



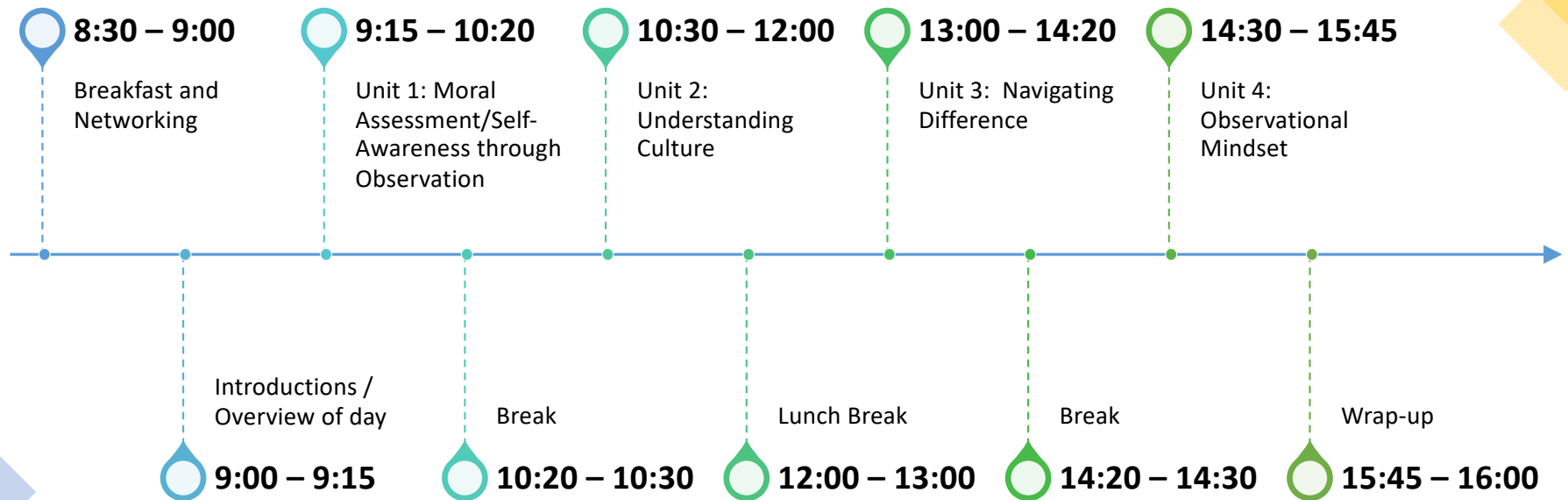
Ethics, Culture, and Leadership

HDO Professional Seminar



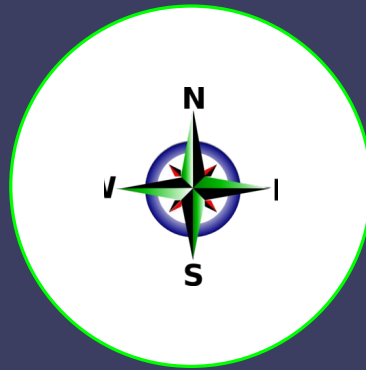
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Schedule for the Day



Seminar Objectives





Unit 1

Moral Assessment/Self-Awareness

Exercise: Moral Self-Awareness

This activity explores a thought experiment called The Trolley Problem

There are no right or wrong answers

Just give the answer that makes the most sense to you

Don't think too much!



Results

- Moral Assessment
 - The lower the score, the more you lean towards relativism
 - The higher the score, the more you lean towards absolutism/foundationalism
- Train Exercise
 - $< .5$ = you lean towards relativism; a score of 0 means you are extremely consistent
 - $> .5$ = you lean towards absolutism; a score of 1 means you are extremely consistent
 - A score of .5 means you are confused...



Compare

- How do your scores from the first and second exercises compare?
- Are you consistent?
- Inconsistent?
- Confused?

A Matter of Truth

- Purpose of the exercise
 - To think about how we make moral decisions
 - To think about the nature of moral truth
- How do we determine right and wrong?
- What is the basis for stating that this particular action is right and another is wrong?
- Is truth objective or subjective?
 - Absolute or relative?



How do we find truth?

- Intuition (treated as objective)
 - We hold these truths to be self evident...
- Divine proclamation (treated as objective)
 - Thou shalt not kill...
- Social Constructivism (subjective)
 - Truth is generated by social processes, as such it's historically and culturally contingent
 - Knowledge is constructed, therefore it does not reflect or represent an external or transcendent reality
- Consensus (subjective)
 - Truth is whatever is agreed upon by a particular group



Approaches to Moral Reasoning

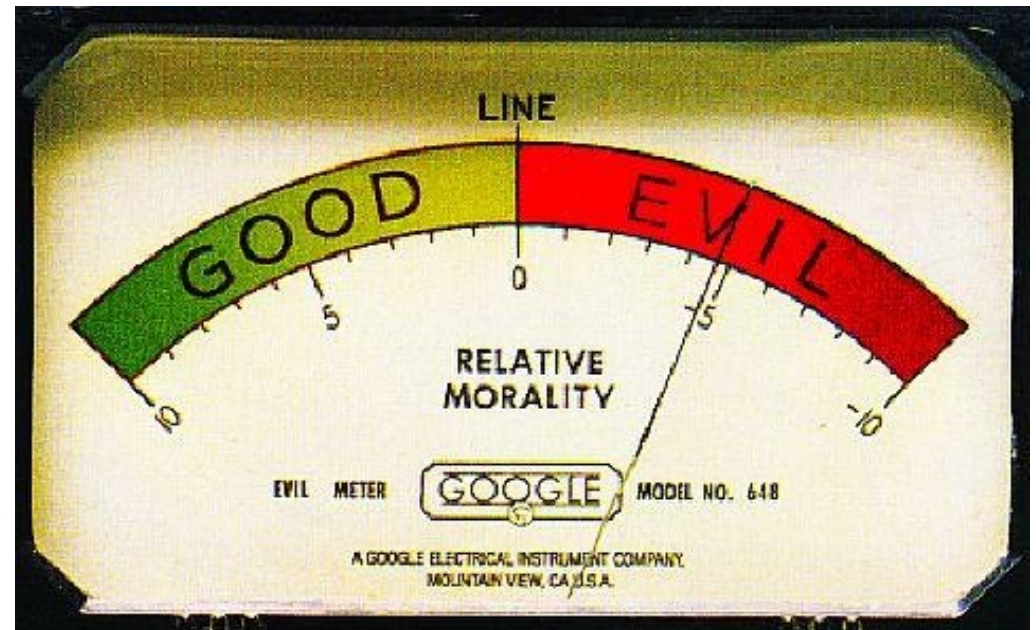
- Deontological—theories of ethics based on the inherent rightness or wrongness of an action, despite consequences (duty)
 - Natural law—self-evident truths about right and wrong
 - Divine command
 - Ideas about intrinsic good, duty, motives
 - Ends do not justify means
- Consequentialist—theories of ethics that focus on the outcome or consequences of an action
 - Utilitarianism—moral value of an act is determined by its utility or its ability to generate happiness or pleasure, which is equated with the good
 - Attempts to emphasize greatest good for greatest number
 - Ends justify the means

Virtue Ethics

- Third approach emphasizes virtues, or moral character, in contrast to the approach that emphasizes duties/rules or consequences
- A virtue is an excellent trait of character
 - Honesty, benevolence, kindness, etc.
 - A deep disposition, well entrenched in its possessor. Not a habit, such as being a coffee drinker. To possess a virtue is to be a certain sort of person with a certain complex mindset.
 - Wholehearted acceptance of a distinctive range of considerations as reasons for action.
 - An honest person isn't one who, for example, practices honest dealing and does not cheat if those actions are done merely because the agent thinks that honesty is the best policy, or because they fear being caught
 - Must recognize that to do otherwise would be dishonest as the reason—I don't do X because X is not the action of an honest person
- Virtues are recognized in the other approaches
 - Consequentialists define virtues as traits that yield good consequences
 - Deontologists define them as traits possessed by those who reliably fulfil their duties
 - Main difference: Virtue ethicists see virtues as not needing definition in terms of something else like consequences or duty

Perspectives

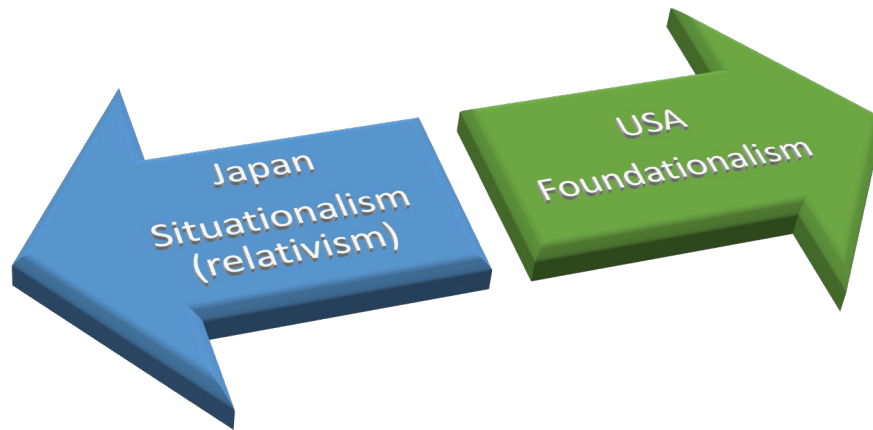
- Deontological and virtue-based approaches lean toward foundationalism (absolutes)
- Consequentialism leans toward relativism



Moral Behavior

- Most people employ a combination of consequentialist and deontological approaches to moral reasoning
- Few are entirely consistent in the way they make moral decisions
- Context is important
- Different societies also tend to construct moral values and legal systems leaning in one or the other direction





Culture and Moral Behavior

- Culture (religion, political ideology, etc.) plays a key role in how people balance consequentialist and foundationalist approaches
- Some cultures emphasize an appeal to absolutes like natural law or divine command
 - Theocracies
- Others emphasize situation and context
- Rare that a society emphasizes only one of these



The Suicidal Agricultural Minister


- Toshikatsu Matsuoka
- In 2007, was to face the National Diet after a scandal involving misuse of government funds
- Committed suicide hours before he was to appear
- Left a note explaining that his wife could tell them whatever they wanted to know
- Was he morally wrong to do this? Is suicide morally wrong?
- The answer in Japan is: “It depends.”



BREAK TIME!

Back at 10:30

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A stylized, pixelated illustration of Daffy Duck from the Looney Tunes. He is depicted in a dynamic, forward-leaning pose, wearing his signature orange suit and bow tie. His large, white eyes are wide open, and his beak is slightly agape. The background is a solid black, which makes the character stand out. The overall aesthetic is reminiscent of early digital art or video game sprites.



Unit 2

Understanding Culture

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Culture

- Do other animals have culture?
- Dogs understand human language and also gestures, but do they have culture?
- Some other animals use tools
 - Chimpanzees
 - Otters
 - Wolves
- No other animal appears to use culture as exclusively as humans as a way of dealing with their environment



What's Culture? Standard Definition

- Culture is a shared set of beliefs, customs, and ideas that are learned and which unify people into coherent and identifiable groups
- Culture represents a form of collective or social memory that links past, present, and future
- This formulation represents culture as fairly deterministic in shaping human behavior within a particular—bounded—context: The boundaries are usually arbitrary
- In organizational studies culture is often defined as “the way we do things around here” and is connected to value and mission statements—tends to view culture as rather top down and confined to the context of a named organization



Better Definition

- People not only are held together, but may be divided by their customs and beliefs, even when they ostensibly belong to the same culture
- Rather than a deterministic “thing” culture is better understood as a process by which people continually create, accept, contest and reinvent the customs, beliefs, and ideas that they use—collectively, individually, and often strategically—to characterize their surroundings
- Boundaries shift, are highly permeable, and often meaningless
- In short, culture is in a constant state of flux



Choctaw Concepts of Senility

Mrs. Maytuby

Chronological Age: 84

Age Cohort Status: Elder

Ethnographer

- J. Neil Henderson, University of Minnesota



Symptoms



- BIOMEDICAL MODEL

- Cognitive Status:
SEVERELY IMPAIRED
- Mini Mental State Exam
= 17 (25 – 30 = normal)
- Behavioral Agitation
- Hallucinations

- CHOCTAW MODEL

- Variable Memory Loss
- Unusually Rude Behavior
- Times of Normal Thought and Behavior



- Biomedical
 - Cognitive Assessment
 - Medical Workup
 - Functional Status Assessment

Assessment

- Choctaw
 - Careful listening for former self
 - Evaluation of behavior for secular vs. supernatural content



Interpretation

- BIOMEDICAL

- Usual analysis of cognitive assessments
- Usual analysis of medical assessments
- Usual analysis of functional status assessment



- Choctaw

- Decision tree for secular vs. indigenous behaviors
 - “white man’s” vs. Indian symptoms
- Awareness that she is seeing into the “other side”



Action

- BIOMEDICAL
 - Prescribe drugs
 - Prescribe therapies
 - Reassess



- Choctaw
 - Respond to physical needs
 - Do care giving tasks
 - Listen/discuss window into “the other side”
 - Make decisions based upon her needs



Outcome

- Biomedical
 - Optimal functioning of cognitive, medical and ADLs



- Choctaw
 - Honored Elder
 - Honored household
 - Confirmation of “the other side”
 - Confirmation of other aspects of indigenous non-white culture



Mrs. Maytuby Case

- CULTURAL
 - Etiology includes supernatural interpretation of “hallucinatory” symptoms
 - Rather than a source of stigma or symptom of physiological decline, dementia is viewed in a fairly positive light
 - She is special for having this experience and ability, as is her family
 - Provides empirical evidence for the existence of the other side

Decisions

- How would you approach provision of care for Mrs. Maytuby in an ethical way?
 - Do you prioritize the biomedical perspective? The Choctaw perspective?
 - How do you decide on how to approach this issue? What are the potential consequences of your decision?



Autonomy and Self Concepts



“Western” view of self as *distinct*

Each person is a separate entity
We are connected through social relationships,
but these do not define who we are
Psychological notion of a core person that
remains largely unchanged over the life course



“Eastern” views of self as *social*

The person is generated through social
interaction
No action or decision is truly independent
Individuals exist, but are embedded in social
contexts that constantly shape them
The individual self is fluid and changes over time



Theories of Autonomy

- Western theories of autonomy identify two conditions as being fundamental to autonomy:
 - Liberty—freedom from controlling influence
 - Agency—the ability to execute intentional acts
- Many philosophers and ethicists view this as universal
 - Japanese notions of autonomy do not necessarily align with the above

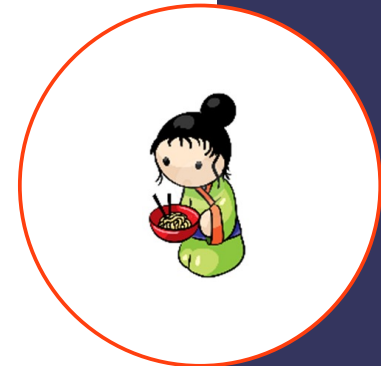
Japanese Self

- Socially embedded in rings of relationships
 - One's position relative to others in the rings changes over time
 - The way one acts in relation to others is determined by how one is socially situated
 - Pattern is evident in wide range of behaviors, including language usage
 - Levels of formality



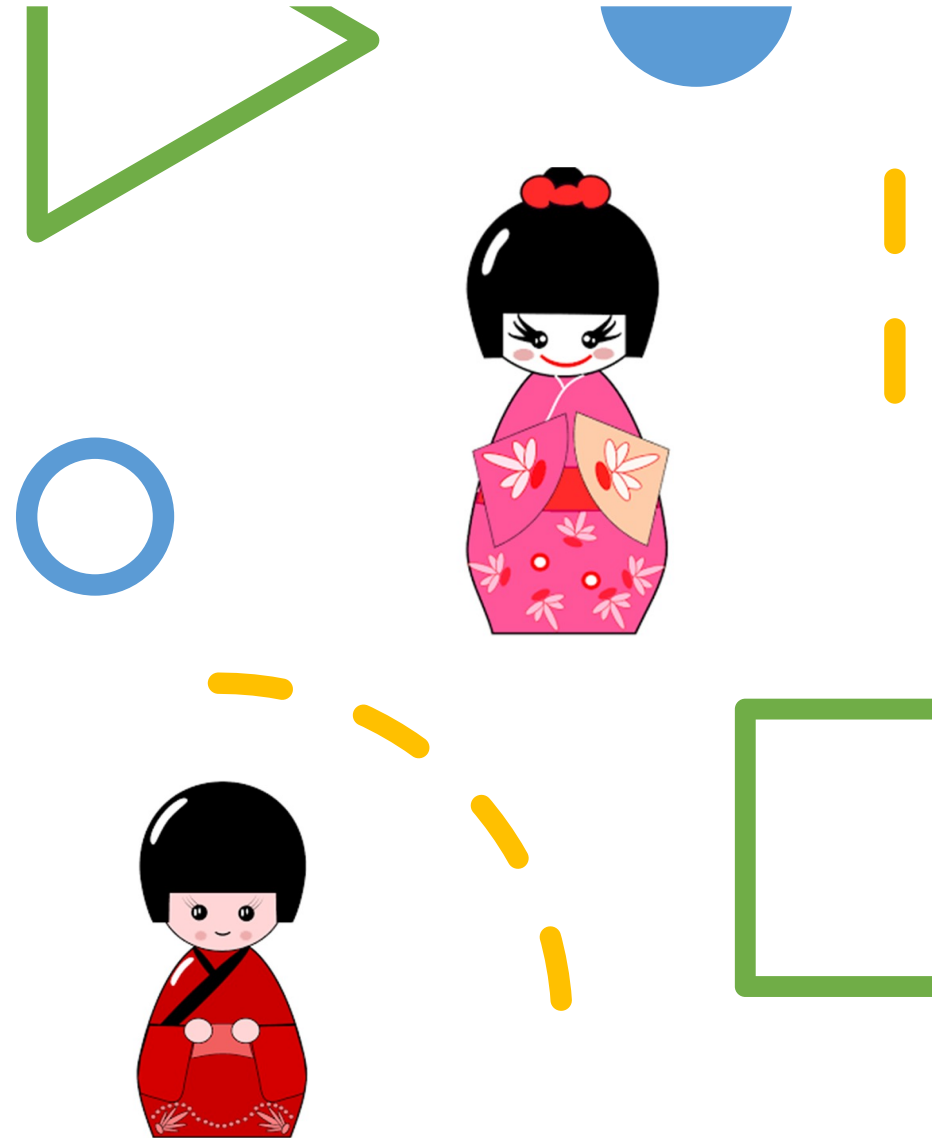
Japanese Autonomy

- Base unit of society is not the individual, but the family
- Decisions are usually family-based, rather than individually-based
 - Changes since WWII have augmented this approach with an individual-centered approach as well
 - Family here may not mean the nuclear family as we think of it in the US
 - May involve extended kin relationships and networks, as well



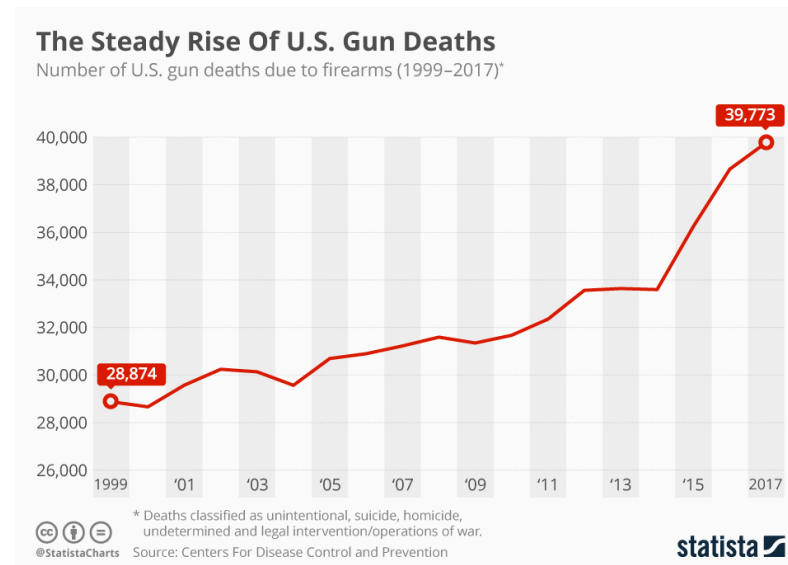
Japanese Ethics

- Concept of autonomy in Japan shapes how people think about right and wrong
 - The individual's moral behavior is closely tied to social context, because the individual—as an autonomous agent—is a social agent
- Ethics are more of an aesthetic category than a strictly moral category
- Right and wrong are situational and, thus, quite flexible



Gun Violence in US

- About 40,000 gun-related deaths annually around half of which suicides
- Significant increase since roughly 2005 in both suicides and homicides involving guns
- 85,000 more shot and injured annually
- About 310 people shot daily, of which 1/3 die
- As of 2019, US had second highest number of gun-related deaths among industrial countries
 - Japan has virtually no gun-related deaths at under 100/year



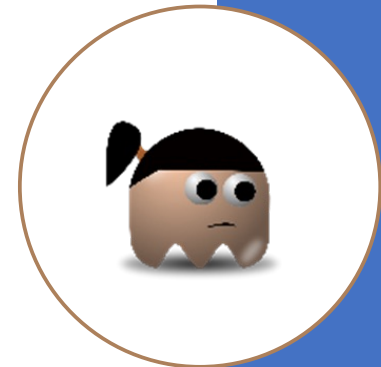


Why the difference?

- The two societies react quite differently to idea of gun ownership, leading to different policies and outcomes
- Japan tends to have positive concept of freedom
 - Autonomy/freedom means being supported by community and working collectively for common good
- US tends to have negative concept of freedom
 - Autonomy/freedom means being left alone as an individual and being self-reliant

Autonomy, Ethics, Leadership

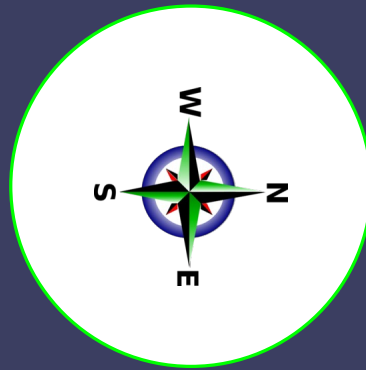
- Individuals who have the capacity of self-governance have the right to make choices about their lives
 - They decide on whom to marry, where to live, what sort of job to have
 - But there are always limits
 - **Cultural patterns often define those limits and even how people think about the nature and meaning of autonomy**
- Leadership involves use of **power** to shape how people exercise individual autonomy
 1. Ethical leaders do this by exercising power in ways that align with prevailing (in society) ideas about right and wrong
 2. Ethical leaders recognize differences in attitudes about autonomy that may influence how people behave and make decisions
 3. Ethical leaders recognize that culture significantly influences how individuals think about autonomy, as well as how they think about decision-making, power, and authority



LUNCH!

Back at 13:00





Unit 3

Observational Mindset

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Culture Activity



- Mission statement of UT Austin
 - The mission of The University of Texas at Austin is to achieve excellence in the interrelated areas of undergraduate education, graduate education, research and public service. The university provides superior and comprehensive educational opportunities at the baccalaureate through doctoral and special professional educational levels.
 - The university contributes to the advancement of society through research, creative activity, scholarly inquiry and the development and dissemination of new knowledge, including the commercialization of University discoveries. The university preserves and promotes the arts, benefits the state's economy, serves the citizens through public programs and provides other public service.
- Core Purpose
 - To transform lives for the benefit of society.
- Core Values
 - Learning — A caring community, all of us students, helping one another grow.
 - Discovery — Expanding knowledge and human understanding.
 - Freedom — To seek the truth and express it.
 - Leadership — The will to excel with integrity and the spirit that nothing is impossible.
 - Individual Opportunity — Many options, diverse people and ideas, one university.
 - Responsibility — To serve as a catalyst for positive change in Texas and beyond.

Critical Examination

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of this statement?
- What sorts of cultural values do you think might be overtly or covertly contained in the statement?
- What are the moral assumptions evident in the statement?
- Do you think it is inclusive?



What did facilities managers think?

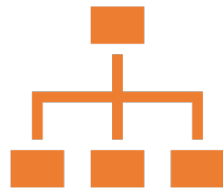
- Mission of the university as advancing “society through research, creative activity, scholarly inquiry and the development and dissemination of new knowledge” was perceived as failing to include or reflect the importance of staff in keeping the institution operating and functioning to achieve those ends.
- Who do you think wrote the statement?



Interpretation

- Discovery—defined as “expanding knowledge and human understanding”—is listed as a core value.
- I’m convinced everyone connected to the university is engaged in supporting that value.
- If staff don’t believe their interests are represented in the mission statement of the organization, in what ways might they interpret a core value of discovery?
- It might be seen as a value that excludes those members of the academic community who are not engaged directly in academic work like teaching and research.
- Interpretation is key:
- The word “diversity” might be seen as aspirational for one group in an organization while being seen as symbolic of blindness to racial or gender inequalities by another group.
- Words like “integrity” can have variable meanings across individuals in an organization.
 - Does it mean that we act in accordance with organizational rules and policies?
 - Do we prioritize our personal religious beliefs over organizational aims and principles?
 - Do we place the needs of the customer over the necessity to earn business and turn away customers who might benefit from a different company’s products?

Do Organizations Have Culture?

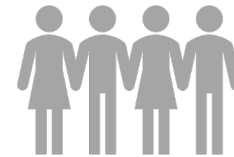


Depends on how you think of it

Organizations have rules, hierarchies, expected patterns of behavior that get passed on

Organizations often formally present value and mission statements

Organizations have paradigms of expected behaviors, such as appropriate attire



Problems

People contest professed organizational values and can be divided by those values

Organizations themselves are embedded in cultural contexts

In many ways they are much more reflections of a larger cultural environment than representing cultural contexts in and of themselves

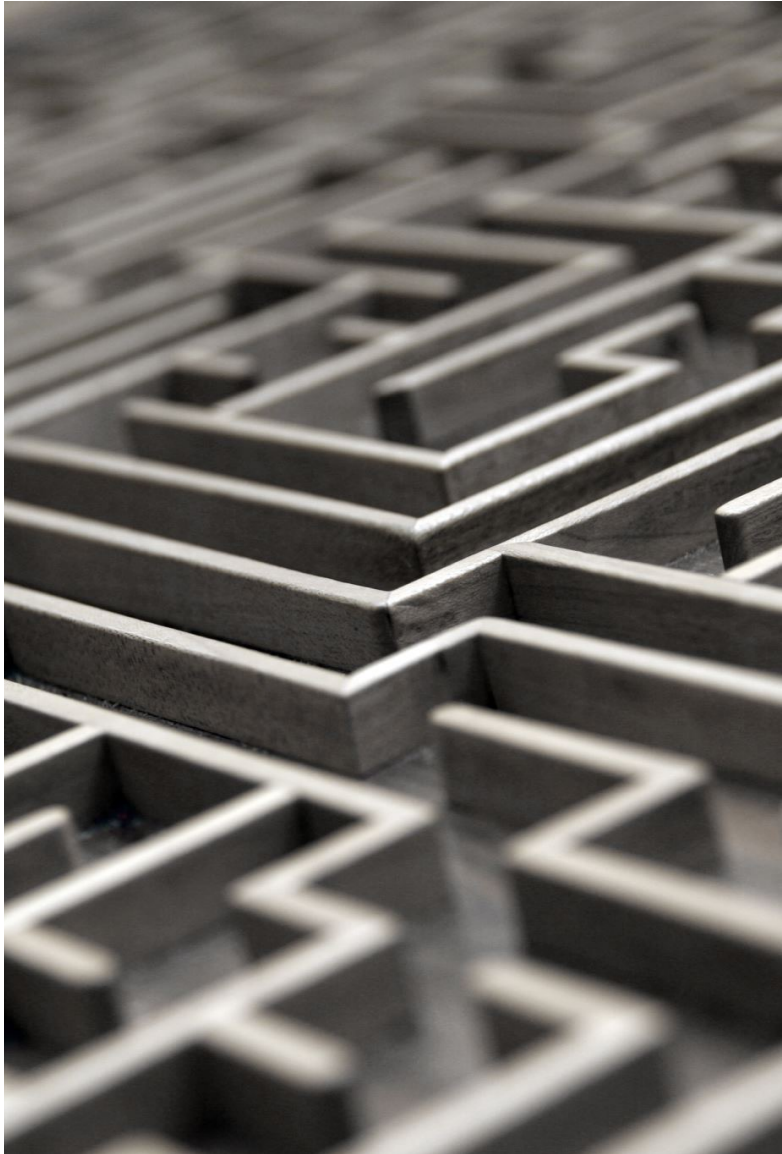
Influence of Culture

- We don't think much about the cultural information expressed in things we do
 - We think of what we do as being natural
- When you put your hand out to shake with a client, you are putting culture into action
 - Conveying a set of ideas about connecting with others that, in the case of a handshake, emphasize human touch as a way to strengthen relationships
- We shake hands without even thinking about it or thinking about the meanings the action conveys



Emic and Etic Perspectives



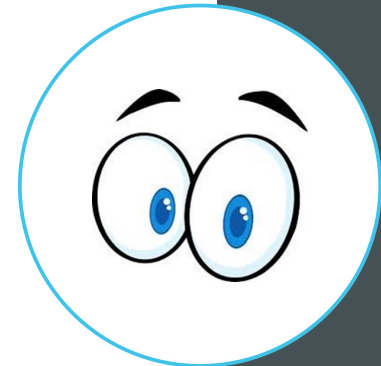


Observational Mindset

- Easy to become annoyed with the behaviors of others that seem very different from what we perceive as natural and normal
 - Awareness of this gives us a basis for responding to cultural differences in a rational way
- Anthropologists try to understand other cultures by learning about and exploring what we call the emic perspective
 - Native's point of view
 - To get at the emic perspective, you need to focus on listening and observing
- When confronted with conflict, try to find an underlying logic that shapes attitudes and behaviors of those involved—including yourself
- Is what I'm observing irrational?
 - Probably not—there is likely to be an underlying logic
 - When that logic becomes observable, it can help explain many aspects of behavior that may have seemed odd, confusing, or annoying on first sight.

How to Observe

- **Step 1: Observe yourself**
 - What assumptions do I bring to my encounters with others?
 - What sort of ethical approach do I use to address moral problems?
 - **Example:** A bad reaction to a more authoritarian approach to management style may be a product of deeper assumptions and values you hold related to social status or the value of titles and power
- **Step 2: Observe others**
 - Increases self-awareness of the assumptions and values that shape one's own ideas about what's natural and normal
 - With careful observation of the cultural patterns that shape behavior in oneself and others, you can learn to see things more easily from the perspective of others and respond to behaviors that seem different or even annoying in a calm and rational way
- Cultural conflict is usually a product of the inability to not only recognize the ways culture shapes the actions of others, but also our own ideas, attitudes, and actions
- **Moral conflict is often the result of assuming that one's own perspective (culture) is the only true perspective**

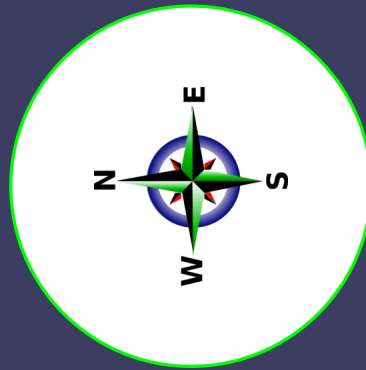


A stylized illustration of a snail's head and shell. The shell is a large, rounded, reddish-brown shape with several dark blue oval spots and a dark brown spiral pattern. The snail's head is pinkish-red and features two large, round, light green eyes with prominent red irises and black pupils. Two long, light blue antennae extend from the head. The entire illustration is set against a solid black background.

BREAK TIME!

Back at 14:30

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Unit 4

Ethical Leadership

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Case Study: The Common Good?

- Habitat for Humanity is a large, international non-profit that builds houses for economically disadvantaged people
- The organization approached a local private school about putting together a community service activity intended to involve children at the school, who were in 5th – 8th grades



Case Study: The Common Good?

- The activity involved assembling playhouses to be given to economically disadvantaged families.
- HH included a mandatory part of the activity:
 - All children were required to bring between 7 and 10 names and address of people they knew to an activity a month before the playhouse build
 - The children were to address the envelopes at school and sign letters provided by HH, then stuff the envelopes which would be mailed to the people the children listed
 - The letters were solicitations for donations to Habitat for Humanity
 - If the students did not bring in the minimum number of names and participate in the letter campaign, they would not be permitted to participate in the playhouse build
- The student body is diverse, including children of both South and East Asian parents, American Caucasians, and African Americans. School has no religious affiliation.
- The school is struggling to attract students and involvement with HH may represent an activity that will be good PR for the school



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Case Study: What should you do?

- If you were the administrator of the school, what would you do? HH is interested in moving forward quickly, so the opportunity may pass if you do not jump at it.
 - Is this an ethical practice? Are there any moral issues to be considered?
 - How would you respond to HH? How would you employ ethical leadership practices to address the plans of HH?
 - Is there a conflict between organizational aims and organizational cultures that might need to be taken into account?
 - How do you deal with the fact that there is a very diverse student body with parents who may have quite different ideas about the rights of children or about support of charities?

Problems with HH Activity

- Children are not fully autonomous decision-makers; they are disempowered
- Do the ends justify the means?
- Is the activity culturally appropriate?
- Would it be ethical in a different cultural context?



Culture and Principles of Ethical Leadership



Practicing Ethical Leadership



Ethical leadership requires clear awareness of one's own values and assumptions about right and wrong

How do I typically judge right and wrong?

Do I lean towards a consequentialist approach or a more absolutist approach (deontological)?

How do I think about the relationship between ends and means?



What are the connects and disconnects between one's own values/ethical assumptions and those professed by one's organization?

How do I manage the differences?



Ethics should be a topic of discussion in an organization

It should not be a top-down discussion of right and wrong, encapsulated in value statements which often trivialize complex issues

It should be an open discussion of how values/ethics compete and contrast, as well as overlap by employees and between employees and the organization as a unit



Ethical leadership is not a thing, nor a position, nor a characteristic; **it is a shared process**

"If we cannot now end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity."

--John F. Kennedy

- Assume that individuals bring different ideas about right and wrong to the table
 - Freedom of choice is always limited in some way; be aware of the ways in which culture limits freedom of choice
 - This includes the structure or paradigm of your organization, but is not limited to that
 - Also includes ethnic and cultural variation among members of your organization

First Principle: Respect Variation

"Yes, I remember the barbed wire and the guard towers and the machine guns, but they became part of my normal landscape. What would be abnormal in normal times became my normality in camp. "

--George Takei

- Avoid inflicting harm on others and limit or avoid actions that risk harming others indirectly
 - Recognize that psychological harm is significantly shaped by culture and cultural background
 - Assumptions about what is "normal" and "abnormal" are not universal and can profoundly influence how people think about right and wrong and experience potential harm

Second Principle: Do No Harm

"Weff done is better than weff said."

--Benjamin Franklin

- Mission and value statements are constantly interpreted
 - People interpret them in terms of their own experiences and cultural backgrounds
 - In deciding what is right or wrong, they use deontological and/or consequentialist approaches variously and not necessarily consistently
 - But there is a logic in their actions
 - Ethical leadership requires awareness of that cultural logic and awareness that most actions, even those that seem strange or alien, are motivated by a logical framework

Principle
Three:
Don't
Confuse
Words with
Actions

Ethical Organizations

- Recognize and openly accept the fact that different individuals bring different cultural values to the organization
 - This influences how each person thinks about right and wrong; ends and means
- Encourage open discussion of ethics in general and of the ethical choices involved in specific situations and decisions as an ongoing feature of the organizational paradigm
 - Encourage awareness of how culture and other factors (gender, age, race, ethnicity, etc.) influence how people think about right and wrong
- Institutionalize ways for people to question authority
- Connect moral ideas to specific actions
 - Actions of leaders need to reflect values expressed by leaders
 - Consistent, fair, honest



Wrap-Up





Final Activity

- Write down five takeaways you can bring to your organization or use in your work as a result of this seminar.
- Discuss in small groups.