

EDITOR'S FORUM

Ethics in Academic Debate: A Gaming Perspective

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In his monumental work *An Essay on Man*, Ernst Cassirer has written, "The ethical world is never given; it is forever in the making."¹ Ethics is an extremely important issue in communication in general, and especially important in a competitive activity like academic debate. But, if Cassirer is correct, how should we go about developing guidelines and theories about what constitutes ethical conduct in academic debate? This work will attempt to deal with this issue by establishing a criteria for ethical conduct in academic debate, specifying the major ethical obligations towards each other held by the major participants in the academic debate situation, reviewing the major charges of unethical conduct currently observed in academic debate, and finally, indicating how a gaming paradigm as applied to academic debate can advance our understanding of the role ethics play in the debate situation.

This work approaches this topic from the perspective of gaming as a paradigm case for academic debate. Some previous work has laid the foundation for an exploration of ethics through gaming. Gaming is a useful method for understanding communicative behaviors in general.² It has also been argued that gaming can be applied to forensics as a useful paradigm case.³ Two distinct works have attempted to establish that gaming is a viable paradigm for academic debate.⁴ Rather than extensively review these previous

**The National Forensic Journal*, II (Fall 1984), pp. 119-134.

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¹Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1944), p. 61.

²Alfred C. Snider, "Gaming as a Form of Human Communication," paper presented to the World Future Society World Assembly, July, 1982.

³Alfred C. Snider, "Games Without Frontiers: Opportunities for Communication Scholars," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, accepted for publication.

⁴Alfred C. Snider, *The New Debate: A Personal Essay* (Privately published: Detroit, Michigan, 1981); and, *Gaming as a Paradigm for Academic Debate* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 1983).

efforts, this work uses them as a point of departure for an exploration of the role of ethics in academic debate.

THE ETHIC OF HONESTY

Ethics concerns codes of behavior, specifically in the "ought to" or "should" sense of behavior. Duke notes that the ethics of game use is a very important issue.⁵ While an issue of importance should be dealt with by strict criteria in the game design process, this is not possible, since many ethical considerations cannot be anticipated during the design process and must be dealt with during the play of the game itself. In attempting to compose an ethical code for the game of debate, the options are either to state a small number of criteria which lack precision or to produce a long list of criteria which restrict the options of the participant. Almost all philosophical disputations which attempt to determine whether a given pattern of behaviors is "ethical" or not give special attention to the particulars of the situation and the ends which are at issue. While murder is seen as unethical behavior by most individuals, nevertheless these same individuals might find it tolerable if it was committed in self-defense. Once we begin formulating ethical guidelines we are soon lost in a sea of "if. . . then" statements designed to take situational factors and the desirability of certain ends into account. What is true of general ethical guidelines is also true of ethical guidelines for debate. Recognizing that ethical considerations probably must be dealt with inside a given debate situation, it seems appropriate to opt for the course of generating a small number of generally applicable ethical standards.

Since academic debate is centered within the communication discipline, guidance for establishing ethical standards may be grounded within this field. Karl R. Wallace has examined the various ethics which apply to the teacher of speech and which are grounded within the public character of public utterance in a free society.⁶ Wallace's work is chosen as a starting point for several reasons. First, it represents an attempt to develop ethical guidelines for a competitively oriented, public, persuasion situation, which academic debate certainly is. Second, Wallace attempts to synthesize concepts of ethics from a broad perspective, drawing on the general thinking of western civilization. Third, Wallace's guidelines are united by the ethical thread that I have found so revealing in

⁵Richard Duke, *Gaming: The Future's Language* (New York City: John Wiley, 1974), p. 104.

⁶Karl Wallace, "An Ethical Basis of Communication," *The Speech Teacher* (Vol. 4: January, 1955), pp. 1-9.

examining academic debate. These suggested ethical guidelines are presented by Wallace for application to the teaching of speech. It is my intention to demonstrate their relevance to the ethical standard of the game of debate. Wallace notes four such ethics: (1) during the moment of utterance the communicator is the sole source of argument and information, and thus has an obligation to present this data in an accurate form; (2) the facts and information presented should be done so in a fair manner and without distortion; (3) the communicator should reveal the sources of the information used; and (4) the communicator should respect diversity of argument and opinion. These four ethics seem to apply well to the game of debate. The fourth ethic is important in that a debate could not take place without some regard for the positions of those on the opposite side of the scenario. The first, second, and third ethics seem to have in common a notion of honesty in that communications should be accurate, undistorted, and from a revealed source. These first three imply that the debaters should honestly present their statements. Thus, the major ethical guideline for a debate should be some form of honesty, at least if we are to apply Wallace's ethics to academic debate.

In establishing guidelines for ethics in the game of debate, some lack of precision should be allowed. In other words, all matters coming under the aegis of these criteria may not be ethical matters, but that will have to be discussed within each debate. For example, a debater who misrepresents an opponent's position is perhaps guilty of an ethical offense, but perhaps not so if that debater merely "misunderstood" a confusing argument offered by an opponent. The only prescriptive standard of ethics in the game of debate should be HONESTY. Academic debate should not be a forum for lying. This does not mean that when the topic is "Resolved: that U.S. military spending should be increased," that only those believing this before the debate can be affirmative debaters. Certainly, persons in this position who are negative debaters would present the best case they could against their personal belief. Rather, it means that those involved should not knowingly deceive others involved. For example, falsehoods (either falsified facts or falsified testimony) should not be entered into the debate: debaters should not knowingly lie about what their colleagues or what they themselves have said during the round, and those keeping time should strive to be accurate and avoid giving additional time to a speaker they favor.

One problem in applying the ethic of honesty is that it may be thought of as assuming that there is a clear definition of truth. While this is a difficulty, it seems that the line is easier to draw

between something which "might" be true and something which is "definitely" false. For example, describing America's nuclear deterrent as "not strong enough" may or may not be true, but a statement to support such a position which knowingly and falsely reported the number of missiles would be definitely false. Determinations of this type, obviously, must be made within the context of a given situation, but nevertheless the guideline of honesty remains applicable.

One important issue in determining honesty is the concept of intention. If a participant makes an innocent and unintentional error in keeping time, this is not an ethical problem. However, if participants intentionally give their partners an extra minute in a rebuttal speech so that their odds of winning are increased, this would clearly be an ethical violation. Determining an individual's intention or "motive" in a specific situation is difficult, barring telepathy and/or the use of "truth serums" in a debate context. Because it is difficult to determine intention with absolute accuracy, does this mean that it is impossible to resolve ethical questions? Ethical issues are too important to be swept under the rug simply because such determinations are difficult. It seems that this problem can be resolved in several ways. First, judges and participants may wish to ignore the issue of intention totally. For example, many judges currently punish debaters for reading falsified evidence even if they did not actually engage in the falsification and even in cases where the debater had no knowledge that this evidence was tainted. Holding debaters and others responsible for their behaviors and not just for their intentions makes application a great deal easier, even if it does offer some cruel lessons to some unfortunate debaters. Even such lessons to the "unintentionally unethical" may help to heighten the awareness of ethics as an area worthy of concern as well as prepare students for the "real world" in which they may often be in a position to profit from the unethical behavior of another by merely acting like they "didn't know." Second, determination of intentionality could take place in a specific debate round, although this might be time consuming. Since the precise nature of ethical concerns is, in Cassirer's words, "forever in the making," this does not seem unreasonable. This sort of application, however, can only take place if the draconian measures utilized by some judges are suspended. For example, some judges contend that if an ethical charge is raised by a team which they cannot sustain, the team making such a charge should forfeit the decision. While not totally in disagreement with this position, since I believe that ethical

accusations should not be made lightly, it seems as if such a standard would have to be suspended in cases requiring substantial determination of intention. Thus, the issue of showing intent to commit a dishonest act is a thorny one, but it can be handled, and certainly ethical concerns are so vital to a productive debate process that this difficulty should not preclude us from generating some broad criteria for making ethical distinctions in academic debate.

Some may see "honesty" as inadequate as a single ethical guideline. This terseness of ethical guidance is advocated because if the ethic of honesty can be achieved, other debate practices now seen as unethical may become self-regulating. If debaters and judges are honest about their actions and motives, the situational nature of ethical disputes can be called into play. For example, a judge who is honest about the decision in the round by saying "The affirmative gave \$10," will certainly find such honest communication as the beginning of moves to stop such behavior. If, however, such a pronouncement is tolerated, this would be an indication that such action was within the ethic of the community at large, and thus permissible. Honesty is the precondition for other ethics-related concepts. My desire is to allow for an open forum for discussion of ethics within gaming, not to compile a long list of what is or is not ethical. It seems to me that achievement of a basic ethic of HONESTY should allow this forum to exist. For example, if the situation in a debate round is honestly handled, then students can engage in other discussions, such as whether a given move meets a criteria of fairness. One of the purposes discussed within the conceptual map for a game of debate was that it serves as a contest to determine who did the better job of debating. This standard assumes and implies fairness, but this fairness can only be discussed and decided in the debate if there is honest communication taking place. This situational approach to ethical concerns in academic debate will be elaborated later in this work.

While the guideline of honesty seems broad, that is because the issue of ethics is a broad one and touches so many parts of the game of debate. Because ethics is so important, we would like it to be a cut and dried matter, but, because it isn't so easy, we must concentrate on its successful application. In determining the ethical or unethical nature of any occurrence within the game of debate, prescriptive action on ethical grounds should be limited.

Designer-Participant Ethics: By "designer" in the gaming sense I mean "tournament host" in the way referred to normally. Designer/participant ethics would include two elements. First,

there should be an accurate exchange of information about the individuals involved and the event planned. Designers should not deceive potential attendees of an event about the opposition, facilities, audiences, or other attractions. The participants, on the other hand, should also convey information honestly about number of attendees, their experience levels, and their identities. Second, there should be an honest effort on the part of designers and attendees to fulfill their obligations. Designers should try to supply promised facilities, meals, etc., while attendees should try to fulfill their obligations of showing up promptly to debate, following tournament rules, etc. In both these examples, it is an "honest" effort that is required, not a successful result.

Judge-Participant Ethics: After the round begins, the relationship between the judge and the participants is important. Two ethical considerations seem to enter into the judge/participant relationship. First, the participants have an ethical obligation to make an honest presentation of material. Participants should not present knowingly false information to the judge. Second, the judge has an obligation to the participants to explain the reason for decision after it has been made. This should include relevant issues for awarding the decision.

Designer-Judge Ethics: The designer (tournament host) and the judge form the administrative portion of the game of debate. Three ethical considerations seem to play a part in their interaction. First, they must engage in an honest exchange about judge assignment. The designer, for example, should be honest with the judges about how they are being assigned (randomly, rated by judge ability, geography, etc.). Conversely, the judges should engage the designer concerning how they would best be assigned (for example, a judge may wish to avoid judging close friends for fear of not being able to make a completely honest decision). Second, the judge should provide to the designer information about the decision once it is made—the correct win/loss designation, points, and reason for decision. Third, since the designer has assigned the judge to specific debates in good faith, the judge should make an attempt to judge the round honestly as an obligation to the designer.

Participant-Participant Ethics: While the simplest of the ethical applications to describe, this set of ethics is perhaps the most important. Two considerations appear here. First, participants should convey to each other an honest description of their position on the topic under debate. Second, the participants should convey to one another as honestly as possible their understanding of the position of the other team on the topic under debate. Participants, in other words, have an obligation to exhibit their true level of

understanding of the positions in the debate. While ethics is a very important part of the game of debate it is very much like most of the rest of the activity—it is a consideration to be actively experienced and discovered, not something to be prescribed.

CHARGES OF ETHICAL VIOLATIONS IN MODERN DEBATE

Although not a common complaint in print, it is not uncommon to hear coaches, students, and interested others express concern over certain supposedly "unethical" practices which take place in academic debate. Comments are often heard that debaters and coaches have "lost" their values, and that certain competitors will "do anything to win." My purpose here will be to identify ethical concerns, both legitimate and illegitimate. Certainly there are some activities in academic debate which can be identified as involving unethical practices. In speaking of ethics in debate, it is important to recall the criteria of honesty established. Thus, truly unethical debate practices, at least to me, involve some breach in this ethic of honesty.

The first ethical concern is with evidence. The use of evidence in academic debate is very important to the process in the round and the outcome as represented by the decision. "Asserted" arguments are not given nearly the weight that "evidenced" arguments are, while at the same time judges will accept counter-intuitive arguments more often if they are accompanied by evidence. Thus, debaters who would "manufacture" evidence or "distort" evidence which does exist would stand a far better chance at winning debate rounds.

Concern about evidence is certainly not new in academic debate. In the sixties, for example, as evidence became more prominent, various studies were undertaken to "backtrack" evidence in order to find out how much of it was "real" and how much was "unethical."⁷ Every debater has stories about someone they knew, debated with, or heard about who utilized evidence unethically, but it rather hard to verify such stories. What is possible to examine, however, is the transcript of the final round of the National Debate Tournament, annually printed in the *Journal of the American Forensic Association*. The complete sources for all evidence are supposedly provided by the teams involved, and the evidence is backtracked and then reported on in the footnotes accompanying

⁷See, for example, Robert Newman and Keith Sanders, "A Study in the Integrity of Evidence," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* (Vol. 2: January, 1965), pp. 7-13; and Joy Miller, "More About Integrity and Evidence," *The Rostrum* (April, 1967), pp. 8-9.

the transcript. While not wanting to make specific charges, I think it is safe to say that in several instances (1964, 1969, 1970, 1972, 1975 and 1976)⁸ some problems have been confronted with the evidence. If examples can be found in the final round of the NATIONAL DEBATE TOURNAMENT, and if it is a concern so much on people's minds, there certainly must be a number of instances of such unethical use of evidence which are not reported. Based on experience gained through debating, coaching high school and college debate, cross-checking evidence from debate handbooks, and editing a number of debate handbooks myself, ethical problems in evidence are not uncommon in academic debate.

The second ethical concern deals with the procedures during a debate round. Specifically, it is possible that the honesty criteria can be and at times is violated during a debate. For example, the time-keeping procedures may be dishonestly manipulated. Team members who are entrusted with timing the speech of their partners may find it advantageous to give their colleagues an extra thirty seconds in a rebuttal speech. While often timing problems arise out of simple error (forgetting to announce the time, not watching the clock, using the wrong time limits, etc.), this can be an ethical concern as well. Another problem which might take place during a round is inaccurate reporting of what has been done in other speeches. For example, a rebuttalist might claim that the other team "had no answer" for a given position, when in fact they did, and thus claim to have won the argument on that basis. Again, while faulty memory and faulty flow charting might be an explanation for this, there is some concern that this may be done "on purpose" in an attempt to gain the decision. Another possible ethical violation might involve the malicious misrepresentation of their own position by teams. An example illustrates my precise point here. If a negative team asks to see a brief read by an affirmative team, the affirmative may hand over a brief which is NOT the original one read in the debate, but a weak step-sister of the original block. The negative will then attack this brief on the basis of faults on THEIR copy, while the judge asking to see the same block at the end of the round would be shown the proper brief. Another example would be a negative debater who, having read a contradictory piece of evidence in a rebuttal speech, denies that any such card was read when questioned about it. Both of these examples, while sounding a bit far-fetched; come from my personal

⁸See *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, Summer issue, for each year.

experiences as a coach and a judge, so they do have a basis in fact.

A third category of ethical problems involves the judging of the debate. Judges, for example, may willingly vote for the team they actually thought lost the round because of some perverse reason. This might involve benefiting their own team, exacting revenge on a disliked team or coach, or because one team has substantially more "reputation" than another (a person who did not see the debate would not question the decision since the "favorite" won). Another example would be a situation where a designer would assign judges to a round because they knew of the biases at work and wanted to aid one team or another, thus attempting to "stack the deck." As already indicated, judges should be willing to be open about their motives in judging, a criteria which Wallace has identified as being applicable to *all* public communication.

While these three concerns represent, in my viewpoint, very real and pressing concerns in academic debate, others have gone much farther. Often it is popular to brand any practice one does not care for as "unethical." Some of these supposed "ethical" violations are considered here.

First, some argue that a coach has a clearly defined "ethical" role, and should not exceed it. For example, some argue that coaches should not do research, should not aid students in constructing arguments, and should not go over the flowcharts of other teams they have judged. While these may be valid concerns when carried to extremes by any coach, they do not seem to involve an ethical violation.

Second, some argue that anything other than random assignment of judges is unethical. At many tournaments, the designer will rank order judges, and then assign the better judges to those rounds which have the most bearing on the outcome of the tournament competition. Many argue that this is unfair, discriminatory, and leads to rampant elitism. Frankly, I find this hard to view as an ethical violation. If tournament organizers advertised random judge assignment and then proceeded to assign them on the basis of their quality, this would be a violation of honesty, but when the assignment of judges on the basis of perceived quality is announced and communicated to teams and judges, there seems to be little violation of honesty. The reason judges are placed in this manner seems clear to me—debaters and coaches want it that way. These parties are concerned that the best possible judge be put into each round, and certainly this is a greater concern when the round is more important. It is not unusual for judges who dislike being assigned on a "skill" basis (perhaps because of low skill levels,

which means judging assignments to lower quality and less important debates) to complain that their teams did not get a good judge in a given round when it was an important or "break" round. In almost all games, judges are assigned on the basis of their skill levels. For example, the umpires at the World Series are chosen as the BEST umpires during that season, and are rewarded by this assignment. Shouldn't we attempt to skill match for the benefit of all involved? Certainly this is an area of legitimate concern for many, yet it hardly seems an "ethical" concern.

A final supposed charge of ethics violation involves the use of a new and unfamiliar strategy. Whenever a team comes up with a new way to approach issues so that they have a greater chance of winning, certain parties are bound to claim that this is "unethical." For example, when Lichtman, Garvin and Corsi proposed the "alternative justification" case⁹ which allowed the affirmative to "drop" entire action planks of their plan, many responded that this was "unethical," probably because they did not know how to answer it yet. One of my favorite personal examples was an affirmative team experiencing their first counterplan. They argued that since they didn't know much about counterplans, it was "unethical" to argue one against them. The response by the negative was that the lack of knowledge on the part of their opponents was hardly an "ethical" violation on their part. I am sure that every new technique which has emerged, from the independent advantage to the generic disadvantage, has been subjected to this criticism. Rather than being unethical, such practices are merely "new," and debaters have not thought out answers to them yet. For example, a certain practice might be "unfair" (providing a theoretical advantage to one side over the other, thus violating the equal opportunity criteria applied to procedures in the gaming paradigm), while not being "unethical." The two concepts, fairness and ethics, are blurred in many instances of this sort of argumentation.

EXPLORING ETHICS THROUGH GAMING

Of all of the criticisms of modern debate, the charge of ethical problems is perhaps the most compelling. Fortunately, gaming offers a very interesting and productive way to study and regulate ethics. Turning to the literature of game theory and game/simula-

⁹Alan Lichtman, Charles Garvin and Jerome Corsi, "The Alternative Justification Affirmative: A New Case Form," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* (Vol. 10: Fall, 1973), pp. 59-69.

-tion, we find a lot of attention devoted to ethical issues. This discussion, of course, cannot attempt to communicate the totality of this literature or even the totality of gaming as a paradigm for academic debate to the reader. It is hoped that interested readers will refer to the primary literature to better understand these concepts. While this essay is meant to be an illustration of the possible applications of these concepts, it is hoped that it can be useful to the reader when examined in isolation.

Schelling contends that ethical behavior has a lot in common with gaming.¹⁰ As an example of this, Schelling discusses the implications of dishonesty and how lying can be related to gaming. Schelling reported that children aged 10-12 years, when questioned about lying, noted that truthfulness was necessary for reciprocity and mutual agreement. "Deceiving others destroys mutual trust." Schelling contends that children find truth socially useful, and that children have freely adopted a rule against lying. Schelling goes on to compare lying to game theory. He notes:

Lying, after all, is suggestive of game theory. It involves at least two people, a liar and somebody who is lied to; it transmits information, the credibility and veracity of which are important; it influences some choice another is to make that the liar anticipates; the choice to lie or not to lie is part of the liar's choice of strategy; the possibility of a lie presumably occurs to the second party, and may be judged against some a priori expectations; and the payoff configurations are rich in possibilities, since a lie can be told for the good of the victim, the truth can be told to pave the way for a later lie, and a lie can even be told with the intention that it is not to be believed.¹¹

Thus, gaming can provide some interesting new perspectives on lying and the behavior surrounding lying. Several reasons explain ways in which gaming approaches issues of honesty. First, gaming can help in studying the situation surrounding such behavior. For example, Fletcher notes that in different situations, lying may be permissible. For example, "if a small neighborhood merchant tells a lie to divert some 'protection' racketeers from their victims, no matter how compassionately the lie is told, he has chosen to do evil according to certain intrinsicist ethics, though it might be considered a lesser evil."¹² Fletcher scorns this, and notes that in some situations, such as this one, "It is not inexcusably evil, it is

¹⁰T.C. Schelling, "Some Thoughts on the Relevance of Game Theory to the Analysis of Ethical Systems," in *Game Theory in the Behavioral Sciences*, Buchler and Nutini, eds. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969), p. 46.

¹¹Schelling, pp. 47-48.

¹²Joseph Fletcher, *Situation Ethics: The New Morality* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), pp. 64-65.

positively good." This is not to suggest that in certain debate situations lying is good, but it does indicate that any approach to ethics must recognize the "extrinsic" position of Fletcher, that the situation plays an important part in determining the ethical nature of an action. Schelling has noted that one must evaluate the consequences of an act, including the consequences on the behaviors of others, and one must be personally responsible for evaluating those consequences.¹³ Gaming is not an answer to ethical problems, but it does provide a useful way of evaluating situation ethics. As Schelling notes, "It may be too early to credit game theory with much help, but surely there is promise."¹⁴ His summary of Fletcher's position is that in the language of game theory, the situation ethic does not content itself with prescribing individual strategies but requires us to scan the entire matrix, evaluating each outcome, and attending to the preferences of others. "It is not the deed, but its intended (expected) consequences by which morality is to be judged. Ignorance is no excuse; one must think through the consequences and evaluate them; if necessary, predicting the behavior of others." The point seems to be that if all parties adhere to the ethic of honesty, then debate can serve as an open forum to explore the situational nature of ethical questions. Honesty is certainly not the only ethic in the game of debate, but it is a *non-situational* ethic. Other ethics are worthy of exploration, but they do not apply to all situations in a debate round. Through the ethic of honesty we can engage in a situationally specific discussion of ethics. Thus, gaming allows us to better understand the situational nature of ethics.

Second, gaming allows us to study how concern for other individuals guides our sense of ethics. One assumption that some have made about competitive games is that players will utilize strategies which only involve their self interest. Actually, it has become apparent that players develop concerns for other participants, which can be thought of as a function of ethics. Schelling has noted that some believe that rationality, as exhibited by players, is to be identified with selfishness. Disagreeing with this, he writes:

This argument, I think, is not usually valid. There is no need to suppose that the payoffs reflect selfish interests. They reflect the player's valuation of the outcomes, and he can surely value them selfishly, altruistically, or in terms of justice or welfare. If a game reflects a lawyer's choice of strategy, the lawyer can be playing to

¹³Schelling, pp. 46-47.

¹⁴Schelling, p. 47.

¹⁵Schelling, pp. 56-57.

maximize his fee, to get an innocent man acquitted, or to establish a precedent that he believes to be in the interest of justice. He may do this out of fun, pride, or ethical obligation, or to get revenge on an opposing attorney.¹⁵

Rapoport has also concluded that players are often vitally concerned with the welfare of other players.¹⁶ In summarizing empirical research in this area, he notes that, players are often concerned not only with their own payoffs but also with what the co-player gets, sometimes empathizing with him, sometimes, on the contrary, deriving satisfaction from his losses, regardless of what they themselves get. The point here is that gaming recognizes that significant pressures will operate to make players concerned about the welfare of other players. For example, a team clearly winning a round might have a tendency to show mercy on the other team by easing up a bit, a tendency debate coaches live in fear of. Certainly not all will show such concern, but it is hoped that a gaming perspective can continually bring out more and more of such concern.

Third, gaming is a useful perspective for investigating how to deter ethical violations. Schelling has stated that gaming can be a very useful tool in examining deterrence as it might arise in capital punishment, international threats of military retaliation, and more generally in the whole realm of rewards and punishments.¹⁷ Various methods can be explored and evaluated in terms of how to increase the motives for ethical behavior on the part of players. His suggestion, which might be considered for application to academic debate, is massive retaliation. Thus, unethical practices could be deterred if massive penalties (such as losing a ballot) were arranged. His hope is that deterrence will be effective, and thus massive retaliation will not be necessary in the vast majority of instances. This is certainly an area where more investigation is warranted in an attempt to relate gaming approaches of deterrence to the control of unethical debate practices.

The conclusion drawn from these points and other issues not covered here must be that gaming and game theory can provide a useful method of understanding and dealing with ethical difficulties. Schelling notes that substantial area exists for the utilization of game theory and the study of ethics, including ethical problems game theory has already addressed; that the use of game theory can be expanded into the discipline of ethics and philosophy;

¹⁶Anatol Rapoport, *Fights, Games and Debates* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960), pp. 280-290.

¹⁷Schelling, p. 54.

and, finally, that the conduct of a game itself is likely to give rise to new ethical concerns for study.¹⁸ Schelling observes that game theory can study ethics as a constraint on human behavior. Such constraints can come from "religion, ethics, law, instinct, sentiment, taste, the nervous system and other parts of the human body, custom, the physical environment, and the contrivances we equip ourselves with."¹⁹ As well, game theory can be especially helpful in examining constraints that affect "people's expectations about each other, for working out the social-behavioral implications of different ethical systems." Certainly this last ability is one of special import to academic debate. Ethical systems can be examined, according to Schelling, by looking at the interactive implications of ethical systems (how changes in constraints and payoffs make particular rules unnecessary or essential) and by examining the implications of coexistence between two radically different ethics.²⁰

There are a number of reasons why the ethics of a game situation matches up well with the ethics of an academic debate situation. Duke, for example, has stated that a game is well suited to handling ethical concerns if it has a neutral, non-manipulative design.²¹ Certainly the game of debate briefly outlined in the works mentioned earlier attempts to meet this criteria, especially by stressing the need for equality of opportunity among players. Schelling has observed that a game is well suited for handling ethical issues if it involves direct consequences of ethical choices.²² Certainly in academic debate, the possibility of losing a ballot on an ethical issue (such as proven fabrication of evidence) does provide the needed consequences. Valavanis has posited that ethical issues are explored when the welfare of others is inter-related.²³ Certainly in an academic debate, players have the welfare of their partners and the school to think of, as well as the welfare of an opponent against whom they might violate ethical standards in competition.

This does not mean that there will be no ethical problems in the game of debate, nor does it mean that ethical difficulties can be defined outside of actual play. As Duke notes, "new ethical problems may emerge in the *use* of a game."²⁴ When ethical

¹⁸Schelling, pp. 53-54.

¹⁹Schelling, pp. 48-49.

²⁰Schelling, p. 60.

²¹Duke, p. 105.

²²Schelling, p. 58.

²³Stefan Valavanis, "The Resolution of Conflicts when Utilities Interact," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (June, 1958), pp. 156-169.

²⁴Duke, p. 104.

problems do develop, it is best to let the operator (in this case, the judge) merely observe how ethical disputes are played out in the round. In the best spirit of a liberal education, the debaters should decide by their argument. Duke notes that the "simplest, most straightforward rule is that the operator should blend into the woodwork at the earliest possible moment and let the game proceed with a minimum of operator intervention."²⁵ Thus, in a debate, ethical disputes are open to argument.

A couple of issues need to be raised in pre-emption to possible arguments against the position that gaming can operate as a way to approach ethics within academic debate. One would be that ethics is necessarily connected with values, and values are very rarely discussed in a debate context. It seems less than sage to argue that values are EVER excluded from intellectual concerns. As Bremer notes, intellectual curiosity probably cannot exist without moral concern.²⁶ Certainly issues such as politics and economics, often discussed in debates, have important ethical components. As Schelling has noted, it is not possible to abstract "ethical man" as separate from "economic man" and "rational man."²⁷ These concepts are related. Academic debate provides a fertile area for a discussion of ethics, values, and morals. Another objection may be that not all will be willing to play the game ethically. Of course, this is true. However, the implication must not be that this demonstrates that gaming is a FAILURE at studying ethics, but means that gaming is a fertile area for ethical study BECAUSE not all will obey the same set of applied ethical standards. As Schelling notes, when we develop a sort of "social contract" between players to play the game "ethically," we "must take as a premise that not everybody will sign the contract."²⁸

Ethical concerns are prevalent in academic debate, both in a discussion of the issues implied by the topics, and by the practices which emerge in academic debates. Gaming provides not an answer, but a feasible methodology for handling the study of such ethical disputes.

CONCLUSION

There are various paradigms which are applied to academic debate. In deciding which paradigm to utilize, we should keep in

²⁵Duke, p. 107.

²⁶Stuart Bremer, *Simulated Worlds: A Computer Model of National Decision-Making* (Princeton: N.J., Princeton University Press, 1977), p.6.

²⁷Schelling, p. 51.

²⁸Schelling, p. 52.

mind the various intellectual and educational opportunities a paradigm may offer. Ethical concerns are important for communication, education, and competition. A viable paradigm for academic debate should offer a way to understand and teach about ethical concerns. Gaming, as a paradigm for academic debate, does not pretend to offer hard and fast rules for determining what is ethical and what is unethical. It does, however, provide us with a useful perspective on ethics as well as a methodology for increasing our understanding of ethical issues. Cassirer was correct, the ethical world is never a given, but it is always in a state of becoming. The ethic of honesty may well be a standard, but hopefully one that is flexible enough to put debate in the "state of becoming" that Cassirer would approve of. Gaming is one valuable method for aiding us in understanding this never-ending evolution.