Teaching Ethics, Vol. 1, no. 1
(2001)

The Educational Significance of the Ethics Bowl

Robert F. Ladenson
Illinois Institute of Technology

The Ethics Bowl is an activity that combines a valuable and distinctive educational experience for students with the excitement and fun of a competitive team game. Since 1997 an Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl has taken place every year in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics. In 2001, thirty-two teams representing colleges and universities throughout the United States will participate in the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl. This article describes the format, procedures, and rules of the Ethics Bowl, summarizes its origins and development, and analyzes in depth the Ethics Bowl's most important educational purposes.

How Ethics Bowl is Played

In Ethics Bowl, a moderator asks two teams of three to five undergraduate students questions that pose ethical problems on topics ranging widely over areas such as the classroom (e.g. cheating or plagiarism), personal relationships (e.g. dating or friendship), professional ethics (e.g. engineering, architecture, business, medicine, law, etc.), and social and political topics (e.g. war and peace, free speech, gun control, health care, etc.). In an Ethics Bowl competition, two teams are asked different questions. Each team answers its questions according to the following format. After the moderator poses a question to a team, the team then gets one minute to confer, after which it must state its answer. The team does not respond completely cold, however. Six weeks prior to the Ethics Bowl all of the participants receive a set of cases that present ethical issues upon which the questions a team must answer at the Ethics Bowl are based.

After the team states its answer to the question posed by the moderator, a panel of three judges then has an opportunity to ask the team brief follow-up

questions to elicit a team's viewpoint on ethically important aspects of the question, or to seek clarification of a team's response. The judges, who are distinguished individuals in diverse fields, receive advance copies of the Ethics Bowl cases upon which the questions are based at the same time as do the student participants, about six weeks before the Ethics Bowl. After the judges have asked their questions, the opposing team then has one minute to present a response to the first team's answer. The first team then has an opportunity to respond to the opposing team's comments.

The three judges then each indicate their respective evaluations of the first team's response and the second team's comment, ranking them on a scale of 0 to 20 for the first team and 0 to 5 for the commenting team. Prior to the Ethics Bowl the judges have been instructed concerning the criteria they are to apply in evaluating the teams' answers and comments, which are as follows:

Intelligibility – Does a team state and defend its position in a logically consistent manner? Is the response expressed with enough clarity and precision that the judge can say she or he reasonably understands it?

Depth – Is any consideration which a judge considers ethically important omitted by a team in its statement and defense of its position?

Focus – Does the team base its position upon any considerations which the judge regards as off the point?

Judgment – In the judge's opinion, has the team evaluated the considerations it identifies as relevant in a careful and reasonable way which reasonably justifies the weight the team attaches to those considerations?

The preceding format is repeated with a different question for the opposing team to complete the first match. For the Seventh Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl (in 2001) each team will compete in three matches against different teams. There will be quarter finals, semi-finals, and a final match to determine the winner among the top-scoring eight teams.

A Brief History of the Ethics Bowl

I first developed the idea of the Ethics Bowl in 1993, organizing in that year a small Intramural Ethics Bowl event at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) with the assistance of colleagues and associates at IIT's Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions (CSEP). The IIT Ethics Bowl grew in popularity on campus over the next two years, and in 1995 I also organized a small local Ethics Bowl to which I invited three teams from nearby universities to compete against the winning team of the IIT competition. The three teams were from DePaul, Loyola, and Western Michigan Universities. The following year (1996), I again put together both an IIT Ethics Bowl and a local Ethics Bowl, whose participants were the same four schools as in 1995, plus a special guest, the United States Air Force Academy. I received invaluable assistance from colleagues and associates both at IIT and the other schools that participated in the local Ethics Bowls for 1995 and 1996. In this regard, I should note especially that without fail CSEP's Director Vivian Weil was encouraging, enthusiastic, and supportive in regard to all of the Ethics Bowl activity on the IIT campus during 1993 through 1996 (as well as to the development of the Ethics Bowl from 1997 to the present, which I shall describe immediately below).

In 1997, with the support of a generous grant from Sears Roebuck & Co.'s Office of Ethics and Business Practices, I developed and organized, for the first time, a nationwide Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl. This event, in which fourteen teams participated, representing colleges and universities throughout the United States, took place in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics (APPE). The idea of holding an Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl, associated with APPE, occurred to me because the previous spring I had put on a brief demonstration of the Ethics Bowl at the dinner of the APPE annual meeting that was extraordinarily well received. The Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl has now taken place at the APPE annual meeting every year since 1997, with continued support from Sears. As noted above, the Intercollegiate Bowl for 2001 will have a field of thirty-two teams.

Although the 1997 Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl was not formally a part of the APPE annual meeting, I received enthusiastic support and close collaborative assistance from Brian Schrag, the Executive Director of APPE. Over the next three years (1998, 1999, 2000) the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl became an integral, and ultimately, an official part of the program of the APPE annual meeting. This was made possible by Brian Schrag's continued enthusiastic, intelligent, and effective support, the assistance of two immensely able co-directors, and the dedicated efforts of several APPE members who came forward to form an *ad hoc* committee that helped me in my organizational and planning efforts, which became increasingly extensive as the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl grew. The two immensely able co-directors were Andrew Rehfeld (1997, 2000) and Bipin Sen (1998). At the time of his participation, Andrew Rehfeld was a graduate student in political science at the University of Chicago; and Bipin Sen was an IIT graduate student in aerospace engineering when he served as Ethics Bowl co-director. The dedicated APPE members who have worked on the *ad hoc* committee that helped me in organizing and planning the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl are: Becky Cox White (Philosophy, California State University at Chico), Deni Elliott (Practical Ethics Center, University of Montana) Barbara Hillinger (Ethics Institute, Dartmouth), Michael Rabins (Mechanical Engineering, Texas A&M University), and John Wilcox (Religious Studies and Ethics, Manhattan College).

Apart from the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl, over the past several years impressive regional Ethics Bowls have been organized by Texas A&M University, Saint Marys' University (San Antonio, Texas), Marian College (Indianapolis) jointly with Taylor University (Upland, Indiana), and the Virginia Foundation of Independent Colleges. In addition, numerous colleges and universities throughout the United States now conduct Ethics Bowls as campus events. The most noteworthy of these (to my knowledge) takes place at Brigham Young University. The Brigham Young Ethics Bowl, which is entirely organized by students, has drawn a field of over thirty teams of Brigham Young students for the past several years.

THE EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ETHICS BOWL

Ethical Understanding

Ethics Bowl starts from the premise that many of the issues students face during their undergraduate college experience, as well as those they will confront in their future lives, are complicated, ambiguous, and difficult to resolve. This applies in the case of topics such as cheating, plagiarism, personal relationships, gender equality, and campus social or political controversies, as well as to issues of professional and business ethics which may come into play for many students in their future careers. The above premise also applies to matters of public importance, upon which students will have to develop informed opinions to exercise their rights and fulfill their responsibilities of democratic citizenship.

Contrary to the implied message of a recent (former) best-selling book, everything a student needs to know about ethics is not, and cannot be, learned in kindergarten. For that matter *everything* one needs to know about complex, ambiguous, and difficult to resolve issues in the aforementioned areas cannot be learned, period. An undergraduate education, however, can make the following three valuable and distinctive contributions to the development of a student's capabilities relative to ethical reasoning and judgment: (1) it can help students develop a framework of analysis for addressing ethical issues in an intellectually well-organized manner; (2) It can provide the opportunity for students to acquire valuable background information on ethical issues of special importance to them in light of their respective interests, concerns, and career aspirations; (3) It can foster the capacity for ethical understanding over a broad range of important subjects.

The third item on the preceding list, the capacity for ethical understanding, requires some further words of elucidation. The positions people take on complex, ambiguous, and difficult to resolve ethical issues in areas such as student life, professional conduct, personal choice, and public affairs tend to depend strongly upon factors such as an individual's politics, personal values, cultural background, economic status, gender, or religion. Even from the standpoints of ethical theories that posit objective general standards of ethical

reasoning and judgment, such as Utilitarianism or Kantianism, no one reasonably may assume that his or her thinking about concrete ethical issues proceeds from a neutral standpoint absolutely uninfluenced by the above kinds of factors. A question thus arises of what ethical understanding means in regard to highly viewpoint-dependent kinds of issues.

I believe that ethical understanding relative to such issues largely consists of viewing from the inside other ethical positions besides those with which a person agrees. It involves not only awareness of the arguments advanced on behalf of these positions, but also understanding of the concerns that motivate the arguments, and even, to some extent, an appreciation of their force. Development of the capacity for ethical understanding relative to complex, ambiguous, and difficult to resolve issues thus only can take place on a large scale in societies where a strong and effective right of free speech exists. The existence of a strong and effective right of free speech in society, however, although necessary in this regard, is far from sufficient. In the case of complex, ambiguous, and difficult to resolve ethical issues, a person's capacity for ethical understanding tends to develop most readily, I think, in an environment with the following three special characteristics: (1) a person feels strongly motivated to state her views on the issues; (2) she also feels strongly motivated to listen carefully to what others have to say about their views on the issues; (3) everyone involved in discussing the issues is motivated strongly to do so in a way that brings out clearly the similarities and differences in outlook among the discussants' views.

Courses in practical and professional ethics can satisfy these conditions to some extent, but face a big inherent problem, I believe. Classroom discussion in which most of the class actively participates can be extremely difficult to generate, as all college teachers are well aware. Even when a teacher succeeds in doing this, students seldom communicate directly with one another. Instead, given the standard class discussion format, they direct their words to the instructor, who then filters the discussion by restating people's positions, commenting on points, posing follow-up questions, etc. Granted, this structure is probably indispensable for providing students an intellectual framework, and background information, for thinking about the issues in the course. The structure, however, seldom allows for the kind of direct encounter among

differing viewpoints most conductive to developing the capacity for ethical understanding.

One might respond to the preceding points by saying that class discussions in practical and professional ethics should so stimulate the students that they tend naturally to continue the discussions on their own, outside of class, in an energized and intense form. Apart from questions about the realism of this response, intense, late-into-the-night, conversational give-and-take among students, despite its many virtues, has the opposite deficiency of class discussion. It can easily become unfocused and uninformed. A key problem in regard to developing students' capacity for ethical understanding, relative to complex, ambiguous, and difficult to resolve issues, one might say, is how to remove the instructor but keep the discussion focused and informed.

I believe the Ethics Bowl provides a highly successful way to address this problem. Over the past six years, judges, moderators, and observers present at Ethics Bowl events, whether national, regional, local, or intramural, have consistently praised the student responses to Ethics Bowl questions as articulate, thoughtful, and very well directed toward, as well as responsive to, a wide range of ethically relevant concerns. In this regard, students report that in their pre-competition discussions of Ethics Bowl cases, team members often begin by taking sharply divergent positions, but as discussion proceeds one or the other of two outcomes tends to result. Either differences of opinion narrow with further discussion, or, if not, team members nonetheless develop a clearer understanding of each other's positions. For this reason, students say, a team usually can reach agreement upon what its response will be to a given likely question about a case because the team members who personally disagree with the response have come to view it as a defensible position that a reasonable and responsible person could hold.

The following anecdote, I think, highlights the preceding point. Several years ago, one of the Ethics Bowl cases involved a quandary faced by former H.E.W. Secretary Joseph Califano. In a hard fought compromise, Congress had authorized Medicaid payments for abortions in cases of rape, incest, and danger to a woman's health. Califano, as Secretary of H.E.W., had the responsibility of directing the development and implementation of regulations for the legislation

embodying this compromise. As a practicing Catholic, however, Califano considered abortion morally unjustifiable except in circumstances necessary to save a woman's life. The question at the Ethics Bowl concerned which of the following decisions Secretary Califano should have made: (a) to instruct his staff to draft regulations fully reflecting the substance of the Congressional compromise on authorizing Medicaid payments for abortions; (b) to use his powerful position as Secretary of H.E.W. to thwart the intent of Congress on this matter; (c) to resign from his position.

One of the student participants in the Ethics Bowl at which this case was used responded to the above question with a clear, articulate, and thoughtful answer on behalf of his team, which he proceeded to defend and justify with great skill in response to the judges' queries. After the Ethics Bowl, a faculty member in the audience complimented him about his answer. The student responded that he had expressed the agreed upon decision of his team about how to answer the question, if asked it at the Ethics Bowl, but that he personally disagreed with the answer.

The student's ability not only to state, but also to expound and defend an ethical position with which he disagreed suggested (to me) the effectiveness of the Ethics Bowl in developing the capacity for ethical understanding. It brings to mind (again, for me) an element of John Stuart Mill's great essays on moral subjects, such as *On Liberty*, *The Subjection of Women*, and *Representative Government*, that is essential to their greatness — the enhancement of ethical understanding that results from Mill's clear, deep, logically cogent, and, even at times, rhetorically powerful statements of the positions with which he himself disagrees. Ethics Bowl thus appears to provide a promising approach in addressing the problem of how to remove the instructor but retain a sharp and well-informed focus of discussion in order to develop the capacity of students for ethical understanding in connection with complex, ambiguous, and difficult to resolve ethical issues.

Virtue Ethics, Moral Community, and Democratic Deliberation

A discussion of the Ethics Bowl's educational significance has to consider, and respond to, a criticism I shall develop immediately below. In order to understand the point of this criticism, one first needs to know, by way of background, that practical and professional ethics education has two predominant intellectual orientations — what one may call, for lack of better terms, the applied ethical theory and the virtue ethics approaches — which are widely perceived to pull in opposed directions.

The applied ethical theory approach views general principles and rules of ethics as central to ethical reasoning. According to this approach a course in practical and professional ethics should include enough ethical theory to familiarize students with the major philosophical conceptions in this area (e.g. Utilitarianism and Kantianism) and to encourage students to work through the concrete ethical issues forming the core subject matter of the course (e.g. relative to business, medicine, engineering, social policy, etc.) in terms of these conceptions. The applied ethical theory approach values, and seeks to develop in students, attributes such as logical and analytical thought, intellectual rigor, and capacity for critical distance in connection with issues of practical and professional ethics.

In contrast to the applied ethics approach, the proponents of virtue theory view the fostering of moral virtue as, by far, the most important aim for courses in practical and professional ethics. Virtue ethics proponents would observe that the emphasis of the applied ethical theory approach upon analysis of ethically complex, ambiguous, and difficult to resolve situations, would make sense as a way to foster moral virtue in a world where independent and creative thought about genuinely contestable questions of ethics was stifled by an overwhelming social consensus on the interpretation of ethical principles and values. For virtue ethics theorists, however, this is not our world. In contrast, they consider one of the most troubling elements of contemporary life to be a deep decline in ethical consensus, and a resulting attenuation of the individual's sense of membership in a moral community. Virtue ethics theorists tend to believe that courses in practical and professional ethics should aim to reinforce, or recover, this sense of

membership in a moral community by fostering the tendency of students to identify with shared standards of ethical reasoning and judgment, and to help students develop important virtues associated with commitment to such standards.

The Ethics Bowl has clear and evident affinities with the applied ethics approach, as explained above. Some virtue ethics theorists, however, might well conclude that the Ethics Bowl does not address the most important objective of education in practical and professional ethics from their standpoint, that is, reinforcing, or recovering, a student's sense of membership in a moral community. Even worse, from the perspective of some interpretations of virtue theory, the Ethics Bowl might tend to work against this objective owing to its unavoidable focus upon ethically hard cases about which significant disagreement exists.

I agree with the virtue ethics theorists to the extent I think the Ethics Bowl would be educationally unsuccessful if it led students to exaggerate the extent, and misunderstand the nature, of the disagreement that exists relative to important ethical principles and values. I do not believe this is the case, however. Indeed, for the reasons developed immediately below, in my opinion the Ethics Bowl has key elements that should resonate strongly with proponents of virtue ethics.

In this regard, it seems to me that the Ethics Bowl is not only consistent with, but also reinforces a view of ethical reasoning and judgment as activities conducted within a community whose members identify with shared standards of right and wrong, and better or worse, in connection with ethical questions. As noted above, students report that their discussions of cases in team meetings to prepare for the Ethics Bowl tend to result either in a significant narrowing of differences of opinion or else in a clearer mutual understanding of each other's viewpoints, which enables them to agree upon team positions relative to the cases, for purposes of competing in the Ethics Bowl. Furthermore, the identification of community members with shared standards of ethical reasoning and judgment is expressed strongly by the students' interactions with the Ethics Bowl judges. A key part of an Ethics Bowl team's preparation for the event involves trying to anticipate the questions that the moderator will pose and that the judges will ask in light of the team's answers to the moderator's questions.

With respect to the judges' questions, it becomes apparent when observing an Ethics Bowl match that most of the time the concerns underlying these questions were identified and carefully discussed by the teams in their pre-match preparations. Students also attest, however, that on many occasions they have found themselves put hard to the test, with great educational benefit, by judges' questions, *which the students themselves recognize*, approached cases from different directions than those they considered, or that pursued the students' lines of reasoning to deeper levels than they reached in their discussions before the Ethics Bowl.

Some virtue theorists might acknowledge that the aspects of the Ethics Bowl described above harmonize with their general approach, but insist that this does not go far enough. According to their view, education in practical and professional ethics not only should provide students a (limited) model of a moral community committed to shared standards of ethical reasoning and judgment, but also should help students develop important virtues essential to membership in such a community. I believe the Ethics Bowl effectively serves this purpose as well. An explanation of why I believe this, however, calls for a brief analysis, set out immediately below, of an important idea in the area of social and political ethics that has not yet figured in this discussion — democratic deliberation.

Democratic deliberation occupies a conceptual space between bargaining, on the one hand, and conversion, on the other hand (I use the word 'conversion' here to refer to the action of attempting to convert, rather than to a successful outcome in this regard.) Bargaining, in the clearest cases, is an activity that precedes voluntary exchange in which parties, motivated by the desire to further their respective interests, try to gain as much as possible while giving up as little as they can. Democratic deliberation, again in the clearest cases, has a far different focus. It involves differences of opinion over matters for public decision, and, for that reason, implicates principles and values of social-political ethics related to concerns such as the general welfare, justice, freedom, and the scope of legitimate governmental authority. In democratic deliberation a party seeks to persuade others to accept his application or interpretation of such principles and values relative to a specific matter at issue.

Seeking to persuade, in the context of democratic deliberation, however, needs to be distinguished from attempts at conversion. A person who attempts to convert another individual seeks to "win her over" so that her most important ethical principles and values relative to public matters come to coincide exactly with his own. In contrast, the idea of persuasion, relevant to democratic deliberation, takes (and leaves) people more or less as they are. In this regard, it does not aim at getting people to renounce their deeply held convictions about social-political ethics, and to embrace entirely different new ones. Instead, it seeks to produce a change in how people think about a particular matter for public discussion through logical argument and rhetorical appeals grounded in a common framework of shared principles and values.

Understood in the above way, one may view democratic deliberation as a practice with several key associated virtues. In many circumstances efforts at persuasion on matters for public decision can escalate into conversion campaigns, with their dangerous potential for generating deep animosity or even hatred when unsuccessful, unless individuals exemplify the virtue of restraint. As a related point, democratic deliberation requires the virtue of tolerance both in negative and positive senses. Negatively it requires being content to take (and leave) people as they are. In a positive sense it calls for acknowledging that individuals with whom one disagrees strongly on matters for public discussion nonetheless are full members of the community defined by commitment to a shared framework of principles and values concerning social-political ethics. Tolerance, however, cannot be exemplified when individuals lack the virtue of patience, especially in the sense of willingness to listen to, and make a good faith effort at, understanding the viewpoint of those with whom they disagree. Finally, democratic deliberation brings into play a wide array of intellectual virtues related both to broad reflection about the meanings of important principles and values of social-political ethics, and to careful analysis directed toward applying these principles and values to specific circumstances with clarity and distinctness.

The relationship is evident, I think, between the aforementioned virtues of democratic deliberation and classical, or direct, democracy, in which an assembly of the entire democratic electorate has the ultimate authority to enact law. I recognize, however, that many would consider the relationship less

apparent in the case of modern representative democracy, and that, accordingly, different points of view about this matter are possible, which, regrettably, I cannot even begin to discuss in this paper given its subject matter and limitations on length. With such a disclaimer, I will simply note that I agree strongly with the viewpoint that the virtues of restraint, tolerance, and patience, as well as the intellectual virtues crucially relevant for democratic deliberation, are essential to an ethically responsible exercise of an individual's rights and duties of citizenship in a modern representative democracy.

I think that the necessity of an Ethics Bowl team to reach agreement in the responses it will present at the Ethics Bowl to moderators' questions, judges' queries, and opposing teams' comments puts team members in an optimal situation for interacting in ways that foster development of the aforementioned virtues. If a team is to succeed at the Ethics Bowl, then during its preparations before the event every team member must state his or her own positions clearly and fully, listen carefully to the statements of other team members, and explore with vigor, care, and an open mind the possible bases for agreement upon team positions relative to questions that might be asked about the Ethics Bowl cases. This suggests to me that the greater the degree to which team members succeed in exemplifying during their preparations the virtues of restraint, tolerance, and patience, as well as the intellectual virtues pertinent to democratic deliberation, the greater their chances for a successful team performance at the Ethics Bowl. For this reason, I believe that the Ethics Bowl has intrinsic features that make it an excellent educational activity not only from the standpoint of the applied ethical theory approach to education in practical and professional ethics, but also from the perspective of virtue theory. In this regard, some of the Ethics Bowl's most ardent supporters over the years have had strong intellectual inclinations toward the virtue theory approach. The preceding analysis, I think, quite possibly, illuminates a large part of why this is the case.

Is Ethics Bowl Too Competitive?

The thought that a competitive game can provide a genuinely educational experience for students in regard to practical and professional ethics may strike

some individuals on first impression as surprising and others as essentially wrong-headed, or even perverse. Such individuals, I think, may have a pre-reflective inclination to associate the idea of ethics with that of *cooperation*, which seems the direct conceptual opposite of competition. A little further reflection, however, makes it clear that such a preliminary association of ideas requires careful rethinking. Competition and cooperation are both necessary elements of human social life. One can ask broad, interesting, and important questions about how to think of the relationship between them in ethical terms. Further analysis is needed, however, to identify which of such questions relate specifically to the Ethics Bowl, and to explore how they relate to it.

The preceding discussion of the educational purposes of the Ethics Bowl, I believe, provides substantial guidance in this regard. From the standpoint of this discussion, a critical issue is whether the competitive aspects of the Ethics Bowl work against its most important educational purposes, which are: (a) the development of ethical understanding in connection with complex, ambiguous, and difficult to resolve issues; and (b) the fostering of key virtues associated with democratic deliberation. Relative to the preceding issue, since I created the Ethics Bowl in 1993, I have had (probably) hundreds of conversations with students and faculty, and received numerous correspondences from Ethics Bowl participants. Apart from the overwhelmingly (near unanimous) positive character of these conversations and correspondences, their most reinforcing aspect for me has been the extent to which the comments of students concerning their senses of what they gained from participating in the Ethics Bowl closely track the view of the Ethics Bowls' basic educational purposes I have tried to develop in this article. Here, for example, are the words of a student from the University of Montana, Dixie Dishon, who was interviewed by Catherine Crier on the Fox Cable Network's Crier Report in 1997 several hours after Montana won the first of the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowls that took place at the APPE annual meeting:

Catherine Crier: How much has the ... [Ethics Bowl] ... affected you personally Dixie, your own approach to life?

Dixie Dishon: Hmmm, I would say that my ethical stances are probably more reasonable and object[ive]. I can listen to other people's opinions now and kind of see their light, where before when I got into a debate I was very staunch in my beliefs and very particular with my own ethical basis for my argument; and doing these particular questions, and especially having to concur with my group we found that doing research and coming into a discussion where two of us would want to go with the question in one way and say that it was justifiable, and two people wanted to say it was morally objectionable really forced us to try to come to a consensus morally ourselves on what we would do in those situations.

Over the years, from time to time, individuals have expressed their concerns to me about the competitive aspects of the Ethics Bowl. In every case, however, they have couched their expressions of concern in general terms, rather than as specific criticisms of particular Ethics Bowl events. The competitive aspects of the Ethics Bowl energize and enthuse students, so Ethics Bowl organizers on the national, regional, local, and intramural levels must plan and conduct their events so that this energy and enthusiasm furthers, rather than undermines, the educational purposes of the activity. One can imagine scenarios in which the competitive aspects of the Ethics Bowl got out of hand. I believe (I think I know), however, that this has never actually happened. For this reason, in line with the adage that says, "If it's not broke then don't fix it," I think it would be unprofitable to develop such scenarios in this paper, and speculate about how to prevent them should they occur.

Conclusion

The Ethics Bowl has developed and grown in ways I never anticipated when I created it in 1993. The rules, procedures and format of the Ethics Bowl have undergone major alterations in the past seven years, which, overall, I believe, have substantially enhanced its educational value. Undoubtedly the future will bring even more changes. Indeed, at this time I find myself increasingly in the position of observing, rather than personally guiding, the

Ethics Bowl's continuing expansion. In this article I have tried to state the key educational purposes of the Ethics Bowl, which I believe it has successfully accomplished, and which, in my opinion, should underlie its on-going development and growth.

Robert F. Ladenson is Professor of Philosophy in the Lewis Department of Humanities at Illinois Institute of Technology.

CASE STUDY

Un-American or Very-American?: The Goshute Nuclear Waste Repository

David R. Keller
Utah Valley State College

When a small Native American tribe plans to store radioactive waste on its reservation as part of a $3 billion project, complex tensions and agreements arise between county, state, and federal governments, environmentalists, corporations, American Indians, and others.

Roaming the Great Basin of Utah and Nevada, the Goshute people once numbered near 20,000, but by the mid-nineteenth century the tribe had been decimated by disease, violent clashes with settlers, and encroachment of habitable land by European immigration and development. In 1863, Goshute leaders signed a treaty with the United States government granting sovereignty of a 17,777 acre reservation in Skull Valley about 60 miles southwest of Salt Lake City (see Figure 1), currently making it one of 554 autonomous "nations" within the borders of the United States. (Another Goshute reservation is located on the Utah-Nevada border near Wendover.) By the end of the twentieth century, the total number of Goshute had dwindled to 600 — the number of Skull Valley Goshute to 120. About 30 of the 120 live on the Skull Valley reservation; the rest are scattered throughout northern Utah and elsewhere.

Few economic opportunities exist on the reservation. Like other Native American nations, the Skull Valley Band of the Goshute (the tribe's formal name) has been interested in nuclear waste storage since the late 1980s and early 1990s when the federal government awarded Native American tribes with grants to study the feasibility of temporary nuclear waste storage. In a 1992 report describing the findings of the tribe's investigation into the issue of nuclear waste, Goshute leaders wrote: