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Promoting Integrity in Students and Instructors

THE
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
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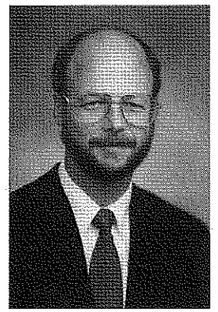
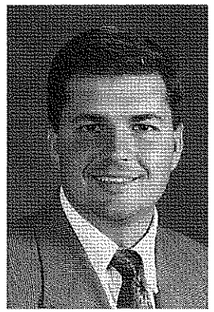
Promoting Integrity Through the Profession





BY DAVID C. WHALEY AND MARK KOKES

Dr. Whaley is a professor and director of teacher licensure in the school of education and Mr. Kokes is an instructor of agricultural education at Colorado State University, Fort Collins.

Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.

-Emerson

Responsibility of the Profession

As the profession of agricultural education has matured during the past century, its scope of responsibility has significantly expanded. Originally, our profession had a reasonably simple focus: "to train boys for entry into the farming industry" (National Council for Agricultural Education, 1990). That initial course of study in agricultural education appeared to be most heavily ladened with efforts aimed towards acquiring and applying relevant production practices. Yet, the scope of the profession today, although still addressing these initial goals, has become more complex. The exponential increase in the knowledge of agricultural sciences has been complemented with deeper understandings of how students learn, develop reputations, and become successful. Student success is now often defined more broadly in terms of feeling, beliefs, and a sense of integrity. Honesty, responsibility, sincerity, and conscience are regularly recognized as salient features in a successful graduate. What is the role, then, of our profession in developing these particular elements of student success?

Without a doubt, the concept of promoting integrity in our students is, at best, challenging. As educators, we recognize that our graduates will function in a professional and social climate in which expectations for their conduct and judgment will most certainly exist, yet these expectations may very well be poorly communicated and understood . . . vaguely or perhaps even not at all. Instructors also generally recognize that one objection to integrity as an instructional topic is that it is not concrete or easily measured, and that it is subject to criticism from others. Often, it is not perceived to be a "safe" topic. One's vulnerability as an instructor is much heightened when beliefs about ethics and integrity are shared openly.

Prescribing the Theme of Integrity

Fortunately, the contributing authors to this issue of *The Agricultural Education Magazine* have risen to this challenge of defining and prescribing the responsibility of the profession in promulgating integrity. As is evidenced in their writings, authors were selected for this theme based on their passion for the subject. They represent a myriad of unique educational roles: an elementary principal, preservice agricultural education students, experienced secondary teachers, extension specialists, and university professors. The insights of these authors help to weave together the threads of this complex "fabric" into a series of scholarly understandings and useful recommendations.

Instructional Strategies and Opportunities

Beebe (1995) described integrity as an "abstraction" (an abstract concept). Most Agricultural Educators would probably concur. We tend to know integrity when we "see it," or especially when it is "not there." How, then, do we foster this important, but elusive, virtue in our students? The authors were unanimous in their belief that the best instruction occurs though the regular occurrence of appropriate behaviors and actions by teachers (modeling). Students cannot develop a sensitivity for integrity if it is not regularly displayed by adults and student peers. In working with SAEs, a teacher's response to situations involving unethical practices in fitting and showing livestock will be scrutinized and "measured" by students. During FFA judging competitions, the teacher's encouragement of "fair play" will equally be recalled. In the instructional setting of the classroom and laboratory, the teacher's regard for copyright infringement will, no doubt, be noticed by students. Finally, the teacher's actions toward others who are different in culture, race, and gender will be noticed by students and will influence standards of behavior for those students in attendance.

The use of guest speakers is also an appropriate instructional strategy for students to examine how professionals confront and resolve ethical situations. Dr. Field (1995) stated that, "The opportunity to learn from role models about the process of making choices, using power, and interacting with those who express different perspectives can be a powerful educational experience for teachers and students alike".

Appropriate behavior and responses can be experienced and practiced by students through

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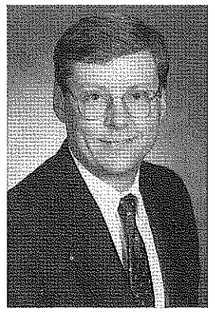
Fostering Integrity



BY TOM FIELD

Dr. Field is an associate professor of animal sciences at Colorado State University, Fort Collins.

If my own struggle to articulate ideas relative to promoting integrity in students and instructors is reflective of others in our profession, then it would be accurate to assume that this topic creates a fair bit of uneasiness in the educational system. The trouble with discussions about ethics is that they are neither concrete, objectively measured, or "safe". Integrity is more than doing the right thing, and it is certainly a complex issue when taken in the context of the multitudes of interactions, decisions, and judgment calls an individual makes in a lifetime.

Integrity is the degree to which individuals lead their lives in accordance with a set of principles and values. Principles are different than values, and those differences are critical to the formulation of curricular experiences that relate to integrity. Values may well be doctrine-specific, and therefore, are subject to change. Principles, on the other hand, are fundamental laws that have universal application (Covey, 1991).

Educators may, indeed, face considerable criticism if classrooms are turned into vehicles by which a particular doctrine is forced on students. However, dealing with principles such as honesty, fairness, teamwork, accountability, self-discipline, trust, and service to others should not be omitted in as much as these concepts are generally agreed to be of importance.

This decade will be remembered as a time when educators, students, and society grappled with the challenge of defining the role and mission of education in an era of demographic and social change. Discussions about integrity and values have the potential to erode due to the variety of perceptions about "right and wrong" as well as the continuing debate as to the legitimacy of discussing these issues within the academic setting. Nonetheless, educators cannot ignore the need to provide a forum for dialogue relative to values, choices, ethical considerations in decision making and technology utilization, and a sensitivity to the diverse perspectives that surround discussion about what should or shouldn't direct an individual's pursuit of achievement.

Our graduates will interact in a professional and social community where the standards of conduct and judgment are often unclear. Furthermore, agriculturists face an increasingly skeptical society concerned about our techniques, motives, and impacts. Therefore, addressing topics related to ethics, judgment, and principle-based decision making is both appropriate and necessary for agricultural educators.

Stephen Covey (1991) refers to the seven deadly sins, as defined by Mahatma Gandhi. Of the seven sins, four are particularly applicable to agricultural education. These "sins" are:

- Knowledge without character.
- Commerce without ethics.
- Science without humanity.
- Politics without principle.

Students and teachers alike would be well-served by an ongoing conversation about these issues as they clearly connect with the information, business, technology, and policies of the agricultural community.

Knowledge Without Character

There is an old story about a carpenter who had only one tool—a hammer. For that carpenter to use his tool, everything has to be a nail. Clearly, the knowledge of how to use that one tool was not sufficient to the success of his carpentry trade. We provide students with the knowledge about a variety of ideas and concepts, but if we ignore educating them about how to apply that knowledge in the myriad of scenarios our graduates will face, then the end result will be analogous to the carpenter with only a hammer for a tool.

Knowledge, in and of itself, is of little consequence. The application of knowledge has an impact that requires a strong sense of responsibility and accountability from those who are entrusted with the stewardship of ideas, concepts, and information.

Commerce Without Ethics

The newspapers are filled with examples of people who have conducted business without a focus on true principles. The lure of the fast dollar is sufficient for some people to make short-term decisions without regard for the long-term consequences.

Historically, agriculture has been viewed as an industry where a handshake closed a → deal. While many continue to live their lives in accordance with the ideal of fair play, there are too many examples of business decisions made without integrity.

Despite the fact that agricultural trade tends to occur on a commodity basis, it is increasingly important to define, understand, and communicate with consumers. A focus on the customer is crucial to principle-centered business decision making.

Science Without Humanity

As evidenced by the controversies surrounding technological advancements such as genetic engineering and the utilization of agricultural chemicals, there is adequate debate to warrant the incorporation of social, economics, and philosophical considerations when evaluating technologies.

Consumer concerns relative to food safety, diet issues, health issues, and impacts on the environment point to the need for agriculturists to carefully examine scientific and technological advancements and applications within the context of the larger community.

Politics Without Principle

The fact that almost everyone can tell a variety of politician jokes clearly points to the general cynicism society bears toward the political process. And if local, state, and national politics are not bad enough, there is always office or organizational politics.

Political action is the pursuit, acquisition, and utilization of power. How people use and respond to power is a critical indicator of their character. Better preparation of individuals for the challenges and consequences of using and distributing political power is needed. Furthermore, our scope cannot be limited to those policies which impact the United States alone, but we must deal with the international arena as well.

Teaching Approaches

How do we teach integrity? Certainly not with lecture. Instead, a series of conversations in both formal and informal settings must be initiated within the community of students, agricultural leaders, role models, and teachers.

The actions of teachers are observed and evaluated by students who seek to discover if we live by our words. Perhaps it is in this informal setting where teachers have the greatest opportunity to deal with character issues, and yet, it is dangerous ground. How much do we reveal of our true selves? When does discussion become indoctrination? How do we provide perspective without being judgmental? These are difficult questions to which absolute answers are difficult to formulate. Yet, if the teaching profession is to be truly accountable, then we must have the willingness to venture into arenas painted, not black and white, but in various shades of gray.

Creating an environment in which to deal with these issues and developing a curriculum that focuses attention on concepts such as character, integrity, and ethics requires us to move towards a cross-disciplinary approach. Exercises designed to bring integrity into the discussion can be created from a variety of perspectives. The integrity of individuals, firms, and industries are likely to be tested in interpersonal relationships in business settings and impacts on the environment or community from the application of technologies.

The utilization of case studies that incorporate role playing and problems solving can serve as a useful models to let students "test the waters". Case studies need to be carefully developed with sufficient detail to keep the discussion on track. Each student in the class should have the opportunity to play a variety of roles including authority figure, employee, customer, seller, and consumer. Instructors must also guard against discussions that degenerate into arguments, avoid interactions that create "us versus them" alliances, and all the while ensuring that perspectives other than the dominant paradigm are expressed.

The use of guest speakers can also contribute to student discovery on how professionals face and resolve ethical challenges. The opportunity to learn from role models about the process of making choices, using power, and interacting with those who express different perspectives can be a powerful educational experience for teachers and students alike.

At an even simpler level, the incorporation of discussion about human issues into our scientific and management curriculum is a reasonable starting point. Agriculture is not immune to critical evaluation by society. Agricultural professionals and pre-professionals need to continuously analyze the intent and impact of their individual and collective decisions. Therefore, it is indeed appropriate for agricultural educators to guide reasonable and thoughtful conversations about the principles and judgments that create and impact the human condition.

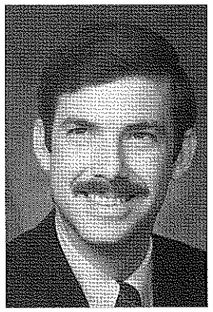
Reference

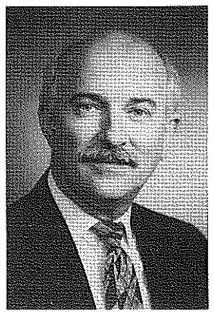
Covey, S. R. (1991). Principle-Centered Leadership. New York: Simon and Schuster. ■

About the Cover

The Chinese character depicted on the cover signifies the term "te". This term, "te" (pronounce DUH), has been translated as "virtue" or "integrity". The basic components of this Chinese character include an eye which looks ahead, the heart, and a sign for movement or behavior. (Symbol courtesy of Dr. David C. Whaley.)

Promoting Integrity in Agricultural Education





BY DR. JACK L. RUDOLPH AND DR. DAVID M. COFFEY

Dr. Rudolph and Dr. Coffey are faculty members in agricultural education at Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green.

"I want my children to succeed in school, to know they succeeded, and to feel good about that...I want the school to ready my children for the future, to give them real options for what follows after graduation. I want the school to help my children grow up to be happy, prosperous, and decent citizens."

A Parent - Horace's School

"The result of (not teaching ethics) is we're leaving students confused about what behavior and conduct is expected. And sadly, the vacuum is being filled with negative signals."

Ernest L. Boyer

In the Classroom

Character is largely shaped and set for the rest of life during the time in which one is enrolled in school. Kindergarten, elementary, and middle schools provide the basics while teaching the rules of acceptable behavior. Allowing students to look at all sides and then sort out what they believe, hopefully, continues to take place beyond the secondary level. Institutions of higher education should allow students to explore issues more deeply, especially those dealing with ethics.

Agricultural education professionals, whether in public schools, state government, or universities, must promote integrity. Too long have professionals in agriculture and agricultural education been guilty of making the following remarks:

"Don't complain with your mouth full."
"Consumers know nothing about agriculture."
"We've done that for years."
"We'll show them."

These reactive statements are responding to criticism and indicate a lack of preparation and understanding of the issues. Changing demographics where producers are outnumbered by consumers 49 to 1, and where agricultural industry workers are outnumbered by non-agricultural workers 4 to 1, makes public perception of the issues related to agriculture and agricultural education much different than those of previous generations. The ever-popular debates on gun control, hunting, animal rights, and the environment are discussed much differently depending on one's background, perspective, and knowledge of the subject matter. To be a spokesperson for any of these issues, leaders must have a knowledge of and appreciation for all aspects of the industry, and this knowledge also includes knowing points stressed by critics.

Only when one understands the other side of an issue may common ground be found, meaningful dialogue established, and effective progress begin to take place. As agricultural education professionals, we must instill within our students the idea of looking at the issues as producers, consumers, urbanites, and suburbanites. The point of view of the general public is sometimes much different from the agricultural perspective. We must step out of our perspective and, as leaders in agricultural education, search and implement better methods of teaching about issues related to agriculture. The challenge of discussing ethical issues in our classes should not be overlooked.

The following are some examples of how teachers can discuss and practice ethical behavior in their classes:

Steps In Leading Discussion On Values And Attitudes

1. Teacher must remain neutral and set the tone for respectful discussion. There are no right or wrong answers, but this does not mean a teacher has no position or even disguises what their position is. Teachers can often be appropriate models or standards for comparison. It does mean that you have to be more committed to having each individual reach a responsible position, whatever it is, than to having it match your view (which feels obviously "right" to you?) This code is clearly against the normal ethos of school authority, but you may explicitly state that priority is being given with respect to an individual's view. Respect is clearly conveyed when other views conflict with your opinion.

2. Desks or chairs are arranged in a circle to signal interactive discussion.

3. Teacher sits to avoid taking a commanding position, indicating further that you are no longer the central authority.

4. Teacher begins a fairly structured discussion, at least initially, to help reinforce the difference between having reasons and merely expressing personal opinions.

5. All rules for leading a discussion apply.

6. Decentralize your role as a teacher.

- Throw questions back to the group rather → than answer them yourself.
- Ask for contrasting views, especially after a run of similar views.
- Occasionally review positions, particularly balancing two sides against each other.
- Express your own view where appropriate as a "seed", but always ask for contrasting views.
- Periodically play devil's advocate. Where classes align on one particular view that is challenged by other perspectives, you need to present and defend the unpopular position. These are often issues that deepen discussion to evoke challenging issues and clarify values more fully.

7. Realize that issues involve values. Well-developed positions cannot be formed without incorporating the appropriate scientific knowledge. Similar attitudes and discussion techniques apply to addressing other social issues as well.

8. Addressing ethical issues explicitly in the classroom can introduce unwanted problems. For instance, it is important to plan and evaluate an alternative activity for those excused from a discussion or a field trip. To regard such issues institutionally, however, or to take one stance as assumed, is to neglect our duty to teach all of science and agriscience (The Science Teacher, January 1991).

Copyright Laws

Good teachers are always looking for new and effective teaching materials and photocopiers have made that as easy as a walk down the hall.

The copyright laws enacted by the U. S. Congress in 1909, and more recently in 1976, were passed to protect the writer's efforts. The part of the new copyright laws (1976) that should be most important to teachers is the fair use guidelines. These guidelines specify what printed material teachers may copy and under what conditions. Teachers may make a single copy of the following for class preparation:

1. book chapter
2. newspaper article
3. magazine article
4. short story
5. essay
6. poem
7. diagram
8. chart
9. picture
10. cartoon

Teachers may also make copies for students of an article or short story if it is shorter than 2500 words.

These guidelines may seem restrictive, but teachers have more freedom to copy than the average citizen.

Special Rules for Videotapes

Video is also covered by copyright laws. Copyrighted television programs (most are) can only be kept for 45 days, after which they must be erased. During the first 10 days after the taping, the teacher may only show the tape twice: once for "initial presentation" and once when "instructional reinforcement" is called for. (Ryan, 1992)

Outside the Classroom

The Agriculture Teacher's Creed states that one is a teacher by choice and not by chance. With their choice is the responsibility of integrity. The real test of the creed comes when an event happens and catches us unprepared. How we react to these moments of truth reflects our own integrity and may shape the belief system of our students.

One such "moment of truth" was shared by a preservice teacher during an agricultural education Methods class:

We were returning from an FFA trip and our agriculture teacher was driving the school van. There were about 12 students and the teacher on this trip. We decided to stop and tour a university campus. We pulled into a parking lot and parked the van, and spent the next hour walking around taking in the sights. We stayed longer than our teacher wanted, were running late, quickly got in the van, and backed out without looking. Almost immediately, there was a crash, and we all got out to see the damage. We had backed into a car and caved in the driver's door. We looked around, but were the only people in the lot. After seeing the damage and checking the parking lot, our agriculture teacher said, "Well, no harm done here. Get back in the van." We headed for home.

This story is true, even if a bit extreme, but the fact remains that some of our most lasting instruction is through example.

The Teacher

"I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it, day by day;
And molded it with power and art —
A young child's soft and yielding heart.
I came again when years were gone,
It was a man I looked upon,
He still that early impress bore,
and I could change that form no more."

(Ryan, 1992, p. 48)

Students will measure our integrity every day not only in what we say but in how we deal with it. We must always remember that integrity is not just a classroom topic, but an ethical way of living.

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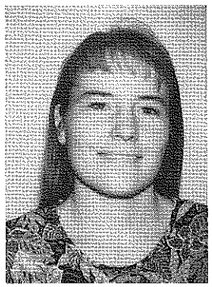
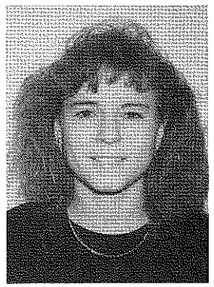
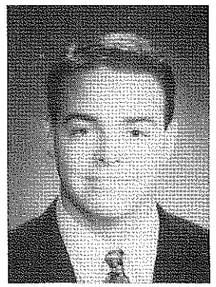
The Integrity Test

"We must believe the things we teach our children."
Woodrow Wilson







BY KELLIE J. COONRAD, PEGGY L. LOFQUIST, K RENAE SOUTHWICK, AND DONALD C. THORN

Miss Coonrad, Miss Lofquist, Miss Southwick, and Mr. Thorn are preservice students majoring in agricultural education at Colorado State University.

Integrity Test #1: Colorado State FFA Judging Contests...

The State FFA Judging Contest is the culmination of many hours of hard work and dedication on the part of students and agriculture instructors. The top 15% of the students in a contest area will receive gold awards and will not, by state mandate, be allowed to compete in the same contest area in subsequent years. On the contrary, silver, and bronze award winners will be allowed to return for competition. The awards ceremony at the State FFA Judging Contest is emotionally charged. Judging teams and advisors are anxious to hear the results of the contests. As the awards are announced, many are surprised that a team known throughout the state to be a top judging team places silver, yet neither the team nor the coach seem upset or surprised. Is this the result of a bad day of judging, or could there be more to this picture than meets the eye? Knowing that with an extra year of preparation this team might win the state contest and therefore represent Colorado at the national contest, did the coach suggest to his team to take a "dive" on a class? If so, how does this impact the students' perceptions and feelings for the value of integrity? What are the long term effects to the students and the teacher?

Manipulation of "rules" is not foreign to contestants and coaches. This scenario is an example of the misguided emphasis often placed on winning. There is hardly a situation more discouraging than a coach and students sacrificing their integrity in such a way. This suggests to the students that such behavior may be appropriate in future situations.

Integrity Test #2: Fairness in the Classroom...

Dynamic classroom settings present a multitude of challenges for a teacher of agricultural education. A common example is presented when the academic achievement of a student threatens his/her eligibility to participate in a leadership event. A student received the chapter nomination to participate in the Prepared Public Speaking Contest at the district level. This student is capable of excelling in the contest, however, his/her participation hinges on his/her grade in Ag II (which is currently 68%). Does the instructor increase the percentage grade to the minimum passing level of 70% in order to allow the student to compete in the contest? If the grade is changed, does this set a precedent for future eligibility conflicts?

This is a difficult test of integrity for any instructor because grades do not always accurately reflect s a student's overall ability. However, grades are a criterion for student participation in most school events. A teacher who chooses to ignore the eligibility policy of the school not only demonstrates a lack of integrity, but also creates other potential problems as well. Students may lose respect and trust in their instructor because they believe the instructor has made exceptions for certain individuals. Moreover, the instructor may be expected to create new rules for individual situations as they arise in the future.

Integrity Test #3: Search for the Solution...

As preservice teachers, we have come to recognize that our program at Colorado State University may not be all things to everybody. By accepting this fact, we have committed ourselves to bridge the gap between the program and the expectations of the profession. Agricultural education students at Colorado State University initiated the Agricultural Mechanics Round Robin to supplement the Agricultural Mechanics curriculum. Over 20 students, 10 area Agricultural Education instructors, and the Colorado State University agricultural education staff supported this two day event with their participation, enthusiasm, and commitment. Those involved were exposed to the most recent safety practices, technological advancements and "hands-on" skills. Instead of decrying Colorado State University's lack of facilities and equipment necessary to provide "top flight" instruction in agricultural mechanics, we took it upon ourselves to search out a solution.

Realizing that there is room for improvement in every situation, we must face any weaknesses in a situation and remedy them. We have to continue to develop our integrity, believing that we "can make a living by what we say, but we can make a life by what we do" (author unknown).

"Individuals possessing integrity can be trusted in work and action, in planning and implementation, in professional and personal dealings, to hold to the highest standards.

"Their work and their handshake are as strong as a 100-page legal document and several escrow accounts" (Ginsburg, 1992). Without a doubt, integrity measures the difference between a successful person and a mediocre person. The development of integrity is a lifelong process, aided by exposure to different people and scenarios.

As preservice teachers, integrity is an issue of great importance to us. At the college level, we believe a primary focus of this instruction

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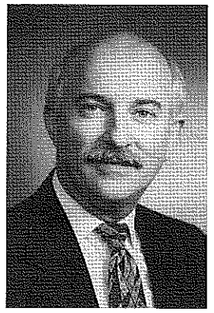
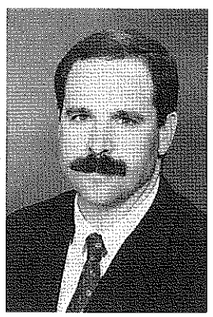
Ethics in Exhibiting and Showing Livestock—Facing Reality





BY DAVID M. COFFEY AND JEFF GOODWIN

Dr. Coffey is a professor of agricultural education at Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, and Dr. Goodwin is an extension agent in natural resources in Dallas County, Texas.

"The moment of victory is too short to live for that and nothing else."
—Martina Navratilova

A Sunday headline in the Kansas City Star, April 2, 1995, addresses "problems" in the livestock show industry. Ann Landers alerts nation of problem of showing pigs in competition followed up three weeks later with responses from an outraged readership. Three livestock exhibitors are "banned for life" from the Louisville North American Livestock Exposition. A lamb beating incident is captured on video for statewide news coverage. Eight of the top-placing animals at the Ohio State Fair are disqualified for vegetable oil or drug contamination. A show fitter is convicted of complicity to cheat, to commit forgery, and to contributing to the delinquency of a minor. At its national meeting, the Livestock Conservation Institute goes on record as making educating producers about unethical conduct regarding livestock exhibition a major objective for 1995-96. A state veterinarian detects clenbuterol in the retinas of slaughtered steers. In two consecutive editions, The Farm Journal features articles on cheating in the livestock show industry.

As leaders in agricultural education search and implement better methods of teaching in and about agriculture, the challenge of ethics education should not be overlooked. It should be understood that agricultural education has no monopoly on the overwhelming subject of ethics. Instead, this is a challenge that touches all aspects of our lives. Herein awaits a tremendous opportunity—if we have the courage to address this timely issue.

The character of youth, as adults, is largely formed in the same "window of time" in which they exhibit livestock. Agricultural educators have the responsibility and opportunity to use this common window of opportunity to make the world a much better place. Can we neglect this awesome responsibility and instead produce citizens who are a drain on society?

In some areas of the country, select groups help dictate what is to be taught, when it is to be taught, and most important, what is not to be taught. While we cannot legislate or regulate morality, as professionals in agricultural education, we can make morality a part of education.

Forgetting for a minute any special interest group that might oppose the responsible use of animals in our society, can we justify our own behaviors as they apply to the exhibition of livestock? When do accusations and innuendo become reality? Do livestock showing competitions and exhibitions foster unethical behavior?

Why should agricultural education students participate in livestock shows? Anyone who has participated in them at any level is convinced that the pluses outweigh the minuses. Selecting and training an animal for exhibition helps create the personal and leadership values of teamwork, sportsmanship, competition, discipline, and responsibility. Developing pride in ownership, a business sense, and occupational experience are outcomes of producing and exhibiting show animals. Family togetherness as well as education in and about the agricultural industry are obvious benefits. Teachers learn the necessity of family cooperation, personality differences, community structure, and hard work while assisting individuals prior to and during competition.

Even though the vast majority of those involved in exhibiting livestock will not tolerate unethical behavior, incidents such as those listed at the beginning of this article have brought to the forefront the need for reassessing livestock shows and the ethics involved therein. Would a top prize of $50,000 make you reassess the right and wrong of a given situation? What are the issues and where are the blames?

Examination of recent occurrences indicate four major areas regarding unethical behavior:

1. False ownership/identification
2. Illegal drugs
3. Physical alteration including physical abuse
4. Professional fitters

False Ownership/Identification

A grand champion steer thought already slaughtered in one state was declared grand champion in another state. Who is responsible?

Some exhibitors (or parents or supervisors of exhibitors) are guilty of the dishonest practice of lying about the true ownership of show animals. In some localities it is a common practice to pool animals and take the best to a major livestock show regardless of ownership. →

There have been countless cases of breeders and professional groomers and fitters, commonly known as "jocks", simply using a young person to exhibit an animal with the bulk of the proceeds going back to the breeder. These kinds of situations are intolerable.

Even the seemingly harmless fudging (which is actually lying) about having an animal on feed from a certain date should not be tolerated. If we teach students that it is acceptable to lie and not follow rules in youth competitions, we pave the way for lying and not playing by the rules as adults.

Illegal Drugs

Tranquilizers, diuretics, and anti-inflammatory agents have been used illegally in livestock shows for years. Advances in drug testing and changes in attitudes regarding the use of these products has changed their acceptability. However, a new drug, clenbuterol, is the most notorious illegal substance to emerge in the show barn. Clenbuterol is a bronchiodialator used unscrupulously to build muscle mass in show animals. Its use is illegal in the United States and in food animals worldwide. In some states, one can be sent to prison for just possessing clenbuterol. The use of clenbuterol has caused human illness in Europe, particularly in Spain in 1989 where 135 people were hospitalized after eating clenbuterol-tainted meat.

With livestock shows functioning as both a showcase for animal agriculture and a window to food production for the consumer, there is no place in an exposition for a substance such as clenbuterol. There should be no tolerance and no second chances for those who dare play with this substance. Exhibitors who dare to use clenbuterol must receive swift and severe punishment.

Physical Alteration

A scene from the video "A Question of Ethics" shows the judge giving the slap indicating the winner of a steer show and the steer then exploding from too much air injected under the hide. This practice and practices such as incorporating "creative dentistry," injecting vegetable oil under the skin, and changing the color pattern of an animal are unethical.

There is a huge difference in showing an animal to the judge at its best visual advantage and engaging in deceit and deception. There is a difference in training an animal to stand on all four corners and in training a person in the creative use of binder twine.

Professional Fitters and Groomers

The hushed remark at some livestock shows is: "I'll bet the student never saw that animal until it was led to him/her ringside". As a teacher should you tolerate this type of behavior? "Jocks" have been at the center of many national incidents of unethical activity. Often they are the "middle person" in securing a livestock project animal and assist with its training and exhibition. These individuals evoke many ethical questions about the role of the student in planning and carrying out a livestock experience project. Do we really want "turn-key" projects for a student just to lead, hold, or drive in a show ring?

What Can We Do About These Issues

As parents, teachers, potential judges, and responsible citizens, we can make a difference! There are some basic rules by which we can abide:

Parents

1. *Remember that successful livestock exhibitors aren't automatically crooked.* Don't jump to conclusions just because a particular family is a regular winner at a livestock show. The vast majority of families who are successful in exhibiting livestock have learned many sound and honest lessons from the school of hard knocks.

2. *Expect zero tolerance for unethical behavior.* It is your personal responsibility for you and your child to not engage in unethical activity.

3. *Cool your adult egos.* Don't reincarnate your days of youth where you came in second or third and vowed to get even with whomever. Don't make your child replay your past problems.

4. *Help other students as well as your children.* One of the best signals of a good parent is one who will assist other kids as much as their own.

Teachers/FFA Advisors

1. *Know and communicate the rules of the show.* Communicate the rules to your students and their parents. Also communicate the ramifications of violating the rules. Insist on zero tolerance for unethical behavior.

2. *Don't look the other way or ignore unethical behavior.* Many times the easiest thing to do is nothing. It is often difficult to "do the right thing" or to ensure that students and parents do the right thing. It may not be pleasant, but you will sleep better at night for having done the right thing.

3. *Provide education about ethics in everyday life.* Relate that there are right and wrong courses of action in every aspect of our lives.

4. *Be a role model who espouses fairness and honesty.*

5. *Make use of human resources including parents and reputable professional fitters and breeders.* Professional fitters and groomers aren't all bad. A resourceful teacher will utilize qualified individuals to educate all students.

Let parents and fitters teach, but do not allow them to do a student's work. Take the → clippers out of hands of adults and professionals, and put them into the hands of students. Ensure that they teach all students, and not just a select group of "client" students.

6. *Be proactive.* Teach right from wrong so incidents don't happen.

7. *Don't respond negatively if your program is host to an unfortunate unethical situation.* If your students are caught in an unethical situation, the two worst possible scenarios would be to ignore it or to mount a local public relations initiative pleading your program's innocence. Don't deny that an incident has happened. And don't tolerate the behavior because "it has always happened".

Everyone

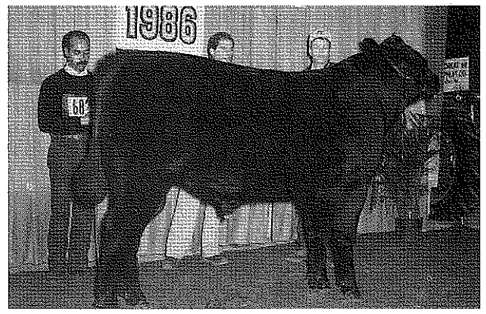
1. *Bring down the "curtain of silence".* When we engage in the practice of "just keeping quiet," we hold up a curtain of silence for the "unethical few" to work behind. If we cannot begin to openly and honestly discuss our problems, the day when commercial agriculture turns its back on livestock show competition will be at hand. Silence is consent.

2. *Don't put yourself in a position of standing up for the "unethical few".* The vast majority of those involved in showing livestock are doing the right thing, but the time has come not to tolerate those who do not. That is a good position to take on any issue—as long as we mean what we say and we back that position with action.

Innovative Changes

Can the livestock industry make a difference in making the exposition of livestock less conducive to unethical behavior? Many states have implemented changes. Other states are following their leads in reassessing livestock shows and showmanship. Some suggestions include:

1. Select a double grand champion system based on an animal's ranking in the live show combined with a "skill-a-thon" which tests knowledge of projects. Select champions based on the skill and knowledge of the exhibitor as well as showmanship.



Livestock showing provides students and advisors with many leadership qualities. Is winning too much of a concern for most agricultural education students? (Photo courtesy of Meng Angus Farms, Bowling Green, KY.)

2. Go "back-to-the-basics" and reward practical agriculture. In some states "average daily gain" is a major judging criterion—not so much to decide between first and second place but to eliminate "poor doers." A "poor doer" might be a lamb that has been in a three month severe holding pattern.

3. Implement an "in-state" or "in-county" bred rule where all steer projects are purchased from an approved list of commercial breeders. Take the show from the professional fitters and return it to a truly educational approach.

4. Implement "caps" on premiums to address exorbitant premiums paid to top winners. Distribute prize moneys more widely among a larger number of exhibitors.

5. Solicit technical assistance from FDA and other federal and state agencies to help enforce the rules and to lessen liability on the local show.

6. Slaughter the top ten steers, lambs, and hogs with an "enhanced carcass inspection," using in-depth sampling, and testing for illegal substances such as clenbuterol.

7. Avoid identification problems by implementing regulations which require nose prints for lambs and steers or tamper-proof ear tags for all. Some states have even gone to DNA fingerprinting to insure ownership and identification.

8. Participate in livestock show ethics educational programs. Many local and state programs provide these programs and are mandatory for eligibility at the local show.

Traditionally, educational leaders have addressed the issue of unethical activity associated with livestock expositions solely as an issue of animal husbandry. Rules were implemented regarding drug testing, slick shearing, electronic identification, etc. However, the issue is not strictly an "animal issue". It is actually a three-pronged issue for animal husbandry, food safety, and the most neglected aspect, PEOPLE. No lasting progress will be made on this problem until it is addressed as an ethical issue regarding people.

As agricultural educators, our mission is to teach young people. Work, responsibility, leadership, competition, honesty, and integrity are major values worth our efforts. Cheating, tampering, and fraud are not. If we can't agree that livestock exhibitions must have zero tolerance for unethical behavior, is there any inherent issue on which we can agree?

Editor's Note: Additional information on issues related to animals including the exhibition of livestock is available from the National Council Project on "Instructional Materials on Animal Welfare". ■

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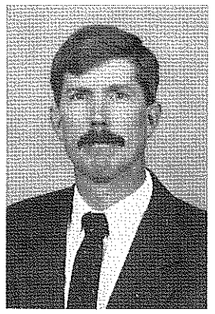
Ethical Standards: Helping Students See the Light



BY MIKE CAMPBELL

Mr. Campbell is an agricultural education instructor at Imperial High School, Imperial, California.

When we open a newspaper today or turn on the television news, chances are that an item will come to our attention about some crime or unethical matter involving a child. Today, the media is filled with the actions of young people that make us question what is happening with America's youth. Perhaps most appalling is that, when questioned why they did it, the responses of these young offenders indicate a lack of a conscious, or at least a reduced sense, of what we believe to be ethical standards. They may believe that the only error in their actions was in getting caught, or that it was the victim's fault for being at the scene and getting in the way. Most of us teaching agricultural education do not face the extreme cases which reach the local newspaper, but we do face the constant struggle to develop a sense and practice of ethics in our students. With this in mind, I believe that we must examine what we do to help students develop appropriate standards of ethics and that we hold students to these standards.

Families are the major contributors to instilling in students a sense of right and wrong. In most children, parents have done an excellent job in helping to build a strong basic character. Teachers also play a significant role in the development of students' ethical standards. Regardless of race, color, or creed, professional teachers have complemented the training that parents initiate by getting their students to understand that what is fundamentally right or wrong is the same for all people. Today, the delivery may have to vary and more attention may have to be paid to certain individuals, especially to those who have not had much opportunity for the reinforcement of values in their lives. These children may be surrounded by adults and peers who do not present an example of socially acceptable behavior.

By the time most students reach high school, their capacity to reason abstractly has begun to develop, as evidenced by all of the times they try to convince you that they are right and you are wrong. Here is our chance as professional educators to take that new-found ability and guide them into looking beyond simply right and wrong. We can build on that and try to get students to realize that their actions today are setting in motion standards that will direct them in the future. When a student enrolls in vocational agriculture, we are provided a great opportunity to work with and help mold young people into productive citizens.

Within the traditional components of an agricultural education program, classroom and laboratory instruction, Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) programs, and the FFA, students are given an opportunity to develop their skills and prove themselves in competition. In all three areas, developing responsibility is at the heart of what we can do to help build character. Whether in the classroom or laboratory, an FFA activity, or an SAE project, it should be the student's responsibility to accomplish the desired goal. This does not mean to simply "cast off the student to sink or swim", rather this makes them truly understand that they are the ones who need to make their own decisions. They will reap the rewards of victories but they also need to be able to handle the disappointment of not winning with the attitude that they have learned through their experiences. In either case, the students need to have it reinforced that they, good or bad, are responsible for their actions.

When looking to develop student responsibility and ethics, agricultural educators need to take an active role in all aspects of the program. In the classroom, the teacher should provide a learning environment that models the FFA Motto in learning by doing. Balancing progressive curriculum with tried and true methods works to enhance students' opportunities for employment, either in entry level positions or those that require post-secondary education.

The area of supervised agricultural experience programs draws perhaps our greatest praise (or biggest criticism), especially at the local level. Many students like to raise animals for their projects. In doing so, they are taught how to keep records and care for the animals. They should be reminded that these projects are undertaken to provide an end product for human consumption.

Though not a new concern, animal rights and the improper use of chemicals in show animals has recently drawn criticism. In many of these situations, the agriculture instructor →

was not involved, but teachers still must help students and parents understand the importance of ethical behavior. More than ever, all parties involved should be reminded of the responsibility in caring for living animals. Their behavior not only reflects on themselves and the agriculture program, but on the entire industry of agriculture. Helping students understand this will guide them in making correct decisions.

Probably the greatest impact that agricultural instructors can have with students is that garnered though the students' participation in FFA activities. From the time when students learn the FFA Motto and when they repeat those words at the beginning of each FFA meeting, "To practice brotherhood, honor agricultural opportunities and responsibilities, and develop those qualities of leadership which an FFA member should possess", students hear what can be the foundation of a strong sense of well-being and ethics. Through competitive activities, students generally show the best or worst of themselves to peers and adults.

To start, teachers need to get students actively involved, whether it be a local FFA barbecue or participation in a state judging contest. Through their involvement, students are in the public eye. And, therefore, the teacher has the opportunity to remind them about proper behavior and how others perceive what students are doing.

Once we get students involved, they need to be taught not only the how-to's of a contest, but also how to handle victory and defeat. In winning, students need to feel good about what they have accomplished. Generally, everyone wants to win. Teachers want their students to win and to give the best possible chance of winning, they train them, practice with them, and push them. When students do not win, they also need to be prepared to accept that. Oftentimes, how one handles defeat can be a greater measure of character than winning. Students must be reminded that they are all winners by getting involved and that involvement puts them ahead of those who choose to sit on the sidelines and just watch.

In writing this article, I looked at things that have worked for me. I believe that most successful agriculture teachers have the desire to be good role models for children. Our job is to teach students and develop their leadership skills so they can cooperate with one another and become productive citizens in this country. Although we are not, after all, immune to the forces which promote winning in order to make the program look good to the community and school administrators, let's not get caught up in that syndrome where we teach our kids to win at any cost.

As an elective program in most schools, the success that students bring is the measurement of how well our program is succeeding. I would hope, however, that this success is based on the goals of the FFA and with the students' best interests in mind. If a victory is gained in something but there is no honesty in that victory, years of hard work can be wiped out. Victories come and go, but one unethical act will be the one that will be remembered. Agriculture teachers must lead their students into the arena in which ethical behavior is pervasive and students take pride in their honest hard work and high standards. ■

Promoting Integrity Through the Profession

(Continued from page 3)

role play and the use of case studies. Case studies should be developed carefully, with sufficient detail to achieve the planned objectives. Each student in class should have the opportunity to assume a variety of roles including that of authority figure, perpetrator, customer, etc. A thorough processing of the issues, actions, and feeling experienced by the students and teacher through role play should provide a number of "teachable moments."

A Covenant for Educators

The covenant of most modern educators is to provide a positive learning climate in which all students can reach a degree of personal success. Whether at the elementary or secondary level, university classroom or livestock show ring, the virtues of integrity . . . honesty, fairness, responsibility, trust, and accountability . . . are to be valued and eagerly pursued as components of student success. These traits, although perhaps challenging at times to define and assess, can be planted, nurtured, and matured through the myriad of learning opportunities that exist naturally in most agricultural education programs—SAEs, FFA, classroom and laboratory instruction, and adult education. There is little question of the essentialness of integrity as one indicator of a graduate's potential for success. Therefore, the promotion of integrity must continue to be recognized and valued within the core mission of agricultural education and tightly embraced by its professionals.

The vast majority of Americans share a respect for certain fundamental traits of character: honesty, compassion, courage, and perseverance. But because children are not born with this knowledge, they need to learn what these virtues are.

William J. Bennett

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Inculcating Integrity in Young Minds

BY VALERIE TRUJILLO

Dr. Trujillo is principal of Cottonwood Plains Elementary School, Fort Collins, Colorado.

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

It was 1977, while I was researching my doctoral dissertation (Trujillo, 1979), when the power of the concept of integrity hit me with full force. I was in the midst of tabulating responses to a questionnaire which asked what was the most important characteristic of a successful school administrator. Hundreds of individuals from all over the world who were practicing school administrators were in agreement... *Integrity* was the most highly-rated, important characteristic for a successful school administrator. That impressed me almost twenty years ago and remains a significant success factor in my mind. I've never forgotten that survey result.

When I began reading the works of Stephen Covey (1989), it was apparent he had some of the same understandings of the importance of ethical behavior in leaders. Much of his work focuses on the belief that "principle centered" lives are highly productive and personally satisfying. Integrity is one of those basic principles. Covey succinctly explains the meaning of integrity in one of his daily reflections books:

> "The degree to which we have developed our independent will in our everyday lives is measured by our personal integrity. Integrity is, fundamentally, the value we place on ourselves. It's our ability to make and keep commitments to ourselves, to 'walk our talk.' It's honor with self, a fundamental part of the Character Ethic, the essence of proactive growth" (Covey, 1989).

The importance of integrity is woven throughout Covey's work and holds significance in the philosophical underpinnings of Cottonwood Plains Elementary School in Fort Collins, Colorado. At Cottonwood, staff members believe part of their mission is to support the growing child with academic skills, social skills, and self responsibility. Integrity is part of self-responsibility.

The Cottonwood staff has made a serious commitment to supporting children's development of positive character traits. The school staff has a plan that is multifaceted and based on systematic development of positive characters traits, including integrity. There are five key components to our approach:

1. Systematic development of vocabulary and concepts
2. Clear expectations based on high standards
3. Intervention procedures that complement the developing traits
4. Consistent exposure to positive adult role models
5. Plenty of opportunity to practice

Systematic Development of Vocabulary and Concepts

The first of these building blocks is a published program which provides the language experiences necessary to talk about students' behaviors and responsibilities. Students and teachers need to be able to communicate effectively with each other about character concepts and issues.

During the past ten years there has been a dramatic change in the language skills of incoming kindergarten children. Receptive and expressive language, including vocabulary and basic concepts, has decreased each year. Children quite simply do not have the same level of skills when they come to school as they have had in previous years. These depressed levels of language ability affect everything we do in school. This is true for the vocabulary used in talking about character traits. The teacher and students in a classroom need to have the appropriate words to talk with each other about these complex concepts.

When we built the Cottonwood Plains School two years ago, one of our first decisions as a faculty was to select a **systematic program of vocabulary and concept development** around character building. There are several programs to choose from; we selected Positive Action (Allred, 1982). This program can be characterized as a set of strategies for developing an understanding of character and the complementary vocabulary.

The program begins with a word of the week. These words are identified and then discussed in the context of life situations that the children encounter. The words are displayed throughout the school, in hallways, the cafeteria, etc. Each of these words are used by all the students and the staff during the week it is studied. Gradually over the year, the children have developed concepts based on these vocabulary words which have been infused with real meaning to the children. The staff reinforces these ideas on the playground, in the hallways and the cafeteria. Parents are involved by being aware of what is being taught that week. Teachers send information and activities home for all parents to use at their discretion.

Student acquisition of character vocabulary is essential. If we have no common language and cannot talk about behavior and responsibilities, then we have little hope of helping children understand these rather complicated ideas that govern our behaviors and decisions. The Positive Action program provides the needed vocabulary and concept base.

Clear Expectations Based on High Standards

The second ingredient in the Cottonwood →

plan is **clear expectations** that are high, but achievable. These expectations, of course, focus on academics. Yet, we do not stop there. Our school has high expectations for behaviors and social interactions as well. These expectations are clearly stated in a one-page Code of Conduct for the school. Students receive the Code during registration at the beginning of the school year and take it home where they discuss it with their parents. Each places their signature at the bottom of the sheet as an indication of their commitment to the Code.

Students also establish their code of conduct for behavior in their classrooms. The process of establishing this classroom code is completed early in the school year and involves the children talking about what they need to have in the classroom environment in order to be productive.

Intervention Procedures that Are Complementary

The third component is complementary to the Code of Conduct. This ingredient is the **intervention process** used whenever students need adult assistance. Quite frankly, the staff works very hard to ensure that problem interactions between students become learning opportunities. The old "crime and punishment" routine so long practiced in the schools of the past is now all but gone at Cottonwood Plains. What has been put into place instead is a system of problem solving that places the responsibility for behaviors in the hands of the individual who makes the choice of the behaviors.

The intervention system is a simple 4 x 6 piece of teal paper (our school color) with the four steps used in solving a behavior problem.

Each staff member has learned the "ticket system" and uses it consistently whenever needed. Incidentally, since we implemented this system, there are fewer instances where the adult supervisor has to intervene, and at those times the children are readily able to use the steps.

This simple system enables children to see they have control over their decisions, and they need to be responsible for what they choose to do. Inculcating this feeling of power and control over self is very important. Children need to have many opportunities to practice self-intervention and judgment. As young people develop these skills over time, they will become more adept at addressing increasingly sophisticated issues they must face.

Our school still has discipline procedures for the constantly disruptive child or for the serious offense that needs to be handled with more severe consequences. Occasionally we suspend students. However, this action is minimized under such a plan.

Positive Adult Role Models

The fourth aspect of our plan is to expose the children to positive adult role models. Staff interactions with students and parents must be based on the same principles that we are inculcating.

Staff members carry the heavy load of being models in their actions with the students and

PLAYGROUND TICKET

Student Name _____

Home Room _____ Date _____

Time of Incident (check one)
___ Before School
___ AM Recess
___ Lunch Recess
___ PM Recess
___ After School

Reason for Ticket (check appropriate spaces)
___ Fighting
___ Bad Language
___ Misuse of Equipment
___ Outside Playground Safety
___ Not Playing Safely
___ Failure to Follow Teacher's Direction
___ Other - Specify

_____

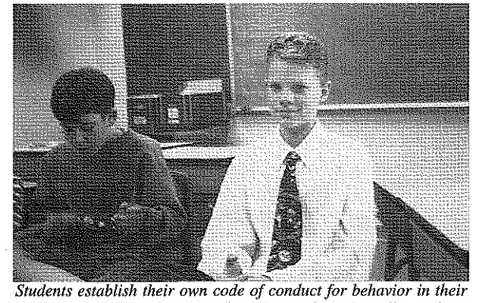
_____
Reporting Teacher's Name

Think Box Reflection
1. What poor choice did you make?
2. Why was it a poor choice?
3. What could you do differently next time?
4. If you make this poor choice again, what should your consequences be?

with each other. The culture of the school has been developed with this in mind. There are cooperative teams of staff members working with multiage groups of students. Close collaborative working relationships with these teams harbors a consistency that the children notice. Each of us strives to maintain high ethical standards in these relationships and in working with the young people.

Modeling is an effective force because children are always observing what is happening around them to learn if the "messages" are congruent. In an effort to widen their perspectives, Cottonwood has reached out to a variety of community agencies to provide additional models. The school formed a partnership with nearby Colorado State University to hold a one-day harvest festival. Students from the agricultural education program and area agricultural businesses and farms participated. The agriculture students did classroom presentations which posed interesting real life questions about food production, safety, market sources, etc. The children were enthralled with the animal pens and farm implement demonstrations. In addition, the agriculture students ate lunch with the children and visited with them about careers in agriculture and university opportunities. The role models were positive and the variety of people was wholesome.

Another example providing positive role models in the school is the Wednesday After School Class program (WAC). Community volunteers come into the school and work with small groups of children. The volunteers share a hobby or skill with the children for about one hour. During that time there is considerable dialog and idea sharing. Some of the classes are on self-esteem building while others are on art, drama, games, and athletic activities. The choices are many and the children make the selection in which they are more interested. The volunteers →



Students establish their own code of conduct for behavior in their classrooms. The process involves the students by talking about what they need to have in the classroom environment in order to be productive. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Valerie Trujillo.)

are quality professionals who participate because they want to help young people. The children see that there are many people in the community that care about them and are willing to share. School staff members screen and train these volunteers to ensure the appropriateness of the "match".

Plenty of Time To Practice

The fifth and final component is providing **plenty of time to practice**. We have found that children need to have many opportunities to try their character "wings." That means the staff has to be creative in providing multiple situations where children can use their new-found skills. One example that is used frequently in the upper grade levels is class meetings.

Each week (more often if the need arises) class meetings are held which are modeled after the ideas of William Glasser (1969). The students and the teacher sit in a circle. Items of interest to students are placed on the agenda, and the teacher may also suggest items for the class to discuss. It is important that a productive time of the day be set aside for this activity so that this is a quality exercise. Much is accomplished in these meetings. This is a perfect time to develop the employee skills of character. The skillful teacher can point out events and actions that demonstrate particular character traits. These are then discussed by students and various perspectives are shared. Vocabulary is utilized fully in this activity. Both the process and the product support the character development of the students.

There are cooperative teams of staff members working with multiage groups of students. Close collaborative working relationships with these teams harbors a consistency that the children notice. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Valerie Trujillo)

Multiage classrooms and multiage experiences provide another arena for practicing skills. Students are able to function in an atmosphere that is full of variety. By interacting cooperatively with children other than homeroom peers, children have opportunities to again bring in their relationships. Changes in routine also provide an opportunity for the classroom teacher to talk about interactions with peers and to reestablish cooperative cultures.

Another venue for practicing positive character is through cooperative learning and teaching. Results from classroom research on effective teaching strategies continue to show that cooperative learning is an extremely productive method of learning. Cooperative activities, conducted with good teacher guidance, offer fertile ground for promoting positive interactions. Cooperative groups operate much better when personal integrity is a standard and when self-responsibility models cooperative learning and the Slavin model. A recent training session using the concepts of Spencer Kagan was very helpful.

There are five key ingredients in our school's plan to provide an extensive supplement to character education, including developing and supporting the quality of integrity. Cottonwood uses a multifaceted and systematic approach that

Parents are involved by being aware of the positive action program and the concepts being taught. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Valerie Trujillo)

supports the groundwork already established in the home before children ever come to school.

Each of the five components can stand alone and have some remarkable effect on the students. However, the melding together of each of these five creates a synergy that has been very effective. Both student and parent surveys have yielded data that show the school is making remarkable strides in fostering positive character trait development. Reduction in the number of negative behavior incidents also indicates the program's effectiveness.

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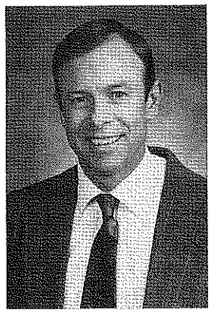
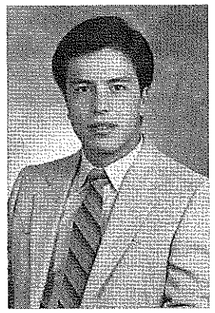
Promoting Ethics in Agricultural Education Through Preservice





BY THOMAS J. DORMODY AND ROBERT M. TORRES

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Introduction

Ethics is at the top of a list of concerns for today's organizations. For example, Genasci (1995) reported the results of a national survey showing 60% of American companies have a code of ethics, 33% offer training in business ethics, and 33% have ethics offices to handle employee inquiries about ethical behavior. In rapidly changing and increasingly complex professions like agricultural education, many of the most important and hotly debated issues are ethical.

Ethics is defined as a set of moral principles or values. When an individual or group takes an action that is contrary to the moral principles and values of others, an ethical issue can arise. We don't have to look far for ethical issues in agricultural education. For example, actions contrary to the ethics, rules, and laws governing youth livestock shows have been nationally publicized lately. Indeed, ethical issues reside in everything agricultural educators do, from classroom management to staying within an annual budget. Yet, it is amazing how much disagreement can occur about the ethics of the solutions to daily professional problems. This article will address sources of ethical disagreements and how preservice programs for Agricultural Educators can teach ethics.

Dimensions and Ideologies of Ethics

Forsyth (1980) provided a taxonomy of ethical ideologies that helps explain why there are ethical disagreements over decisions and actions taken by individuals and groups. The taxonomy is based on the two dimensions of ethics: "relativism" or the degree to which one "rejects universal moral rules" when making moral judgments, and "idealism" or the degree to which one believes "that desirable consequences can, with the right action, always be obtained". From these two dimensions, Forsyth derived the four ethical ideologies listed in Table 1.

In the arts, authors and screenwriters often create tension in a story by developing conflicts between individuals with different ethical ideologies, especially between those in diagonal quadrants (Table 1). We observe classic confrontations between the absolutist and the subjectivist in films like "A Man for All Seasons" (Sir Thomas Moore vs. Henry VIII) and "Inherit the Wind" (pseudonyms were used in this film for William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow). In "Star Trek," while developing solutions to novel problems encountered in outer space, much of the interest aboard the starship *Enterprise* is generated from the interaction between situationists like Captain Kirk or Dr. McCoy who both place great value on outcomes that benefit the individual, and the exceptionist, Mr. Spock, for whom logic dictates action, unless, though he doesn't understand it logically, conditions pragmatically supersede pure logic and dictate otherwise.

Some believe one can and should move between these different ethical ideologies. Covey (1991) says that principle-centered leaders "have the power to discriminate, to sense the similarities and differences in each situation. This does not mean they see everything in terms of situational ethics. They fully recognize absolutes and courageously condemn the bad and champion the good." If we accept Covey's (1991) definition of principles as the "values, ideas, norms, and teachings that uplift, ennoble, fulfill, empower, and inspire people", it would be difficult for professionals, regardless of dominant ethical ideology, to accept a practice such as an Agricultural Educator fitting a livestock project for a student while that student is enjoying the rides on the midway.

Ethics are also culturally based (Hodgson, 1994). What may be right in one culture may be wrong in another. Star Trek explores how ethics are culturally based whenever the →

TABLE 1 ***Taxonomy of Ethical Ideologies*** **(Forsyth, 1980)**

	Low relativism	High relativism
Low idealism	**Exceptionist** Moral absolutes guide judgments but pragmatically open to exceptions to these standards.	**Absolutist** Assumes that the best possible outcome can be always achieved by following universal rules.
High idealism	**Subjectivist** Appraisal based on personal values and perspectives rather than universal moral principles.	**Situationist** Rejects moral rules; advocates individualistic analysis of each act in each situation.

crew of the *Enterprise* encounters a new civilization. Clark and Clark (1994) discuss how cultural differences in behavior can lead to ethical issues. For example, "a supervisor who talks about a subordinate's personal difficulties to his colleagues when the person is absent is deemed inconsiderate in Britain and the U.S. but considerate in Hong Kong and Japan" (1994). The Japanese manager who comes to the U.S. without knowledge of this cultural difference may be labeled unethical for such behavior. Therefore, cultural awareness is part of understanding ethics and making ethical decisions. In other words, relativism and idealism must be considered in a cultural context.

The Dangers of Relativism

Professionals are more likely to be criticized about an action due to their degree of relativism than their degree of idealism. This is not to suggest that any one of the ethical ideologies is more ethical than another. However, full or even partial rejection of universal moral principles can open one up to the ethical scrutiny of others. Those who adhere to a set of universal principles, and other relativistic people (with a different solution), could be critical of a relativistic solution to a problem. "That is not the way I would have handled it."

In contrast, although they may receive a label as a "person of principles," those who adhere strictly to universal moral principles might also have their ethics questioned by others. "Even though the students were caught drinking, the teacher could have made an exception in this case and let the students make the trip . . . they've been such good students over the years." Yet, we know of agricultural education professionals who have handled this same situation differently. Who is right? Is one solution more ethical than another? In situations such as this, idealism is also problematic. In other words, it is difficult to find solutions with desirable consequences for everyone.

Agricultural educators are commonly exposed to pressures from others to bend universal or personal moral principles or rules, to look the other way, or to make exceptions. We have heard horror stories about agricultural educators who have stuck by a decision and acted on principles or the rules and lost their job because of it. We might say to a class of preservice agricultural education students that if they have to risk unemployment because of fairly, firmly, and consistently enforcing rules (developed by the stakeholders and the educator and communicated clearly to and accepted by everyone), then they don't want to work "there" anyway. But this discussion offers little comfort to someone who is caught up in such a conflict.

Teaching Ethics to Preservice Agricultural Educators

Can ethics be taught? While it becomes a question of ethics itself for university agricultural educators to "promote" their ethical ideology, the concept of ethics can and should be explored with preservice students in agricultural education. Ethics should be integrated into all professional development courses and it has a natural home in leadership courses. The focus should be on teaching about ethics and how to teach them to others (i.e., youth). Methods most conducive to teaching ethics involve group problem-solving activities like simulations (e.g., role playing and case study analysis) and group discussion. These allow students to interact, explore, and weigh the consequences of different solutions, and discover their own and other's ethical ideologies. The problems should focus on decisions and actions that lead to ethical disagreements. The intent of these learning activities is to look beyond one solution and explore the consequences (both positive and negative) of a variety of solutions and their ethical foundations.

One way to address ethics in preservice courses is with "Where Do You Draw the Line? The Ethics Game" (Shirts, 1977). This commercially available simulation promotes student dialogue about the decisions and actions of individuals in case studies. For example: *Pat is the principal of a high school. He/She accepts a pair of expensive leather driving gloves for Christmas from the sales representative of a large school supply company with which he/she does business.* Should we question the ethics of Pat's decision to accept the gloves? The students' answers will depend on their dominant ethical ideology (Table 1). Other case studies can be developed by faculty to cover problems specific to the profession. Here is an example that we developed for this article: *Alex is the agricultural education teacher who witnesses one of his/her students violating a county fair rule when preparing an animal for a livestock show. A fair board policy specifically states that violators will be disqualified from the show. This student also happens to be the child of Alex's school board president.* What would you do in Alex's situation?

The solutions to these problems will vary from one person to another. The four ethical ideologies offer preservice students a way to understand their own thinking and a foundation for discussing the consequences of solutions based on other ideologies. As part of the discussion, faculty might emphasize solutions that reduce or minimize the risk of ethical disagreements. That could mean understanding the dominant ethical ideologies of the important →

stakeholders involved in a potential problem and its solution. An ethical issue is less likely to arise when a solution is congruent with the ethics of the stakeholders. The ability to base decisions and actions on the ethics of stakeholders may mean an agricultural educator will have to develop and implement solutions outside of their modal ethical ideology. Consideration of the ethics of the stakeholders is an eclectic, democratic, and often collaborative approach to problem solving that always stimulates discussion among students. Again, this is not to imply there is only one correct approach or solution to ethical problems. However, it is when one selects a solution that is dissonant with the ethical beliefs of important stakeholders that ethical issues may lead to dire consequences for the agricultural educator.

Summary

Barker (1994) defines leadership in an ethical context: "leadership is the process of combining the ethics of individuals into the mores of a community." If we forge the mores of a profession or an organization from the universal and situational ethics of individuals and do so with consideration for the cultural dimension, then a sound base from which to make ethical decisions can be built. The seven overarching goals for agricultural education (National Council for Agricultural Education, 1990) represent a partial set of mores for our community in what we value as a profession. If our professionals and future professionals base their decisions on these goals and other organizationally-universal moral principles, if they communicate these principles and the rules derived from them clearly and comprehensively and administer them fairly and consistently, then ethical issues should be diminished. When they do arise, we need to encourage agricultural educators, especially new ones, to seek the advice of mentor teachers and professionals. Experience will continue to be a great teacher for avoiding or handling ethical issues for which there are no organizational mores.

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The Integrity Test

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should be to expose students to various real life experiences which may or may nor test their integrity. These experiences, like those mentioned in our scenarios, may include attending classes, serving as leaders in student organizations, working as student employees, participating in various FFA and agricultural education activities, and student teaching. The experiences will provide preservice teachers with the opportunity to observe others and to develop their own beliefs about right and wrong.

Believing that integrity is a key to being a successful citizen in a democratic society as well as a successful instructor in agricultural education, the following are our suggestions for the continual development of ethical standards in preservice instructors:

- Students look to their instructor for guidance and direction, therefore leading by example is the most powerful tool an instructor may possess. If the actions of an instructor reflect integrity, students will also foster a basis for right and wrong.
- Educators will make daily decisions that are reflective of their personal beliefs and values. Holding true to these beliefs and values will insure integrity in each situation.
- All students are capable of achieving their own level of success. A teacher must nurture an atmosphere where each student has an equal opportunity to excel.
- While the awards and ribbons may fade, the experiences behind them will last a lifetime. Recognition achieved through honest means will reflect integrity throughout one's life. The following passage reflects our belief in integrity and its association to teaching:

> "The students are the most important people on campus. Without students, there would be no need for the institution. The students are not a cold enrollment statistic, but human beings with feelings and emotions like our own. The students are not someone to be tolerated so that we can do our thing. *They are our thing.* The students are not dependent on us. Rather, *we are dependent on them.* The students are not an interruption of our work, but the purpose of it. We are not doing them a favor by servicing them. *They do us a favor by giving us the opportunity to do so.*"
>
> (Author unknown)

The scenarios that we have presented are only a few examples of the many challenges faced by agricultural educators. The building and testing of personal integrity is a life-long process, one in which educators play a large role. When faced with these particular situations, or any number of others which may exist, remember it is your belief system which will guide your decisions. These beliefs must be solid in order that we may continue to lead our student towards their own sense of integrity.

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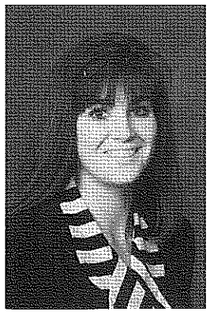
Teaching Values To High School Agriculture Students



BY JACQUI D. LOCKABY

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Humans are both impressive and strange beings. Every person has the same basic chemical makeup, yet each one has a unique speech pattern, body language, and aesthetic features. On the surface, these characteristics seem to make everyone an individual, but a key element is missing. Some may say that key element is personality, but in reality, it is the value system of the individual because it is the base from which all the other characteristics can build.

Because of its importance in character building, educators have long recognized the need for helping students develop a solid value system. Values were an important part of the curriculum when education first began in the United States. Many of the early primers and textbooks focused on Christian ethics and quoted freely from the Bible. Most of the values that were taught were widely accepted, and it seemed natural that they be part of the school curriculum.

As society changed, many schools drifted away from teaching values to students. While some of this was due to court rulings which outlawed the teaching of religion, much of it was because educators could not agree what values should be taught. A major argument presented was that values are something that should be taught at home. That argument is severely weakened today by the fact that many times students are not getting value education at home. This realization has led more and more people to advocate returning to teaching basic values to students. A former secretary of education speaks of the need for a "moral education" through which a school provides "training of the heart and mind toward the good" (Bennett, 1993).

Agricultural education is in an ideal position to take advantage of this current mood to return to the teaching of basic values. It is refreshing to see other people realize what we in agricultural education, have known for a long time—what a student actually accomplishes depends on his/her attitude, philosophy and value judgments. It is important as educators to realize that students will have some kind of value system and that it is part of the learning process to help students develop and utilize their individual system.

How do we maximize the development of positive values in agriculture students? Just as with any educational process, the key individual is the teacher. Let's look at a few things an agricultural science teacher should do to enhance student value development.

1. *Recognize that you as a teacher play a key role in the development of students' value systems.* Oftentimes, the way you teach is more important than what you teach. Pullias and Lockhart (1963) stress that the effect on students caused by a warm, loving and mature adult who looks beyond his/her own needs and desires is impossible to estimate. They note that teachers with a warm personality do not get overly involved in the lives of their students, but rather they show maturity and objectivity through their teaching approach.

2. *Show a personal commitment to values.* Major value studies suggest that the greatest degree of value change occurs in situations where teachers express firm value commitments. Over three decades ago, Pullias and Lockhart (1963) noted the importance of the teacher taking advantage of opportunities to express values that are appropriate to the subject matter. For example, it would be very appropriate for you to take a strong stand against drugging animals to gain an advantage in the show ring. In helping students write speeches, it is important to stress the need for citing sources and avoiding plagiarism. By expressing your own values, you can open the door for further discussion which will permit students to recognize the values you express evolve from a process of logical thought rather than from quick decisions or rationalizations. Pullias and Lockhart (1963) claim that by using this practice, students will realize the importance of committing themselves to a sound viewpoint.

3. *When teaching values, concentrate on values commonly accepted by society.* There are a number of commonly accepted values that few would argue against. These include values such as kindness; honesty; loyalty to parents and family members; abiding with the law; fairness; citizen responsibility; and an obligation to help the poor, the sick, and the less fortunate. Don't engage debates about abortion, sex education, religion, etc. When in doubt about teaching a particular value, discuss it with your administrator.

4. *Utilize the FFA in teaching values.* Students learn best when they have the opportunity to apply what they have learned. The FFA can be a tremendous tool in teaching students the values of responsibility, citizenship, cooperation, honesty, and a number of other

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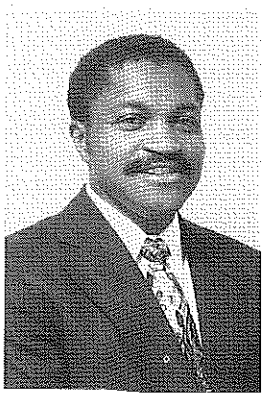
Modeling Positive Behavior Starts With Promoting Integrity in Students and Instructors



BY WILL A. LEWIS

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U.S. PRESIDENT RESIGNS IN DISGRACE FOR LYING

POPULAR TV EVANGELIST JAILED FOR EMBEZZLING PUBLIC FUNDS

SENATOR INDICTED FOR MAIL AND STAMP FRAUD WHILE OTHERS CLAIM INNOCENCE FOR MAJOR KICKBACKS

MAYOR TAPED IN STING OPERATION

STAR ATHLETE ANNOUNCES HE HAS AIDS

The headlines go on, daily calling into question the integrity of our nation. The morals and values of our public school administrators, teachers, and students are being tested daily. Even local newspaper headlines read: "School Administrator Fired for Taking School Funds; Teacher Facing Charges of Sexual Misconduct; Student Suspended for Hitting Teacher." It would appear that the moral character of our society is decaying, and our public school teachers and students are at risk.

What is a partial solution to this moral dilemma at the secondary level in our schools? Although not a panacea, positive role modeling by the administrators and teachers certainly does lend itself to creating an environment that supports integrity.

Administrators and teachers can create that environment by:

- Being professional in the way they talk, dress, and act.
- Being accountable for their actions.
- Being truthful in their teaching and conduct.
- Being a positive example.
- Respecting the students as individuals.
- Modeling positive behavior toward their students and others.
- Showing each student that they care.
- Developing self-confidence and a sense of self-worth through positive reinforcement.
- Avoiding negative reinforcement which develops doubt and low self-esteem.
- Being honest and fair in grading students.
- Using secure means with copies of tests and with storing and handling money.
- Preventing cheating on exams.
- Treating contests as an integral part of the program.

Spend time in class teaching the concepts of integrity.

- Discuss as a group "Why honesty pays."
- Discuss different ways of being dishonest and the consequences of dishonesty.
- Discuss ways to be accountable for your behavior.
- Discuss ways to respect the rights and property of others.

Summary

Students often achieve their goals of increasing status or popularity by identifying with a role model. Television, movies, and radio have a tremendous influence on students' selection of those role models. Many television programs are dominated by violence, crime, dishonesty, and deviant characters in life-like situations. Sometimes it becomes difficult for students to determine what behaviors and values are acceptable in the real world. Positive role models at home, school, church, and in organizations such as the FFA can have a tremendous effect on students' behavioral development. Most students will spend from seven to nine hours each day, five days a week, in the presence of a teacher. This means that teacher can and should be a positive role model for all students. ■

Teaching Values

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values. Don't forget though, that it is your responsibility as a teacher and as an advisor to make sure students are learning positive rather than negative values.

Following these guidelines will help your students develop a positive value system. It will also help ensure that you are doing your part in educating what Conway Dorsett (as cited in Ryan, 1993) identifies as the "three people" in each individual: the worker, the citizen and the private person.

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