy\***
- Prostitution
- **Prohibition\***
- **Lewd and Lascivious Acts\*** (Bestiality added 2006)

**Blue Laws** = regulates public and private conduct on Sunday

*\*No longer criminal*

# Police Officer

- Deprive freedom
- Who to investigate
- When to impose laws

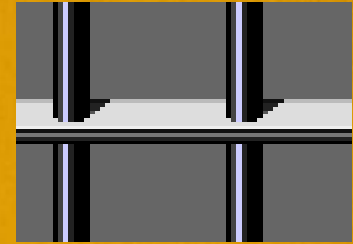


# Prosecutor

- Most powerful--less public scrutiny
- What, how and who to charge



# Corrections



- **Probation/Parole**

- Presentence
- Violations
- Individual freedoms



- **Prison/Jails**

- Punishment
- Privileges
- Facility
- Daily life and health of inmate



# Common Elements

## 1. Discretion

## 2. Duty To Enforce Law

- Commitment



## 3. Protect Constitution

- Due process:  
Controls Government

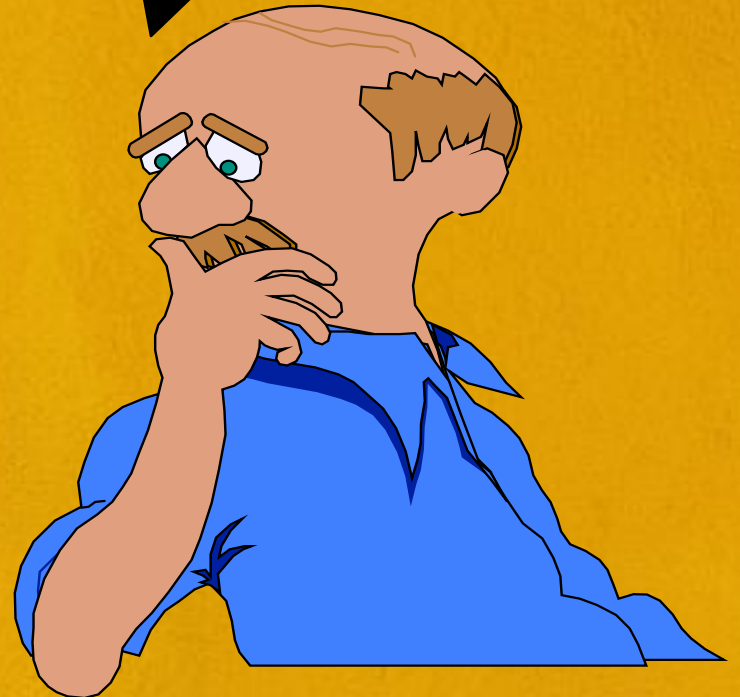
- Fair = Equality

## 4. Public Servants

- Public trust

- Held to higher standard

# What Is Discretion?



# Definition Of Discretion

- Latitude, authority or freedom to make a decision
- Principal Ingredients Of Discretion
  1. facts
  2. values
  3. influences
- “Selective enforcement/prosecution”
- Limit it or increase it?







# What Factors Influence Police Discretion?



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# Factors Influencing Discretion

- Nature of crime
- Departmental policies
- Relationship between victim and offender
- Amount of evidence
- Available alternatives in community
- Way summoned to scene (dispatch, witnesses, presence of crowd)
- Victim's status/cooperation
- Characteristics of suspect
- Poverty/environment
- Background of officer
- Officer's mood/stressors
- Disagree with law
- Peer influences



# Conclusion

- Is our ethical responsibility broader than our own behavior?
- Does society tolerate and justify unethical behavior yet expect it?
- Will developing critical thinking skills promote ethical decision making?



## ***Lesson 1 Tool Box***

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