

APRIL, 2009

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT BY MICHAEL SCHWARTZ

### ETHICS: APPLIED AND PROFESSIONAL

- ◆ Business
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Engineering
- ◆ Environment
- ◆ Law
- ◆ Medical
- ◆ Nursing
- ◆ Police
- ◆ Public Policy
- ◆ Public Sector
- ◆ Social Work
- ◆ Teaching

A friend visiting Jerusalem sent me a photograph of Oskar Schindler's grave. Schindler, we are told, neglected his wife, chased whores, drank wildly, and bribed and corrupted wherever he could profit: admittedly, we would not have invited Schindler as a keynote speaker to the Australian Association for Professional & Applied Ethics annual conference. But Schindler is dead which is not irrelevant; and whilst he was not a churchgoer, is buried in the Catholic churchyard on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

My colleagues are mostly economists. John Maynard Keynes is no longer their hero having been replaced by those more recently departed. But it is unlikely that they would dispute Keynes's claim that in the long run we are all dead. And Schindler is dead.

Greek mythology recounts how Zeus, concerned with Hermes's thievery, made him responsible for travel and commerce. Regardless of any supposed presumptions as to commerce and thievery Hermes commanded something more: he alone had impunity to enter the land of the dead. And I urge the AAPAE to consider that journey.

Today we ask who the AAPAE should consider: medical ethicists, police ethicists, business ethicists, defence ethicists, religious ethicists, legal ethicists? Perhaps the answer is not the living but the dead. Schindler's behaviour we are told could not be explained by any ethical theory of conduct. It seems equally dubious that it could be explained by any ethical theory of virtue. Schindler, whilst imbibing the cognac and chasing the ladies, does not seem to have spent his life attempting to acquire good habits to mould himself into a morally good person. But don't such considerations merely

alert us to the obvious fact that amongst the dead are often the most implausible moral agents?

The late Richard Rorty in his 2005 address to the Society of Business Ethics said philosophy has to look backward as its best years are in the past, with the present different to that past. Bob Brecher, who has taken issue with other arguments made by Rorty, argues that we have obligations to the dead because even if they are dead they remain members of a community which has benefited from their efforts. Brecher claims we discharge such obligations by remembering and acting accordingly, which also expresses our obligation to each other.

Contrary to Rorty then, the AAPAE has to look backwards if our best years are to be in the future. Contemplating such implausible moral agents as Oskar Schindler we might conclude that we can only rationalise Schindler's ethical behaviour as something akin to a fluke. Yet, the AAPAE cannot exist in the expectation of fortuitous flukes. We claim to encourage awareness of applied ethics as a significant area of concern. We can best do so by realising how unlikely the acts of an Oskar Schindler were, and not least of all because of the lack of any concern with ethics in those circumstances he experienced. If we count Schindler amongst our dead - and the discussion of his acts by ethicists suggests we do - then we are obligated to encourage the awareness of applied ethics so as to make future Schindler's less unlikely. Given how remote the possibility is of making such behaviour completely plausible we at the AAPAE have work to do, and I invite all readers to join us in this project. After all, complete success would render us dead making us the obligation of the living.

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## AAPAE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROFESSIONS IN THE COMMUNITY

Tuesday 9th – Thursday 11th June, 2009

Hosted by the School of Policing Studies, Charles Sturt University  
Goulburn, NSW.

<http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/arts/policing/aapae/index.htm>



### CALL FOR PAPERS

The Sixteenth Annual AAPAE Conference welcomes practitioners and academics from various disciplines and professions for discussion of interests and issues in applied and professional ethics.

The conference theme of *Professions in the Community* may be interpreted broadly. Topic areas addressed at earlier conferences include:

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| ⇒ Business Practice | ⇒ Social Work        |
| ⇒ Education         | ⇒ Teaching           |
| ⇒ Engineering       | ⇒ Public Relations   |
| ⇒ Environment       | ⇒ Childcare          |
| ⇒ Law               | ⇒ Pharmacy           |
| ⇒ Health Care       | ⇒ Ethics in Research |
| ⇒ Police            | ⇒ Journalism         |
| ⇒ Public Policy     | ⇒ Consulting         |
| ⇒ Public Sector     | ⇒ Accounting         |

Prospective authors should note that these are merely suggestions and abstracts and papers that address other aspects of professional ethics and applied ethics are most welcome.

The flexibility of the conference will allow papers and presentations from a diverse range of disciplines.

Presenting after the Conference dinner on the Wednesday evening will be **Stephen Keim**.

Stephen was one of the lawyers representing Dr Mohamed Haneef, and came to attention (in particular) for releasing to the media a transcript of an interview between police and Dr Haneef, sparking substantial debate about the ethical issues involved.



PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A major event for AAPAE each year is the conference. This is part of our history – the association began at a conference; it is part of our constitution – one of the objects is to organise conferences; and it is practical – we meet people, learn, and have an opportunity to show our wares to the wider world. And that contact with people outside the association is another of our aims – to foster community discussion of issues related to professional and applied ethics.

In one sense conferences do that well – speakers of national significance come to know of our existence and our capability. We've been prescient too – Nick Xenophon addressed the 2005 Adelaide conference and Penny Wong the 2007 Melbourne

event; Malcolm Turnbull and Tony Abbott debated the Republic in the old Senate chamber during the Canberra conference and in Wagga Christine Nixon, then an assistant commissioner in New South Wales, took part in a plenary discussion of police ethics.

Each conference has had its distinct highlights and memorable moments. We have seen capital cities and regional centres, there have been conference dinners on the banks of the Yarra, in woolsheds and with Plato for entertainment.

Conferences also serve the important purpose of bringing new members to the association. It is at the moment our main method of recruiting. It is particularly difficult to recruit mem-

bers from outside the academic community. Our sister institutions in the United States (the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics) and in the United Kingdom (European Business Ethics Network - UK) both have the same problem. This year APPE adopted a number of programs designed to increase attendance from practitioners, but I understand these have had little positive impact on the number of registrations beyond the academic community.

Our Constitution, and our own inclinations, urge us to facilitate networking and engage with the community. It is a challenge, but one we need to take up.

**Howard Harris, University of South Australia**

AAPAE CONFERENCE JUNE 2009 (CONT'D)

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

**Commissioner John Pritchard, Police Integrity Commission**

John Pritchard is the current Commissioner of the Police Integrity Commission. Prior to his appointment as Commissioner, Mr Pritchard was the Deputy Commissioner with the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).

Mr Pritchard previously worked as lawyer with the Sydney Office of the Commonwealth DPP and as a solicitor in private practice working mainly in the area of criminal law.

**Dr Brian Steels**

Brian is a Research Fellow at the Restorative Justice Research Unit at the Centre for Social and Community Research, Murdoch University and works to address community restorative approaches to the criminal justice process.

His work takes in his interests in restorative justice, therapeutic jurisprudence and offender rehabilitation at an individual, family and community level, especially among people often discarded and socially excluded.



**Associate Professor Gillian Cowlshaw**

Gillian Cowlshaw studied anthropology at Sydney University in the 1970s and taught at Charles Sturt University, the ANU in the 1980s and the University of Sydney in the 1990s.

Her work has been focused on the varied relationships between Indigenous and settler Australians. She holds an Australian Professorial Fellowship at UTS.

**15TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE AAPAE, JUNE 2008.  
CHIFLEY AT LENNONS, QUEENS STREET MALL, BRISBANE.**

**Conference Report by Mark Lauchs, QUT**

The 2008 conference was opened by the Hon Justice M A McMurdo, President of the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court of Queensland. Her presentation covered contemporary aspects of legal professional ethics. The second day was opened by the Hon Michael Lavarch, Dean of the Law Faculty at QUT, who discussed ongoing attempts in Australia to develop a Code of Conduct for members of parliament.

Across the two days, thirty-six speakers gave presentations on a range of applied ethics topics. There were two themes for the two days: legal ethics and business ethics. But additional papers covered issues ranging from corruption to bioethics. A point of particular interest to many was the virtue ethics workshop on day two which attracted the diehard phi-

losophers to ponder the wonders of Aristotelian virtues.

The conference dinner was a small but successful affair held at the venue. The food was good and the wine flowed – leading to some less than sparkling attendance on the second day.

Fifty people attended

developing, organising and operating a problem-free event. The venue staff were also extremely helpful and courteous throughout the two days.

This was the first year that we did not referee papers prior to the conference. It was decided that speakers would be determined off abstracts and it would



across the two days. Feedback has been good which reflects the high quality of the papers presented and the collegiality of the attendees.

Lessons learnt from the conference include the necessity of having good support staff at the organising university. The Law Faculty promotions staff were essential in

then be up to speakers to submit their papers to journals. From the feedback I have had thus far this appears to have been successful. There was certainly no deterioration in quality of the presentations and many used the opportunity to discuss and refine their work before submission.



## Proceedings of the 2008 Conference

### Available Online

The proceedings of the 2008 AAPAE Conference are available online through the *Electronic Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies* (<http://ejbo.jyu.fi/>).

Matthew Birmingham, *Evidence-Based Policy and Mixed Economy in Australia*  
[http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo\\_vol13\\_no2\\_pages\\_12-18.pdf](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol13_no2_pages_12-18.pdf)

Peter Bowden & Vanya Smythe, *Theories on Teaching & Training in Ethics*  
[http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo\\_vol13\\_no2\\_pages\\_19-26.pdf](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol13_no2_pages_19-26.pdf)

Gian Luca Casali, *Creating Managerial Ethical Profiles: An Exploratory Cluster Analysis*  
[http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo\\_vol13\\_no2\\_pages\\_27-34.pdf](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol13_no2_pages_27-34.pdf)

Scott Elaurant, *Corporate Executive Salaries: The Argument from Economic Efficiency*  
[http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo\\_vol13\\_no2\\_pages\\_35-43.pdf](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol13_no2_pages_35-43.pdf)

Erica French & Gian Luca Casali, *Ethics in Emergency Medical Services: Who Cares? An exploratory analysis from Australia*  
[http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo\\_vol13\\_no2\\_pages\\_44-53.pdf](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol13_no2_pages_44-53.pdf)

Howard Harris & Katalin Illes, *Promoting and Assessing Integrity in the Research Degree*  
[http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo\\_vol13\\_no2\\_pages\\_54-60.pdf](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol13_no2_pages_54-60.pdf)

Peter McGhee & Patricia Grant, *Spirituality and Ethical Behaviour in the Workplace: Wishful Thinking or Authentic Reality* [http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo\\_vol13\\_no2\\_pages\\_61-69.pdf](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol13_no2_pages_61-69.pdf)

Michael Schwartz, *Managers sans Owners and not Owners sans Managers*  
[http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo\\_vol13\\_no2\\_pages\\_79-83.pdf](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol13_no2_pages_79-83.pdf)

Jeremy St John, *Aetiology and Mutability of Commodification*  
[http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo\\_vol13\\_no2\\_pages\\_84-91.pdf](http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol13_no2_pages_84-91.pdf)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF AAPAE MEMBERS

Schwartz, Michael. 2008. Some Thoughts on Moriarty and Moeller *Journal of Business Ethics* 78 pp. 25-38

Breakey, Hugh. 2009. The Epistemic and Informational Requirements of Utilitarianism *Utilitas*, no. 1(2009) p 72-99. <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayFulltext?type=6&fid=3663980&jid=UTI&volumeld=21&issuelid=01&aid=3663976&fulltextType=RA&fileId=S0953820808003373>

Harris, H. 2008. Promoting ethical reflection in the teaching of business ethics, *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 17 (4) p379-390.

Harris, H. 2007. Traditional virtues and contemporary management, *Philosophy of Management*: 6 (2) p61-76.

Harris, H 2008, *Inquisitiveness as a management virtue: Insights from CS Peirce*, Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, San Antonio TX, February 2008.

Harris, H. 2008. The human face of business networks and alliances. *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies* 1(1).

Peter Bowden and Vanya Smythe (2008) "Codes Of Ethics" Keeping Good Companies. *Journal of Chartered Secretaries*, Australia. Vol 60, No. 10 pp. 584-588.

Peter Bowden (2007) "Institutionalising Ethical Behaviour" : Australian Association of Professional and Applied Ethics, Annual Conference.

Peter Bowden "The Argument for more protection" Canberra Times, December, 2008

Chaar, B, Brien, J and Krass, 'Professional Ethics in Pharmacy Practice - Developing a psychometric measure of moral reasoning' *Pharmacy World & Science*, DOI: 10.1007/s11096-009-9292-1

Recent publications of members may be listed in 'Australian Ethics'. All members are invited to send details of their recent (2008/9) publications to the editor: [h.breakey@uq.edu.au](mailto:h.breakey@uq.edu.au).

The purpose is to make current research in applied and professional ethics accessible and to raise awareness of the particular research specializations of members.

PLEASE NOTE:

Papers from the 2008 AAPAE Conference, published in the *Electronic Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies* are listed separately (with links) on p. 5.

Appearances before Parliamentary Inquiries:

Peter Bowden, 3 August 2006: *NSW Parliament*, Committee of the Independent Commission Review of the Protected Disclosures Act 1994.

Peter Bowden, 27 October, 2008: *Federal Parliament*, House Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs.

Peter Bowden, 1 December, 2008: *NSW Parliament*, Committee of the Independent Commission against Corruption.

## ETHICS IN PHARMACY BETTY CHAAR

In an era of extraordinary advancements in technology, media outreach and communication facilities, public scrutiny of professionals in all walks of life has heightened, along with expectations and accountability. Whether you are an artist or a scientist, an architect or an academic, a professional by nature of his or her role in society is never immune to public scrutiny. One only has to look at recent examples of public scrutiny of professionals in the media to realise the impact the *ethics* of a professional has on our daily lives. Think about the ethics of an artist who displays photos of naked children, or the doctor who abuses the trust inherent in health care and assaults his own patients; the ethics of journalism in wars, the ethical minefield of scientists recently given approval to explore human cloning in Australia, the ethics of teaching in schools or tertiary institutes and the never ending cycle of ethical decision making in politics, to name but a few. All these are examples of professional and applied ethics at play and not only of profound importance in the eyes of the public, but also in the fundamental structure of society as a whole.

I am not an “ethicist” by training, nor am I an expert in moral philosophy. I am a pharmacist, who has dedicated many years to providing health care at the front line in many contexts and in many countries, with great pride and devotion. The notion of professional ethics as it exists today was never taught in my earlier undergraduate training. In those days we were simply

given the legal framework of our professional responsibilities. Concepts of professional ethics were rarely mentioned or analysed. A Code of Ethics was regarded as more or less an accessory – a public declaration of values to which the profession proclaimed adherence, but which was rarely utilised or referred to in any educational or analytical term, with the rare exception of investigational aspects of an inquiry into malpractice if disclosed by the Pharmacy Board.

In reality, and not that long ago, we were trained to exercise paternalism in practice. No patient dared challenge a pharmacist, let alone a doctor, with a question about medications...and I mean simple questions like “*what is this medication for?*”, “*will I have any side effects?*” or “*must I take this medication*”. People were not encouraged to ask such questions, and if they did they were reverently referred back to their prescribing physician. Doctors wrote prescriptions in Latin to guard

against prying eyes, and pharmacists dutifully dispensed the coded orders, no questions asked. Patients enjoyed no such thing as a “right to auton-

omy” for example. In those days, doctors and pharmacists knew what was best for the patient, otherwise why consult them?

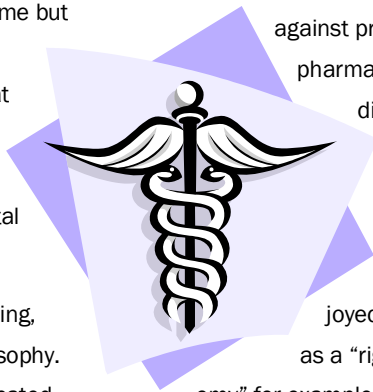
How things have changed!

Forces of change such as consumerism, feminism, post World War II medical

ethics (The Nuremburg trials, The Declaration of Helsinki) and the emergence of human rights as the guiding principle to all things medical, have shifted values and ethical principles in health care to unprecedented levels of support for the patient as an individual, just as deserving of respect for his or her dignity and autonomy, as much as, or even more than his or her basic health care needs. This evolution has been remarkable and within a relatively short time span, drastic changes to teaching curricula had to be made to accommodate for changes in professional attitudes and responsibilities, as well as understanding and meeting expectations of the public.

In response to a perceived need, and an invitation, I changed my career path and walked down a wobbly path of teaching “Professional Ethics in Pharmacy”. I started to teach this topic to 4<sup>th</sup> year students in pharmacy a few years ago, and every year I am evermore astonished at the depth of analysis and interest my students take in the topic. It is rewarding to see young, upcoming professionals reflecting on professional ethics in various contexts and listen to them recount what it means to them to be professional.

**“In those days, doctors and pharmacists knew what was best for the patient, otherwise why consult them?”**



**ETHICS IN PHARMACY (CONT'D)**

Amongst the most baffling of issues to pharmacists and students alike are of course questions about life and death alongside the requirement to respect patient dignity and autonomy. For example, dispensing the “Morning After Pill” (a medication taken within 72hrs of unprotected intercourse to prevent pregnancy) is a perplexing issue for pro-life individuals. Provision of medication to facilitate euthanasia likewise brings forth heated discussions.

Issues of privacy are often confusing when relationships and competencies are difficult to ascertain. Examples include: the exact age considered acceptable for informed consent; assessing the capabilities of the mentally ill to provide informed consent; rights of parents (particularly teenagers); partners who may or may not be together requesting information about one another; carers who might have a conflict of interest.

The right of the patient to refuse treatment or to demand certain medications also presents a puzzling twist to ethical reflection, particularly in balance with notions of social justice and fairness of distribution, or simply the “best interests” of the patient. The list goes on, and variations of ethical dimensions of each contextual scenario continuously present challenges to moral reasoning in professional ethics in pharmacy.

Additionally, unique to pharmacy, over and above facing dilemmas in-

volving the norms of healthcare ethics is the responsibility for the operations of a small business, ensuring viability is maintained. This is a challenge sometimes. Unregistered complementary products for example, fill the shelves of most pharmacies, with little evidence of efficacy or modes of action. The ambiguity surrounding the provision of these products often renders the role of the pharmacist little more than a salesperson or retailer, which is a position both students and pharmacists find particularly irksome. Pharmacists spend years of their lives learning to be experts in pharmacology and medications. On the other hand, complementary products provide most pharmacists with a wide margin of profit, without which business could suffer. Add to this the constant threat of deregulation of the profession (i.e. allowing supermarkets to establish pharmacies). Hence there is no surprise that there exists a broad range of ethical concerns specific to the profession of pharmacy.

Teaching this topic therefore has been immensely challenging, given the velocity at which change has occurred, the scope of ethical concern in pharmacy and the sheer width and breadth

of the domain of moral philosophy I ventured to explore. In pharmacy, in particular in Australia, this represents almost uncharted waters. Before the Professional Ethics in Pharmacy course was initiated, no course material existed, no course outline was handed down, and frankly no one knew where we were heading. Five years later, with ongoing in-depth research in moral reasoning, bioethics and related topics, Professional Ethics in Pharmacy is now a new, distinct course, recognised as an essential part of the training of future pharmacists in Australia.

It is from this brief outline of my experience and perspective, that I acknowledge the important role of the AAPAE in my engagement in the field. I was under the impression that my rather isolated existence would be that way forever. That is, until I found not only like-minded individuals in this association, but also a warm welcome and an embracing, generous ambience that

**“Over and above facing dilemmas involving the norms of healthcare ethics is the responsibility for the operations of a small business...”**





## WHAT IS THE KEY QUESTION FOR PUBLIC SECTOR ETHICS?

It is relatively easy to argue that the ethical behaviour of the government of the day is inextricably linked with that of the public service. The argument would draw on the belief that ethical behaviour starts at the top. Innumerable treatises state that the senior executive sets the ethical standard in any organisation. Additionally, in a democracy, the public service exists to carry out the wishes of our elected representatives. But what if the politician is following the imperative of maintaining his party in power and the public servant is strongly committed to ethical behaviour?

In NSW, sufficient evidence can be found to accuse the government of dubious ethical behaviour: Milton Orkopoulos (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs): convicted for paedo-

phile behaviour, Gillian Sneddon (his electoral secretary): dismissed for testifying, Matt Brown (Police): underpants dance and

**“What if the politician is following the imperative of maintaining his party in power and the public servant is strongly committed to ethical behaviour?”**

attentions to a staffer, subsequently forced to resign, Tony Stewart (Health): accused of touching up, lying, subsequently stood aside, and John Della

Bosca, (Education): Iguanagate. The main issue for many however, is the set of revisions recommended by a Parliamentary Committee three years ago to the ineffective NSW Whistleblowers Protection Act. Nothing happened. The recommendations were publicly rejected by the government as unnecessary. Three years later, a political confrontation in the Upper House resulted in a second inquiry, so far ignored. Considerable empirical research tells us that internal reporting is the most effective way to stop wrongdoing, and therefore possibly the major contributor to ethical behaviour in organisations. NSW has rejected that approach.

Perhaps it is also the unholy struggle for power now going on that gives a strong sense of an

## ETHICS IN PHARMACY (CONT'D)

- **From previous page**

allowed me to share, learn and give voice to my views, concerns or even my lack of experience in the field. It is reassuring to meet with representatives from so many professions in the same quest, probing for answers to weighty questions of professional ethics and sharing the multitude of perspectives each profession has to convey. A common theme to members of the AAPAE is the promotion of a better understanding of profes-

sional ethics, which has provided me personally with substantial insight into the field as well as a network of experts to consult or seek a second opinion of if the need arises.

From personal experience and a great interest in the topic, I encourage anyone interested in professional ethics from any field of practice to join this eclectic congregation of like minded, yet very diverse members of the AAPAE. It has been an invaluable experience for me over the past few

years, and I am sure the AAPAE will continue to provide a platform for sharing and learning in the multifaceted domain of professional ethics with renewed energy and enthusiasm to embrace a new era of endeavour for us all.

**Betty Chaar**

**University of Sydney**

WHAT IS THE KEY QUESTION FOR PUBLIC SECTOR ETHICS? (CONT'D)

unethical government. The Sydney Morning Herald article *Last Gasp of Power* (January 31) on the struggles between the current premier Nathan Rees, and Della Bosca, Joe Tripodi, Eddie Obeid, and the former union boss John Robertson is only one of many. Imre Salusinszky's *Putting the Knife In*, (The Australian Feb 6, 2009) writes of "The push gathering behind former planning minister Frank Sartor, dumped from Cabinet following lemma's downfall" and of the factional infighting of Tripodi and Obeid whom Rees regards as "rats in the ranks."

Does this behaviour affect the public sector – the administrative side of government? I would argue that it must have an impact. There has been Railcorp (\$20 million ripped off), the NSW Fire Brigade, Wollongong Council, Joe Scimone, a good friend of Ports Minister Tripodi, employed (and subsequently dismissed) by the NSW Maritime Authority while being investigated by ICAC. Talking of Sydney's waterways, there has also been the chief of Sydney's ferries Rear-Admiral Geoff Smith. Investigated and cleared by ICAC for giving his sons a summer job on the ferries, he now under investigation for alleged misappropriation of tens of thousands of dollars using his corporate credit card. While we are not all familiar with the rights and wrongs of the hospitals at Camden, Campbelltown, Royal North Shore,

etc. nor are we sure about the issue with the Lane Cove Tunnel and the "\$25 million bribe the Labor Party has paid the tunnel operators to delay the road changes until after the election" as claimed by the then leader of the Opposition, we are also not aware of government statements

**"Does unethical behaviour by the government affect the public sector? I would argue it must have an impact."**

or inquiries that clearly exonerate the public agencies involved. The public is left wondering what actually is the truth.

We have had the same issues at the federal level. Was it an obligation on public servants to tell us that there were no children

overboard, no weapons of mass destruction, and that the government was ignoring its own report on airport safety?

It does seem to me that the key question of public sector ethics is to ask what the moral obligations on a senior public servant are when the government pushes the ethical boundaries too far. But even if we ignore the risks to a person's career, our democratic system says that public servants must support the government. Should it?

Should this not be the major issue at any of the many conferences on public sector ethics that have been undertaken this year alone?

**Peter Bowden**  
**University of Sydney**



**FORTHCOMING BOOK: REASON AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS BY PETER DAVSON-GALLE**

AAPAE members might be interested to learn of a forthcoming book of mine that is “in press” and should emerge mid-2009. It is entitled ‘*Reason and Professional Ethics*’ and is to be published by Ashgate in England. Here is what I try to do with it.

Many professionals confront ethical issues concerning their proper roles and the manner in which they should carry out those roles. University and College courses for the preparation of such professionals usually address some of these matters. Sometimes the treatment is cursory (little more than the inculcation of a “professional code of ethics” as stipulated by some professional body). Sometimes the issues are raised and discussed but without students having the “tools of thought” with which to think their way through what are quite complex issues. This book aims to provide students (and, for that matter, their instructors) with a “stepped” introduction to those tools of thought.

Briefly put, those tools of thought are drawn from the critical thinking, or informal logic, corpus. In particular, given that the issues being deliberated upon concern what one should *do*, the book belongs in the field of so-called practical reason. Three features distinguish it from other works in the field. The first is its explicit focus upon professional ethical issues and its brief portrayal of some normative and meta-ethical theory

that bears upon many such issues. The second is its unusual focus upon the acceptability of an argument's *premises*. The third is its concern with reasoning of an *extended* sort rather than merely with the features of a single argument.

Much of the critical thinking literature focuses upon getting particular arguments logical. Yet an argument, however logical, is only acceptable as a case for its conclusion to the extent that its

**“Sometimes ethical issues are raised and discussed but without students having the ‘tools of thought’ with which to think their way through complex issues.”**

premises are acceptable. A lot of the time one’s complaint against an argument is that one or

other of its premises are dubious and deserving of support and/or criticism.

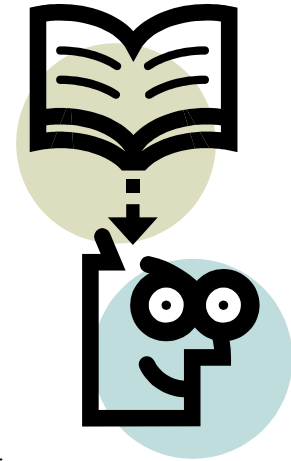
Extended inquiry (in soliloquy or in dialogue) is comprised of a series of arguments with some “connective tissue” between them (this

criticizes or supports that...) that relates them together as one inquiry. At any given point in an inquiry, working out which option is the best next move is dependent upon the particular inquiry history to date, the interests of the particular inquirer and so on. And this situation of multiple possible paths forward, to be deliberated among as an exercise in self-conscious meta-cognition, continues as a particular inquiry unfolds. Thoughtfully handling such extended inquiry is, in my view, underdone in the extant literature. Yet carrying out such a connected series of particular arguments in a meta-cognitively thoughtful, rigorous way is a key part of thinking in depth about an issue.

Any members who would like further details (including release dates) are welcome to email me at:

[P.DavsonGalle@utas.edu.au](mailto:P.DavsonGalle@utas.edu.au).

I would be happy to email the introductory chapter of the book to interested parties.



"Making the right moves...."

# AAPAE

## AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR PROFESSIONAL AND APPLIED ETHICS

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

The AAPAE fosters and publishes research in applied and professional ethics as well as attempting to create connections with special interest groups. The AAPAE does not endorse any particular viewpoint, but rather aims to promote a climate in which different and differing views, concerns, and approaches can be expressed and discussed.

## AAPAE 2008-2009 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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