Research Seminar

Ethical Decision Making in Goal-Directed Influence: The “Target Effect”

Professor Bruce Barry, Vanderbilt University, Tennessee USA

Abstract: Behavioral ethics scholarship to date has largely focused on the thought processes of individuals facing discrete ethical dilemmas where the influence of other people on one’s thoughts and actions is assumed to be exogenous to the dilemma itself. Prior work ignores the more complex and more frequent ethical decisions about tactics (e.g., lying) and goals that are embedded within goal-directed interpersonal interactions. Our theoretical model advances research in behavioral ethics by highlighting the social-cognitive and self-regulatory processes whereby an actor’s ethical thought is shaped directly by another individual, in this case the influence target, during common social influence situations (e.g., goal-directed influence, persuasion, negotiation). We reflect on the implications of our model for ethical decision-making research and for understanding the ethical dimensions of interactions within and around organizations.

Presenter: Bruce Barry is Brownlee O. Currey Jr. Professor of Management and Professor of Sociology at Vanderbilt University, where he teaches courses on ethics, negotiation, and public policy issues. He has also taught at Duke University and the University of North Carolina, and has been a visiting scholar at the Queensland University of Technology and the University of Melbourne in Australia.

His research on behavior at work, including ethics, conflict, power, justice, and negotiation, has been published in numerous scholarly journals and volumes. He also writes about workplace rights and public policy issues at the intersection of business and society. He is associate editor of the scholarly journal Business Ethics Quarterly and a member of the editorial boards of three others (Work and Occupations, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, and Negotiation and Conflict Management Research).

Date: Friday 28 March 2014
Time: 12:00-1:00pm followed by Sandwich Reception
Venue: BUSN 142 Sir Rod Eddington Case Study Room
Registration: Siew.Wade@uwa.edu.au by 25/3/2014
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