Resolving Moral Dilemmas

In Part II of the survey, respondents were presented with four dilemmas and asked to recommend resolutions. Unlike many ethics surveys, which present respondents with right-versus-wrong temptations, these dilemmas were intended to represent "right-versus-right" choices.

- The first dilemma involved use of an agricultural pesticide that, on one hand, would increase the food supply but, on the other hand, might be harmful to humans.
- The second involved a private charitable organization's intention to build a large orphanage near the respondent's home that, on the one hand, would disrupt the community but, on the other hand, would provide shelter to "100 very poor children."
- The third involved the respondent's witnessing "an obviously poor person" shoplifting in a store plagued by crime in the past, and asked the respondent to choose between reporting or not reporting the shoplifting incident.
- The fourth involved a friend of the respondent who is sabotaging new machines in his workplace in order to protect jobs threatened by new technology. The respondent had to choose between reporting the friend's actions or being loyal to him.

By necessity, the resolutions offered to the respondents were cursory and blunt. Many respondents scribbled objections to the lack of subtlety and the relatively narrow range of options presented to them. This is perfectly understandable. The resolutions chosen by the respondents, however, were the least important responses. Far more significant were the questions concerning the philosophical justifications for their choices, questions intended to reveal important differences in beliefs.

To get at those justifications, respondents were offered three philosophical principles. After choosing a resolution for each dilemma, they were then asked to choose the philosophical principle that best described their reason for selecting that resolution.

- The first was a utilitarian justification: "This decision would produce the best outcome for the greatest number of people."
- The second was a rule-making principle reflecting Kant's categorical imperative: "This is what everyone should do in such a situation, regardless of the consequences."
- The third was the Golden Rule. This principle was worded slightly differently in each dilemma to suit the situation. For instance, in the pesticide dilemma it read, "This is the way I would like to be treated if I were a farmer," while in the orphanage dilemma, it read, "This is the way I would like to be treated if I were an orphan."

Finally, in a third question following each dilemma, respondents were asked to indicate the resolution they felt most other people in their country would have chosen. This item was included in part to see how differently our respondents felt others would behave. But it is also possible to interpret responses to this item as the "real" response of the respondent. That is, the respondent may endorse the course of action most publicly acceptable in the first resolution (ostensibly credited to him or her), but then project in the second resolution the course of action he or she would be more likely to take in real life—let off the hook by the ability to attribute that resolution to others.

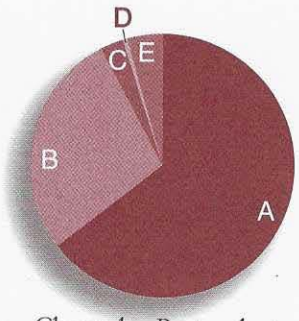
1 The Pesticide Dilemma

Farmers in your country are using an experimental pesticide. They claim that use of the pesticide helps people by substantially lowering the cost of food. But some experts claim that the pesticide may harm people who eat the food treated with it. They have called for banning the pesticide until it has been proven safe.

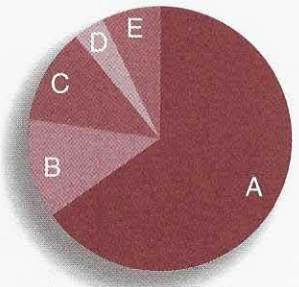
The resolutions offered for this dilemma—and the percent of respondents who chose each option and the percent who attributed it to others—are as follows:

Table 3 *The Pesticide Dilemma Resolutions*

	Chosen by Respondent	Attributed to Others
A Call for government regulation of the pesticide until it is proven safe.	65%	65%
B Support a group that discourages farmers from using the pesticide.	28	12
C Support the farmers who wish to use the pesticide.	3	12
D Demand the pesticide be used.	0.4	4
E No response.	4	7



Chosen by Respondent



Attributed to Others

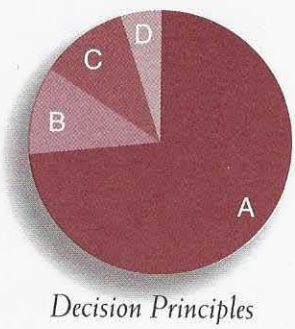
There was a good deal of support for government regulation. Given the earlier ambivalence about the moral authority of government expressed in other items, this could indicate that the government's role in this problem did not appear to these respondents to have a moral dimension. If government intervention in agriculture were perceived as a moral or value-laden issue, chances are more respondents would have chosen the second option, which avoids government involvement. While many more respondents felt that others would support use of the pesticide than believed in using it themselves, the opposition to use is pretty clear.

The near unanimity in the resolution of this dilemma made it unlikely that there would be any significant relationship between these responses and the responses to other items. In relation to the values of the participant, in fact, the only noteworthy finding was that people who chose Honor (and there were only 31 of them in this survey) were more likely to support the farmers than people who did not choose Honor. Otherwise, neither the demographic variables nor the moral boundary responses were related to the choice of resolutions of this dilemma.

The decision principles chosen to explain respondents' resolution choices were no less unanimous than their resolutions:

Table 4 *The Pesticide Dilemma Decision Principles*

Principle	
A Utilitarian	74%
B Rule-Making	11
C Golden Rule	11
D No Response	5



Decision Principles

Clearly the utilitarians carried the day: More than three-quarters of those who responded to this question chose the utilitarian explanation. The other responses were evenly split between the other two explanations.

Yet there is a significant relationship between the resolutions and the principles respondents chose. Two-thirds of those who chose the Golden Rule (21 of 30) chose to discourage the farmers without involving the government. Given the ambivalence toward government that respondents had

More Important than Science

Jane Goodall (England), *founder of the Gombe Stream Research Center in Tanzania, is one of the world's foremost primatologists.*

I think [values and ethics] are the most important [subjects] of all. They're far more important than science, far more important than any other single issue, because they should be the underpinning of decisions that are made by scientists, by politicians, by economists. Without really strong moral values and ethical principles, everything tends to go wrong. And that's what we're seeing around us in the world today.

I think there's a fundamental core of values, which has to do with respect for other individuals—with thinking of them as beings with the right to be treated in certain ways. And, perhaps most important of all, responsibility. And when we come to look at responsibility to other people, there won't be *that* much difference among different cultures. We're moving towards an era when [even] those differences will be less and less, as we have more understanding of each other's cultures, and as people learn more about each other.

I think that science is getting much more ethical in its procedures. It's becoming apparent to more and more scientists that one of the reasons why [it was earlier denied that] nonhuman animals [have the] ability to reason and have feelings was because it was more convenient for the people experimenting with them. If you could persuade yourself, "Well, it's just an animal, it can't feel, it's not really hurting," then it was easier, morally, for [you] to continue.

If you look at the whole evolutionary track of time, the tiny little blips on that enormous canvas since we became capable of developing ethics—since we emerged from our ape-like, human-like ancestors—it's so short! And we're already having discussions internationally about ethical values. Human rights have become something that's talked about. A hundred years ago, this was only just beginning. So, there is a gradual progression [forward] in terms of ethical values.

expressed earlier, this appears a reasonable application of the Golden Rule.

Interestingly, this distribution of principles mirrors the distribution of responses to the question about what others would do rather than what respondents would do to resolve the dilemma. Table 3 also reveals a near-unanimous "first choice" for what others would do, followed by an even split between the two lesser choices. Is this coincidence?

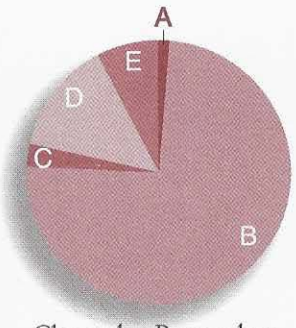
A cross-tabulation of decision principles and of the resolutions that respondents felt others would offer indicates that the distribution of responses is almost precisely what one would expect if there were no relationship between these two variables. Knowing which of the decision principles a respondent offered, in other words, does not give you any advantage in guessing which of the resolutions he or she believed others would choose—an important point, and one to which we will return later.

Two values were significantly related to decision principles. Those who chose Respect for Elders (19 respondents) were slightly more likely to use the Golden Rule and less likely to use a rule-based approach. Perhaps more significant, Reverence for Life (chosen by more than 100 respondents) was related to a preference for utilitarianism. Like those who chose Respect for Elders, those who chose Reverence for Life seemed particularly likely to avoid Kant in favor of utilitarianism. No other values were related to the choice of decision principles, and neither demographic variables nor moral boundaries were related to the choice of decision principles.

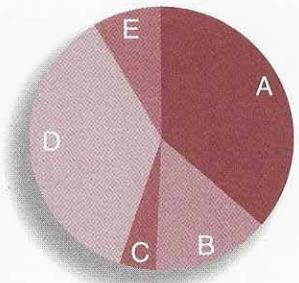
This dilemma may not have been understood as a tough call by this population. Greater affluence may make the prospect of increased food supply or cheaper food less compellingly attractive than it would be among people of more modest means. It's also worth noting that none of our respondents listed an agricultural occupation, while probably more than half the world's work force is still engaged in agriculture. The uniformity of these responses, then, may be an artifact of unusually affluent and nonagricultural respondents.

2 The Orphanage Dilemma

A local charity wants to build an orphanage near your home for 100 very poor children from elsewhere in the country. Some of your neighbors think this orphanage will put a strain on local resources, such as the water supply, police, and schools. The charity says these children desperately need shelter and that other communities have already refused to allow the orphanage to be built.



Chosen by Respondent



Attributed to Others

The percentages of respondents selecting various resolutions to this dilemma are as follows:

Table 5 *The Orphanage Dilemma Resolutions*

	Chosen by Respondent	Attributed to Others
A Support a group that is protesting against building the orphanage in your community.	2%	36%
B Express welcome to the orphans.	75	15
C Consider moving to a new neighborhood.	3	4
D Call on your city government to limit the number of orphans allowed to live in the new home.	14	36
E No response.	7	8

While there was more unanimity in respondents' own actions here than in the pesticide dilemma, there is much less unanimity in their estimations of others' actions. Of course, it would be difficult for most people to be mean to orphans; the 49 respondents who chose responses for themselves other than welcoming the orphans may not have done so enthusiastically.

But what is most striking here is that only 40 respondents felt that others in their country would be as kind as they themselves would be. There was no relationship between demographic characteristics and the choice of a resolution to this dilemma, and moral boundaries were likewise unrelated to resolutions. So there is no statistical relationship between living inside the United States (or outside it) and respondents' choices of what others in their country would do to resolve this dilemma. Therefore, it doesn't appear that people outside

or inside the United States are *particularly* likely to think that their fellow citizens are more hard-hearted than they are themselves. Is this response an indicator of the participants' "real" desire to resist welcoming the orphans, or an expression of their realistic awareness of others' lack of compassion?

Two values were significantly related to resolution of the orphanage dilemma: Honor (chosen by 31 respondents) and Self-Respect (chosen by 96 respondents). The pattern of responses was the same for both values. People who chose Honor and people who chose Self-Respect were both slightly

Running Away from Values

When we talk about Africa, we are talking about societies [in] which 90 percent of their people still [live] in a rural setting where traditional social values are practiced. Some of them are negative values which need to be changed. But others are very useful values, like [those found in] the extended family system, which is about . . . compassion, caring, responsibility, respect for the traditional family institution.

Those people are not alienated so much from the traditional social values. Where moral values are lacking, where there is a very serious situation of spiritual crisis, is in the industrialized, urbanized human sector. This worries me, because the leadership, the elite, do not share the traditional values [of] the countries they lead, but the values that prevail in the West, where this elite has been educated.

When I was a young boy, moral studies were a part of my curriculum. These are taken out now. Even worse, you have an older generation of noneducated parents who believe that their kids know better than they do, and are, therefore, weak in providing guidance. The village, the community, is equally weak. The student-teacher ratio is out of proportion. So kids don't get guidance in moral studies. I'm very much worried. It means lack of responsibility, lack of restraint, lack of compassion, lack of justice, lack of rule of law.

I don't think this is an issue that can be addressed by governments [or] by other segments of our societies separately. This will [require] more of a universal, collective effort. People think civilization [means running] away from these values. To run away from the spiritual needs, norms, spiritual issues: Is that really civilization?

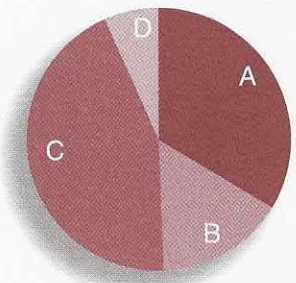
I don't think the developing world should wait to reach [the West's] state of spiritual crisis, but should learn from the failure of the social structure in the West.

Kassa Kebede (Ethiopia) *is secretary of foreign affairs for Ethiopia, and was Ethiopia's ambassador to the United Nations from 1983 to 1988.*

more likely to ask the government to limit the number of orphans, and slightly less likely to welcome the orphans. Perhaps choosing these values is associated with greater soul-searching in response to this difficult dilemma. Honor was also associated with the pesticide dilemma, and in that case people who chose Honor also tended to choose a resolution that was less palatable from a conventional standpoint.

Another interesting aspect of the slim trend regarding Honor is that for both the pesticide and the orphanage dilemmas, the resolution favored by those who chose Honor is a resolution most respondents feel that other people would choose when confronted with this dilemma. This could lend support to the interpretation of the "others' response" as representing the "real" response. Perhaps people preoccupied with Honor are simply more forthright.

In choosing decision principles, the participants responded as follows:



Decision Principles

Table 6 *The Orphanage Dilemma Decision Principles*

Principle	
A Utilitarian	34%
B Rule-Making	16
C Golden Rule	44
D No Response	7

There is less unanimity here than in the pesticide dilemma. The Golden Rule was the most frequently chosen principle, although it doesn't enjoy the monopoly that utilitarianism seemed to have in the previous dilemma. There, the respondents perhaps felt that the government could end up declaring the pesticide safe, in which case both sides would get what they desired. In the orphanage dilemma, the potential demand on the community's resources may seem less avoidable, making it seem more like a zero-sum problem. In such a case, when one side is favored it may be less attractive to defend that choice merely because of the greatest number gain. The Golden Rule may seem a "higher" principle for such a choice.

This interpretation is born out by the cross-tabulation of decision principles with resolutions. The utilitarians are disproportionately likely to favor calling on city government to

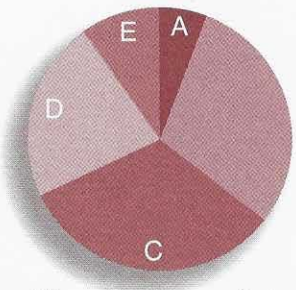
limit the number of orphans, while those who applied the Golden Rule to this dilemma are disproportionately likely to welcome the orphans. This appears reasonable, particularly if the government is democratic, and can be counted on to apply a sort of utilitarianism while protecting essential rights.

In the pesticide dilemma we noted that there was no relationship between the decision principles and the resolutions that respondents felt others would offer to the dilemma. That is not the case in the orphanage dilemma. Utilitarians are disproportionately likely to believe that their fellow citizens would protest the orphanage, and similarly unlikely to believe that their fellow citizens think government regulation would be appropriate. Conversely, those who offered the Golden Rule were more likely to believe that their fellows would call for government limits and disdain joining a protest. Those who embraced a rule-making principle predicted no particular action by their fellow citizens. Demographics and moral boundaries are again unrelated to decision principles.

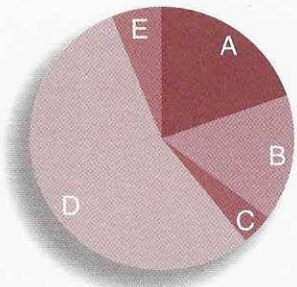
Is there a tendency to be consistent in one's choice of decision principles between the two dilemmas? Even though there are obviously some people who were utilitarians in the pesticide dilemma who have used a different principle here, how much switching of principles was there? A cross-tabulation of principles in the pesticide and orphanage dilemmas supports the conclusion that there is some evidence of consistency in decision principles, even across dilemmas that people seem to perceive very differently. There is also a slim tendency for Honor (a value that was not chosen very often) to be associated with fairly unpopular resolutions of the dilemmas, but resolutions that are thought to be popular with others.

3 The Stealing Dilemma

Your community has been plagued with stealing, and many small shops have had to close recently. At the market one day you see an obviously poor person stealing food. No one else seems aware of what this person is doing. A sign in the store warns that shoplifters will be fully prosecuted. The person sees you and realizes that you know what is happening. The person begs you not to tell.



Chosen by Respondent



Attributed to Others

This was the first dilemma in which "do nothing" was an option. Since the respondent has been seen by the imaginary thief, doing nothing is morally significant, since another person would know that the respondent had done nothing in the face of an evident crime. The resolutions offered to the stealing dilemma were as follows:

Table 7 *The Stealing Dilemma Resolutions*

	Chosen by Respondent	Attributed to Others
A Call the store manager right away.	6%	20%
B Wait until the person is gone, then notify the store manager so he can take precautions for the future.	30	15
C Explain to the person why stealing is so bad for the community, and threaten to have the person arrested if seen stealing again.	33	4
D Do nothing.	22	55
E No response.	10	6

This was also the first dilemma in which there is more unanimity about what others would do than there is about what the respondents themselves would do. There are also more nonresponses for the participant's action than for others' action. This means that some people felt they knew what others would do, but couldn't choose their own action from the list presented. Neither demographic variables nor moral boundaries were significantly related to resolutions of this dilemma.

More than half of the respondents chose a resolution (B and D) that would not involve confronting the thief directly. It is probable that some of these choices were influenced by fear rather than by an attempt to do what is right. Some people may not have felt it possible to do the right thing in this situation.

Four values were related to the resolutions offered to this dilemma: Humility, Preservation of Nature, Responsibility, and Social Harmony. People who chose Responsibility and Humility proposed to call the store manager right away. Those who chose Preservation of Nature preferred to do nothing. Those who chose Social Harmony chose the middle way: They proposed to call the store manager only after

the thief is gone. There is a simultaneous neatness and complexity to these relationships. Humility is often parodied as cowardice, but here the humble risk the wrath of the one person whose presence in the dilemma (other than the respondent's) is immediate. Responsibility seems more intuitively consistent with calling the manager. In this dilemma, being responsible and being humble seem to correlate.

What to make of Preservation of Nature in this dilemma? Recall that those who chose Preservation of Nature were less

Five Thousand Years of Global Ethics

In the heritage of India, the concept of global ethics is as old as the hills. Five thousand years ago, it was said in India that the world is one family. In fact, those who regarded one's country or society as the *only* arbiter of values [were said to] trivialize human nature, because human nature is universal.

It is true that adaptations and interpretations will differ. Take, for instance, the question of compassion, reverence for life. Among the Jains in India, vegetarianism is an absolute rule. For others, in the Hindu faith, it is a matter of option. Rules may have variable interpretations. But that does not diminish the value of those interpretations.

Justice is also a relative and comparative term, because if justice to one person involves a graver injustice to someone else, those who have to dispense justice would have to balance it. Unless you have this sense of proportion and balance, you cannot administer true justice. Absolutes are there, but in a given situation, you have to make an adjustment to the situation.

[These days,] the individual takes a decision without the amount of consideration that was the hallmark of a previous generation. Consideration for others may have also declined—not in mere simple social courtesies, not just being gallant, not just being chivalrous, but real intrinsic consideration for others.

[But] I think one must caution against the impulsive tendency of imagining a golden age [in the past]. We must realize that in many ways we are a far more ethical people in our present age—far more concerned with the use of force, with issues of accountability and governance, with human relations.

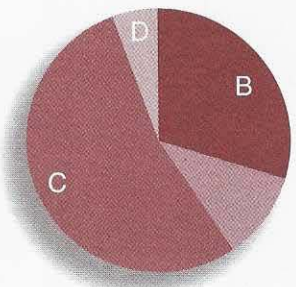
So the question of a society moving forward and backward is never just unqualified movement forward, and is never unqualified retrogression. One should not allow oneself to become despairing and despondent, and therefore overlook all the progress that we have made.

L. M. Singhvi (India), *India's high commissioner to the Court of St. James in London, was one of the presidents of the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago that created an interfaith declaration on global ethics.*

likely to believe that the decisions of businesspeople were consistent with their own values. In other words, it may not be concern for nature *per se* that is related to sympathy for the thief in this dilemma. It could be that suspicion of business explains the relationship between choosing preservation of nature and choosing to do nothing in the dilemma.

Finally, choosing Social Harmony is related to pleasing both the thief and the store manager. This seems almost a caricature of social harmony.

As in the orphanage dilemma, the Golden Rule is the most popular principle chosen to explain these decisions:



Decision Principles

Table 8 *The Stealing Dilemma Decision Principles*

	Principle	
A	Utilitarian	30%
B	Rule-Making	11
C	Golden Rule	54
D	No Response	6

Once again none of the demographic variables was significantly related to the decision principles, nor were moral boundaries. Neither were any of the value choices made by respondents. But as in the previous two dilemmas, there is a strongly significant relationship between one's decision principle and the resolution he or she favors. Utilitarians are likely to call the store manager only after the poor person has left, thereby doing good to both the manager and the thief. Those who applied the Golden Rule to this dilemma favor doing nothing, which in fact works to the advantage of the thief.

There was no relationship between respondents' thoughts about what others would do and the decision principles they used in this dilemma.

How consistent in their decision principles were our respondents now that a third dilemma had confronted them? Once again, there appears to be accumulating evidence that people are reasonably consistent in the decision principles they apply across dilemmas.

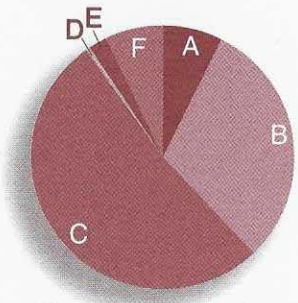
4 The Luddite Dilemma

You are employed by a company that is replacing many jobs with machines. Even though you are not at risk, fellow employees in your department are losing their jobs. You discover that a good friend of yours is part of a group that is intentionally damaging machines in order to try to save jobs.

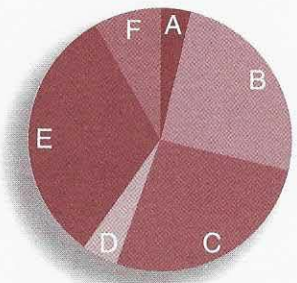
The resolutions chosen for this dilemma were as follows:

Table 9 *The Luddite Dilemma Resolutions*

	Chosen by Respondent	Attributed to Others
A Tell management your friend is responsible.	7%	4%
B Tell management that sabotage is taking place, but without exposing your friend.	31	25
C Speak privately to your friend and warn him he may be caught.	52	27
D Take steps to hide evidence of your friend's guilt.	1	4
E Do nothing.	2	32
F No response.	7	8



Chosen by Respondent

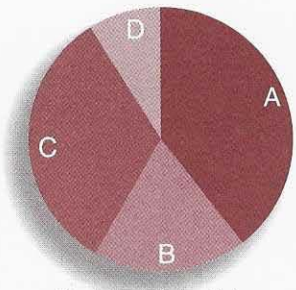


Attributed to Others

Once again, there is considerable unanimity regarding a single course of action—the "speak privately" option. When one adds those willing to inform management without exposing the friend to those who would simply speak to the friend, one finds overwhelming support for some variation of assisting one's friend. Our respondents balk, however, at helping the friend more directly by hiding evidence.

There is more diversity in our respondents' estimations of how others would deal with this situation. But the most common response is to say that others would do nothing. Once past that response, the next most common are the two main choices of the respondents themselves.

People who chose Compassion were disproportionately likely to choose to speak privately to their friend and *not* to tell management of their friend's responsibility. Compassion was the only value choice that correlated with resolution of this dilemma. As with most other such relationships, it seems intuitive and clear.



Decision Principles

Knowing a person's value priorities . . . is of little help in predicting the principles he or she will apply to moral decisions.

As in the earlier dilemmas, demographic variables and moral boundaries are unrelated to respondents' choices of resolutions.

The principles used to explain the resolutions of the Luddite dilemma were:

Table 10 *The Luddite Dilemma Decision Principles*

Principle	
A Utilitarian	40%
B Rule-Making	19
C Golden Rule	33
D No Response	9

Utilitarian reasoning is once again the most popular (as in the case of the pesticide dilemma), but the Golden Rule is a fairly close second. Rule making makes its best showing so far, but is still clearly a minority approach.

No demographic variables were related to the decision principles in this dilemma, nor were moral boundaries. Nor were any values related to the decision principles.

But once more, the decision principles are associated with a pattern of preferred resolutions, and once more the preferences conform rather clearly to the philosophies the principles represent. Utilitarians favored protecting their friend while still telling management there is trouble. This solution is very similar to allowing the thief to escape and then telling the shopkeeper, also favored by utilitarians. Rule-makers would inform management of the friend's involvement, the most strict application of the law available as a resolution. Those applying the Golden Rule tended to favor warning the friend privately without talking to management. Virtually no one would hide evidence, or even fail to act by doing nothing.

By totaling the responses to these four dilemmas, it is now possible to assess the frequency with which respondents chose each of the three resolution principles. The utilitarian response was selected by 49 percent, followed by the Golden Rule at 39 percent and the Kantian categorical imperative at 12 percent. Given the heavy emphasis in contemporary ethics texts on the first and last of these principles, and the virtual dismissal of the Golden Rule as an operative principle for ethical decision making, these findings suggest the need for some pedagogical rethinking.

From our cross-tabulations concerning these four dilemmas, we can also conclude that people who choose a decision

principle in one dilemma are likely to choose that same principle in another dilemma, and that the principle they choose has consequences for the resolution they choose.

But we can conclude, too, that decision principles—as important as they are as indicators of an intention to act a certain way—are virtually unrelated to one's values. It is the rare case that values are significantly related either to the resolutions or the principles underlying those resolutions. When values are related, they are related in a fairly straightforward fashion, and no single value appears consistently in three or more dilemmas. Knowing a person's value priorities, in other words, is of little help in predicting the principles he or she will apply to moral decisions.

Ethics at the Grassroots

If you ask me, "Are we on the right track, talking so much about values systems?," I say, "Of course!" If I take stock over a long period—based on the experiences of two world wars, of totalitarian fascism and mass unemployment in the '30s—[I see] an enormous outburst to improve the standard of ethics and morality on the level of government. We created the United Nations. We created the charter. We have seen many other charters and treaties in which we have laid down ethics. We have settled the ending of certain aspects of colonialism and apartheid.

But at the very same time, we have a gradual diminishment of society—of, let's say, responsible society—just because of the fact that we've thought the *state* had to be responsible. America considered itself an established democracy, and thought, "Well, if each country has an established democracy and a free market system, we are there." Now we're finding out that's not the whole truth. We ended the split between the first and the second worlds. And now we see all this violence all over the world. We see an increase in income differences. We see the ecological problem.

But there is a lot of increase in awareness. Many people underestimate what is going on at the grassroots level in terms of new social movements, civil society movements based on the need of human beings to belong to some sort of institution. I think at the level of the efficiency of what we consider to be the first instrument of values—the nation state—there's a lot of cynicism. But at the very same time, I'm very optimistic about youngsters today. They have a feel for morals and ethics, many of them. They're organizing themselves into this new social movement.

If you are asking, "What would you say to youngsters?," I would listen to them.

Ruud Lubbers (Netherlands), *prime minister of the Netherlands from 1982 to 1994, is cochair of the State of the World Forum.*

Values and Television

The 13 questions in Part III of the survey concerned the ability of the media to teach children the values our respondents consider important. One question, scored on a six-point scale, was a general item about how often television programs "teach children values similar to my own." Twelve other items, also scored on a six-point scale, were designed to probe various aspects of children's socialization and television's usefulness in this regard.

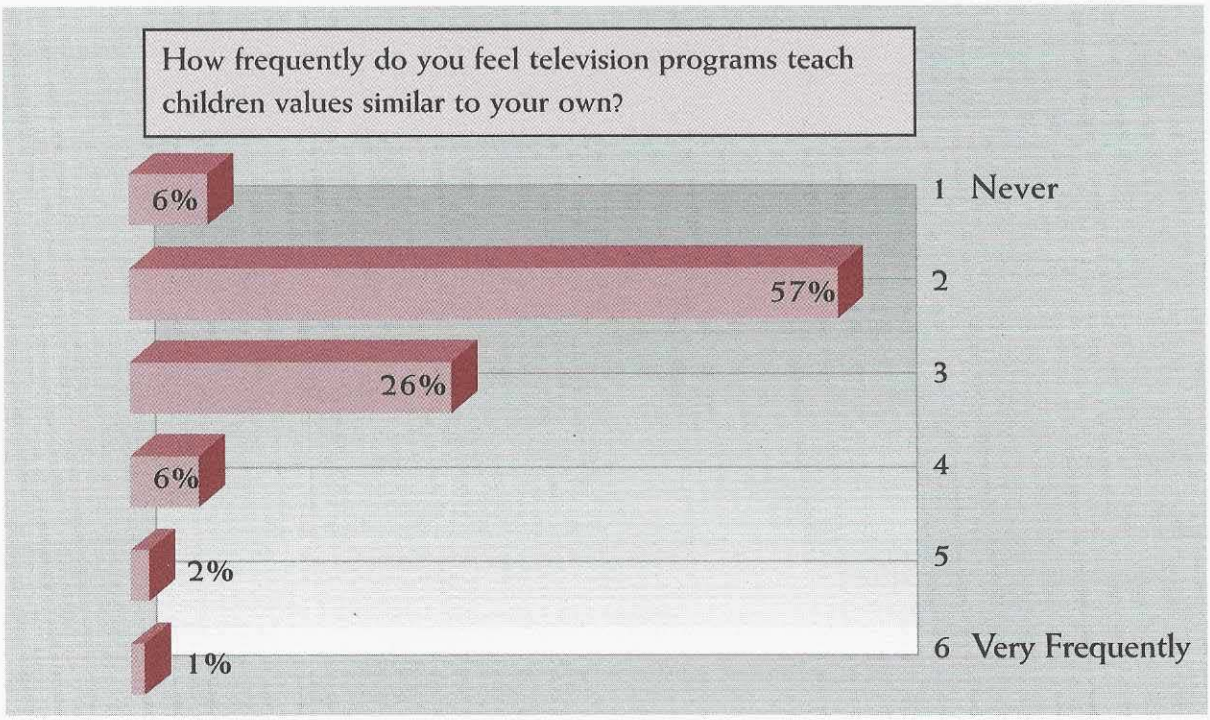


Figure 10
Television as a Teacher of Values

Responses to the single general question about TV and values did not correlate significantly with living inside or outside the United States. That is, it appears that the attitudes our respondents have toward TV in its role as a socialization vehicle do not depend on where they live (or the concomitant differences in television systems). Neither was sex, education, or age related to any attitudes toward TV.

Employment sector, however, was a significant distinction. Among people who answered the occupation question, the average score for the single general question was 2.37 on a scale ranging from a low of one to a high of six. People in the professional and business sectors did not deviate significantly

from this overall average. However, people in the education sector gave TV a significantly higher average score, 2.63, and those in the nonprofit sector a significantly lower score, 2.06.

In the analysis of the 12-item scale, we find that once again the education sector is significantly higher than the whole population, but so is the business sector. Also, once again the nonprofit sector is significantly lower than the population average. It is surprising to find educators so confident that TV is an ally in the proper socialization of children, since the stereotype is

Values: Our Strategic Reserve

Every human being has, inherent to our own nature, values. In the past we had time to recreate ourselves in our values: family values; traditional values; our cultural values of honesty, truth, transparency, loyalty, solidarity. The problem is that with growth, and with this everyday struggle for survival, we tend to leave behind, or set aside, our own values. We just seem to have time to survive—in eating, in just dressing.

I think that today, at the end of this millennium, we are waking up again and trying to go back to our strategic reserve. And in Mexico, and particularly in Guanajuato, our strategic reserve is our values. If we give them priority over material things, or over just earning money, or earning a space in society, or earning power—if we go back to living values, individually we are going to be much better human beings, and collectively, community-wise, we are going to do much better.

The real universal values are common to everybody. You cannot survive in this world through small islands of progress surrounded by misery and poverty.

To me, there's no way of surviving if it's not through values. Because otherwise, individualism, regionalism, nationalism will kill this opportunity of a worldwide culture, of a worldwide set of values, and a worldwide effort to get to a world of rewards for everybody.

[But] we don't seem to be advancing very consistently [against corruption and] toward transparency. Politics is getting more and more contaminated. If [cleaning up corruption] can be done, it can only be done first through a real participative democracy. But [even that is] not enough. You also need a very strong, structured society. We need citizens with character, with knowledge of their rights, who have the courage to demand every day, in every action, full respect for those rights.

Vicente Fox (Mexico), *former chief executive of the Coca-Cola Corporation for Mexico and Central America, is governor of Guanajuato State in Mexico.*

quite the opposite. But in written comments, some noted that the availability of specific programs, or services such as PBS or the Discovery Channel, contributes to their appraisal of television even if most of what is on tends to be unhelpful. Perhaps educators are more confident than others that they can navigate TV's offerings and find the more enriching material.

The individual values were not generally related to responses to the TV questions. People who chose Truth were more likely to believe that TV taught values similar to their own, but no other value was related to this item. People who chose Devotion (only 24) tended to score lower on the 12-item scale than people who did not. Other than these findings, no value choice was related to the TV items.

Opinions about television's role in teaching children were generally low. The average score for the all respondents was only 2.4 for the single-item general question, and 2.69 for the 12-item scale. Both are below the midpoint of 3.5, and none of the employment sectors that were more positively disposed toward TV ever rose above three in their average scores on either item. But this somewhat negative attitude towards children's relationship with TV was not powerfully related to a distinct pattern of values or demographic characteristics.