Teaching Bioethics to High School Students

www4.utsouthwestern.edu/FrederickGrinnell/hsinteract.htm

Exploring Bioethics

1. Questions to Always Ask Yourself:
   - What is the ethical question?
   - What are the relevant facts?
   - Who or what will be affected by the outcome?
   - What are the relevant ethical considerations?

Law
Old English: lagu, laid down

Morals
Latin: moralis, custom

Ethics
Greek: ethos, character
Some Theories Focus on the Elements of Human Behavior

Actor → Action → Outcome

Actor - Character
Action - Obligations
Outcome - Consequences

Universal Approaches to Ethical-Decision Making
Situation evaluated according to general theories, principles, or exemplar cases. Solution comes from outside of the particular situation.
Core morality characterized by universal and shared cross-cultural norms and values.

Contextual Approaches to Ethical-Decision Making
Situation evaluated according to its unique features, values and interpretations. Solution comes from within the situation itself.
Rather than a core morality, focus on an individual's sacred, cultural, and personal story.

Respect for Autonomy
Non-maleficence
Beneficence
Justice

Principles act as instruments: What does this case look like from the point of view of autonomy, justice, beneficence or non-maleficence?
Moral Mapping

. . . for a single terrain we can plot many maps, depending upon our interests. Each map presents its own salient features in a coherent way. There is no one map that is right for all the things we want to do.

Conflict over International Research Ethics

Universal Ethics: Certain moral principles are binding on all cultures or societies even if those cultures or societies do not accept them.

Contextual Ethics: For moral principles to be normative, they must be accepted in the culture in which they are going to be applied. “Colonial” ways of thinking have no place in post-colonial bioethics.

Student’s Little Helper

(adapted from Fall 2009 Regional Ethics Bowl Case and the Poynter Center Monograph Jessica Banks Case)

Sara: It was amazing. I took one of the Provigil pills and was able to move through the practice test feeling focused and confident. It was actually fun. I didn’t experience any of the fatigue that normally hits me as I get to the later test segments. And my score was the highest that it ever has been. I think I am ready for the real exam.

Barbara: Are you sure that using the drug is OK? Wouldn’t some people think it is cheating just like athletes who use steroids? Maybe only enhancements available to everyone – like caffeine – should be allowed to be used.

Nancy: Well, what about the fact that not everyone can afford a professional SAT prep course. Maybe taking Provigil is no different. Sara, could I have one of the tablets that you will not be using?

Narrator: Should Sara give her a tablet?
### What's the question?

- What do we already know?
- What do we need to find out?
- What do we think we know?
- What are the ethical considerations?
- What are the possible solutions?