The Influence of Cohesive Groups on the Ethical Behavior of Public Employees: An Analysis of an Urban University

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The Influence of Cohesive Groups on the Ethical Behavior of Public Employees: An Analysis of an Urban University

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the faculty of Old Dominion University
in fulfillment of the requirements for

The Doctor of Philosophy Degree
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Abstract

The Influence of Cohesive Groups on the Ethical Behavior of Public Employees: An Analysis of an Urban University

Patricia Bellin Strait
Old Dominion University 1993
Director: Dr. Berhanu Mengistu

Ethics problems permeate all aspects of public agencies. This is especially true in urban areas where public workers have frequent interactions with large numbers of civilians. The results of unethical behavior often have very tangible effects with perhaps the most serious consequences being the deterioration of public services and the destruction of public trust.

This dissertation explores Milton Fisk's Group Ethics Theory which states that ethical behavior varies according to cohesive group membership. In order to investigate Fisk's theory, an ex post facto study was performed within a single urban university. The primary independent variable was group membership. Data was also collected on the variables of gender, age and longevity of service to the organization. The materials used in this research were a sociogram questionnaire and an ethics survey.

Analysis of Variance revealed ethical differences between cohesive groups within the same organization and even within individual departments. Men and women did not score differently on the ethics survey, but age and longevity levels did reveal statistically significant differences. This research confirms that ethical behavior differs according to cohesive group membership and in doing so makes the following recommendations: First, it is essential that managers understand that employees do not necessarily operate from similar ethics philosophies. Secondly, it is important that managers learn to identify cohesive groups and their influence on the ethical structure of the organization. Thirdly, employees should be given a formal voice in the formulation of the ethics principles which guide the organization. Like all research this dissertation answers some questions while raising still others. The sensitive nature of ethics data makes most public employees reluctant subjects at best.
Acknowledgement

I am convinced that the pursuit of a doctoral degree is generally a lonely business. One which requires great discipline and self-motivation in order to succeed. I am also convinced that the doctoral process was intended to be a lonely pursuit in order to winnow out those who are unable or unwilling to contribute to the 'body of knowledge'. With this in mind, I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Berhanu Mengistu, Dr. Wolfgang Pindur and Dr. Jack Robinson for their guidance concerning this dissertation. Special thanks to Dr. Mengistu and Dr. Pindur for their support throughout the Ph.D program. I would also like to acknowledge the impact this effort has had on those around me. Your patience and support did not go unnoticed. Lastly, I would like to thank my family and friends for their encouragement.
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Chapter One: Introduction

A day seldom goes by in the course of public business that an individual or organization doesn't fall under scrutiny for unethical behavior. This is especially true in the urban environment where public servants have close and frequent interactions with the civilians they serve. Throughout American cities, public employees such as council members and educators are often under scrutiny for conflicts of interests and questions of conduct. The frequency of unethical behavior alarms concerned constituencies and undermines the public's faith in elected, appointed and professional public employees. Ethics problems permeate all aspects of urban agencies including such organizations as human services, public education, police departments, public works and public health clinics. The result of unethical behavior often has very tangible consequences with perhaps the most serious consequences being the deterioration of public services and the destruction of public trust.

In addition to the scenarios listed above, ethical dilemmas in urban agencies take many other forms and effect workers at every level. Some of the more common manifestations including calling in sick when well, misuse of company equipment, providing substandard services and removal of company supplies. While some of these behaviors may not seem overly serious, the cumulative effect of many employees engaging in these practices over long periods of time result in a loss of productivity and rising operational expenses both of which are passed on to the
consumer/taxpayer. If such practices are to be stopped, managers must first understand what motivates these behaviors and under what circumstances are they most likely to occur. Though managers admit they are unclear as to how unethical behavior originates, they are often quick to resort to seeking easy fixes in the form of codes of conduct or other mandates of ethical behavior. These ethics declarations usually die a slow death posted on a remote office wall, eventually ignored by employees and supervisors alike. The problems, however, live on.

To complicate the situation even further, many public servants disagree as to what constitutes an unethical action. Many of the subjects who were interviewed during the development of the survey used in this study disagreed as to which specific actions were truly unethical. This disagreement was especially apparent when the survey was pretested and subjects were encouraged to voice their opinions concerning the ethical dilemmas described in the survey. Part of the confusion is caused by the different philosophical viewpoints that make up the ethics dialogue. While other viewpoints will be briefly discussed, this dissertation will explore the Social View School of Thought, in particular Milton Fisk's Group Ethics Theory outlined in his book *Ethics and Society*. What Fisk asseverates above all is that ethics has a social basis. Many different heterogeneous groups, however, exist within a diverse society; therefore, what constitutes ethical behavior is inconsistent at best. Groups are formed throughout society by the identification of mutual interests. Ethical behavior is then defined as behavior which will protect the group's interest. The ethical behavior of each group, while equally legitimate, may differ greatly from the next group. There is substantial literature which suggests that cohesive groups
are a major influence on the ethical behavior of individuals who belong to those groups. This dissertation investigates the question: Are there ethical differences between cohesive groups within the same organization? Two related questions are: Does ethical behavior vary according to gender, age and longevity? Do gender, age and longevity influence group cohesiveness?

In order to answer these questions, the data collection will be divided into two parts. First, cohesive groups will be identified using a technique known as a sociogram. Then, an ethics survey will be administered to identify ethics differences between groups. The variables of gender, age and longevity will be also be explored to see if they are descriptors of cohesive groups or influence ethical behavior.

**Specific Focus of this Study**

The focus of this study is to determine if ethical behavior differs according to group membership as well as the influence that gender, age and longevity might exert in those differences.

It is equally important to say what this study does not do. This investigation does not support a particular ethics principle as universally good or even better than other principles. The survey instrument used in this study does not intend to intimate that one score is good while another score is bad; the purpose of the survey is only to determine if the scores are different. Discussions as to what is good or bad are not relevant to this
study and are, in fact, contrary to the theory under investigation, Milton Fisk's Group Ethics Theory.

Furthermore, it is not the intention of this study to condemn one ethical practice in favor of another, nor to suggest that other philosophical viewpoints are wrong or somehow lacking. The ethics paradigms of Naturalism, Devil Theory, Pragmatism and Emotive Theory are briefly summarized in order to place the Social View School of Thought to which Fisk's Group Ethics Theory belongs within its appropriate philosophical context, and to alert the reader to the ethics dialogue taking place. These thoughts provide the framework for this dissertation.

**Relevance of This Study**

The results of this study could be useful in several ways, primarily it implicates a new way to manage the professional integrity of urban and other public organizations and employees. The old approach of establishing codes and other ethical mandates will not change behavior or bring about the desired results as long as the influence and the import of cohesive groups is ignored. The needs of the various groups must be woven into the ethical fabric of the organization if the desired fundamental changes, whatever those changes might be, are to be produced. There are other important implications for urban management and public administration. Managers must gain greater understanding of the role of cohesive groups within the organization. Of particular importance is the analysis of group needs and how they may or may not be in conflict with the overall ethics objectives of
the organization. Managers must learn to orchestrate group needs so that they are in harmony with organizational objectives. There are also policy implications implicit in the Social View approach. The Social View suggests that all groups not only have a right but a responsibility to participate in the formulation and modification of the ethical structure of the organization. In the Social View Paradigm, the public manager merely performs as the conductor of a mighty orchestra of needs and interests. The new ethics role for managers is to facilitate not dictate.

Organization of This Dissertation

The remainder of the dissertation assumes the following organization: Chapter Two develops the philosophical context of the dissertation as well as an overview of current ethics research within urban and public administration. Chapter Three provides the methodology and a description of the development of the survey instrument. Chapter Four presents the statistical results and other findings to the research questions. Chapter Five provides the discussion and closing remarks. The Appendix contains the in-depth interviews on which the survey instrument was based as well as all other documentation pertinent to this study. The End Notes and Bibliography conclude the dissertation.
Chapter Two:

Philosophical Background: Paradigms of Ethical Thought

In order to gain a full understanding of how the Social View School of Thought is positioned in ethics philosophy, it is necessary to identify the current paradigms which constitute the philosophy of ethics. To speak in terms of paradigms is merely a convenient way to identify the similarities among various ethics theories. While many ethics scholars pursue the approach of categorizing ethics theories, there is little agreement as to the appropriate names of the various schools of thought. In addition, most authors design ethics paradigms in ways which will best support their particular areas of inquiry.

For instance, in LaRue Tone Hosmer's book, *The Ethics of Management* he provides these paradigms which he describes in the following way:

Eternal Law: moral standards are given in an eternal law which is revealed in scripture or apparent in nature.

Utilitarian Theory: action should generate the greatest benefits for the largest number of people.
Universalist Theory.................moral standards are applied to actions and decisions to ensure that similar decisions would be reached by others.

Distributive Justice..............moral standards are based upon 'justice'. Everyone should ensure a more equitable distribution of benefits. This paradigm is based on John Rawls work entitled A Theory of Justice.

Personal Liberty..................moral standards are based upon 'liberty'. Everyone should ensure greater freedom.

Bernard Williams, author of Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy takes another approach and divides ethics theories into two major areas, contractual and utilitarian. He describes the contractual paradigm in this way:

"In this (body of) theory, moral thought is concerned with what agreements people could make in favored circumstances, in which no one is ignorant and no one is coerced. The (contractual) theory also gives an account of motivation. The basic moral motive is a desire to be able to justify one's actions on the grounds others could not reject."

In contrast, the utilitarian paradigm takes "facts of individual welfare as the basic matter of ethical thought." This paradigm is dominated by concepts such as rules, institutions and the welfare of the people.

While Hosmer provides John Rawls' Distributive Justice with its own...
paradigm, Williams simply places the concept of Distributive Justice within the larger paradigm of Utilitarian thought. Williams, however, concedes that there are many different kinds of ethics theories and several ways of classifying them, no classification, however, is uniquely illuminating.

For the purposes of this research, ethics theories have been divided into five schools of thought: Naturalism, Devil Theory, Pragmatism, Emotive Theory and the Social View. The paradigm in which this research takes place is the Social View body of theory, in particular the Group Ethics Theory developed by Milton Fisk. In order to provide an illustration of how the Social View Paradigm fits into the larger body of ethics philosophy, the other four paradigms will be briefly summarized.

**Naturalism**

Natural law thinking is best illustrated by the writings of Aristotle. Aristotle's ethical philosophy is contained in his two major works Eudemian and Nicomachean Ethics. Nicomachean Ethics was written in his later years and some indicate that his ethical values shifted with age from his earlier work Eudemian Ethics.

Aristotle and the natural school of thought contend that man has an inner nature which propels him to pursue intellectual and humane endeavors. His energies are devoted to arranging his environment so that his inner nature is in harmony with nature. Nature, according to Aristotle, intended us to practice virtue in the various forms of kindness, temperance and other forms of good conduct. Deviations from these virtues are considered
unethical. Most men who pursue these attributes fall somewhere near the "golden mean". In Nicomachean Ethics Aristotle writes:

"People are thought to have by nature judgement, understanding and intuitive reason. This is shown by the fact that we think that our powers correspond to our time of life, and that a particular age brings with it intuitive reason and judgement; this implies that nature is the cause."

Concerning man's moral judgement Aristotle had the following to say:

"What is called judgement, in virtue of which men are said to be 'sympathetic judges' and to 'have judgement' is right discrimination of the equitable. This is shown by the fact that we say that the equitable man is above all others a man with sympathetic judgement. Sympathetic judgement is what discriminates what is equitable and does so correctly; and correct judgement is that which judges what is true."

Aristotle assumes that men will proceed in a rational, positive manner with what nature has given them. Problems arise when we are asked to identify what is 'natural'? Is sterilization natural for people who don't want children or cannot afford to have more children? Is it natural to use human tissue to save other humans? Is it natural to take what you feel is owed to you? Naturalism is susceptible to many different interpretations.

In more recent times one of the best known advocates of naturalism is Lawrence Kohlberg. Within his research, Kohlberg has attempted to illustrate universal moral development through his work with moral dilemma scenarios. After completing research using a sample of teenage boys, Kohlberg concluded that his subjects progressed through three major stages of moral development: preconventional, conventional and
postconventional. In the first stage decisions are largely based on the desire to avoid punishment and obtain rewards. This is the first kind of moral reasoning that a child develops. In the second stage of moral development, subjects conform in order to avoid the disapproval of authority figures or their reference groups. The consequences of one's actions are taken into consideration. The influence of rules and policies dominate the second stage. In the final stage of moral development subjects are concerned with the needs of society. Kohlberg refers to this as a "morality of conscience". The progression of moral development is viewed as a natural process with parents, family and reference groups playing major roles. According to Kohlberg, these stages are systematic with one stage preceding the next. Kohlberg viewed this progression as the result of the natural process of aging and intellectual development.  

Contrasting the parameters of the Naturalism Paradigm to the classifications created by Williams and Hosmer, we see that Williams would classify these theories within his broad utilitarian paradigm. Hosmer, on the other hand, would place the work of Aristotle and Kohlberg within his Eternal Law Paradigm. You will recall in Hosmer's description of Eternal Law, he employs the phrase "that which is revealed in scripture or is apparent in nature". The operative word here is "nature" and so this first paradigm is referred to as Naturalism.
Devil Theory

The primary distinction between Naturalism and the Devil Theory school of thought is the emphasis on what the psychologist B.F. Skinner called negative reinforcement. Naturalism assumes that guidance for ethical behavior is provided within nature and man acts to be in balance with nature, refining his behavior as he ages. While both Naturalism and Devil Theory look toward scripture for direction, Devil Theory differs in that its primary motivating factor is the desire to avoid unpleasant circumstances, namely damnation, hence the focus on negative reinforcement. The point in Devil Theory isn't that man is moving toward harmony with nature, but more that man's ethical actions are motivated by a desire to avoid devil-like behavior and the consequences devil behavior brings.

Devil Theory ethics, otherwise known as Puritan ethics dominated thinking during the early settlements in the United States. Basic to Puritan ethical theory is that man possesses a tendency to engage in self gratification. In this paradigm, man is always in battle with the devil, hence Devil Theory. Puritan ethics is underscored by a code of strict morality. In the book, American Ethical Thought, Guy Stroh describes Puritan ethical theory this way:

"The Puritans, in other words, sought to improve their material conditions of life while being careful not to fall in love with the world. They believed in and practiced such virtues as prudence, thrift, cleanliness, enterprise"
and justice, not for the final or ultimate purpose of justice but the glorification of God. Good works were the result of divine grace...Every man should have a calling and work hard.

It is interesting to note that in a recent group of interviews with two New England managers, sentiments have changed very little from the Puritan standpoint. Simply stated, working hard is ethical and not working hard is unethical. One, however, does not get the impression that people today who espouse this philosophy are working hard because they enjoy it, but because they are compelled to do so.

Puritan Ethics is parsimonious and contains clearly defined guidelines. Within the context of the work environment, employees are motivated to avoid organizational sanctions for violations of ethical conduct, again the emphasis on negative reinforcement. Devil theory has remained popular probably because it is an effective way of controlling people. Fisk makes the following comment:

"You will now see this theory has enormous implications for us as social beings. It is important that such a theory be challenged. This is not so much because, if it were successfully challenged that, those who support domination would stop using the theory. It is mainly because, successfully challenging the theory can change the self-image of people who suffer from domination. So long as (those suffering) think of members of their own group as being naturally selfish and aggressive, their motivation for attempting to overthrow the domination is seriously weakened."

Despite the differences between Devil Theory and Naturalism, Hosmer still classifies these beliefs within the Eternal Law Paradigm, moral standards revealed in scripture or apparent in nature. Williams, on the other hand, would place Devil Theory within the large Utilitarian Paradigm.
Pragmatism

Pragmatism ethics had its patrimony in the frustration that resulted from the Natural and Devil Theory Paradigms. Pragmatism focuses on the challenges and obstacles that the environment provides. Pragmatism is also concerned with the consequences of our assumptions. It emphasizes methodology over ideology. Not surprisingly, Pragmatism became more popular as science advanced. Perhaps the person from the United States most associated with Pragmatism is William James. He contends that ideas and beliefs come from experience rather than divine guidance. Perhaps most importantly, he said that beliefs become the rules for actions.

This paradigm puts the responsibility on man himself. Man has free will to act or not to act. His actions are the result of his beliefs and his experiences. It seems logical then to assume that those people who have different experiences would interact with their environments differently. It would also seem likely that employees would come to different conclusions as to what might be considered ethical behavior. The pragmatic approach today is often referred to as the "whatever-works" system of ethics. It is easy to see how this interpretation originated. Pragmatists emphasize empirical observation and then plan their responses accordingly.

As the name suggests, Pragmatism is concerned with the practical side of ethics, the repercussions of our actions. Perhaps the greatest point of departure from the earlier paradigms of Naturalism and Devil Theory is the direction for ethical responses is no longer provided in nature and scripture. The influence of experience and the social environment are emphasized. Put another way, ethical responses are largely situational and will vary.
according to the situation. In management theory this would be called the contingency approach to ethics.

Within the Pragmatism Paradigm, there exists no universal order to guide ethical behavior. Pragmatism is far less prescriptive than Naturalism or Devil Theory, which is not to say that it is not normative. A great many employees are practitioners of the Pragmatism Paradigm, in other words, employees are typically ethical when it is convenient for them to be so. The existence of situational ethics can often be identified by the responses received in ethics surveys in which few people score in the extremes.

Interestingly, Hosmer does not mention what perhaps is the most prevalent paradigm in the daily practices of employees, situational ethics. Each classification which is provided by Hosmer assumes individuals are motivated and should be motivated to a higher order, whether it is greater freedom of choice or based upon the concept of justice. All of Hosmer's paradigms are prescriptive rather than descriptive in nature.

In reference to William's paradigms, Pragmatism is probably most closely aligned with Contractualism. Within Contractualism, ethical "contracts" are primarily between individuals and their reference groups. In Pragmatism, however, ethical contracts are largely between one's self and one's conscience with the interests of one's self often winning out. Williams addresses what he identifies as important shortcomings in Contractual Ethics:

"Contractual ethic theory cannot provide the basic method of understanding ethics, because it needs itself to be understood. If applied narrowly, it insistently raises the question of the special conditions required to make it appropriate. There may be circumstances in which aspirations for a better world would be effectively expressed through
the project of thinking about ethical life in terms of contractual theory — but if there are, the general idea of such theory cannot in itself tell us what they are.

Emotive Theory

A more recent development in ethics is the Emotive Theory. The development of this theory is primarily attributed to A. J. Ayer and C.L. Stevenson. Ayer created the concept of metaethics which moved ethics toward a more empirical investigation. Ethical beliefs were considered to be moral judgements which could be researched to determine if they produced desirable results. This early concept of Emotive Theory did not attempt to suggest what "should be" but merely to test if the normative values espoused actually produced desirable results.

In 1937 C. L. Stevenson published an article entitled, "The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms". He, too, refused to support any particular moral code, but confined his work instead to insisting that moral codes be investigated to see if they obtained the desired results. Although he acknowledged that the normative questions of ethics were certainly important, he confined his research to the analysis of ethical judgements. Stevenson's work advocated the clarification of ethical terms in that he contended that it is interpretation of an ethical concept which gives direction, and not the emotional meaning behind the concept. It is this ethical interpretation which can be empirically investigated.
Metaethics is an attempt to move ethics from a prescriptive approach to more of a descriptive science. Metaethics analyzes the language of ethics. Proponents of this school of thought advocate a separation of moral prescriptions from ethical theory. Emotive theory requires rigorous methodological investigation. Metaethics philosophers assert that most ethics theories are subjective statements which cannot be affirmed or denied. It is these subjective statements which metaethicists believe have hindered the advancement of a science of ethics. Frederic Reamer, author of Ethical Dilemmas in Social Service, describes metaethics in the following way:

"Metaethics involve an analysis of the meaning and definitions of ethical terms such as good and bad, and right and wrong; normative ethics, on the other hand, involves the application of ethical standards and values in order to judge whether specific actions are right or wrong. Thus, the question is What is the meaning of the term good? is one of metaethics, while the question Should resources be distributed among individuals on the basis on need? is one of normative ethics."

The current emphasis on survey research is in keeping with the metaethics tradition. An ethics survey which measures behavior is an attempt to measure what is not what should be or even which behavior is preferred. Accordingly, the survey used within this research does not seek to identify one group as being more ethical than another, just that the behaviors of the groups differ.
Metaethics Theory / Emotive Theory is not clearly represented in the categories created by Williams or Hosmer. Emotive Theory, however, is an important movement in ethics research.

The Theoretical Framework for This Study

The Social View Paradigm

Before beginning the discussion on the Social View School of Thought, it is important to outline some of its key concepts and their definitions according to Social View philosophy.

- **morals** - the principles which guide our actions within society
- **ethics** - the principles which guide our actions within the work environment. To say something is "morally and ethically wrong" means that those actions are viewed as being contrary to the welfare of society and the organization to which the individual belongs.
- **ethical** - actions which safeguard the welfare of the group to which the individual belongs.
unethical - actions which are contrary to the interests of the group

longevity - a variable of the factor of "experience". It refers to the length of time that an individual has served in a particular professional capacity.

ethical theory - an explanation of what ethical thoughts and practices are; it implies a general test for correctness.

vested employee - an employee who has typically accrued nine or more years of service

Like Williams' Contractual paradigm, Social View Theory addresses the ethical contract between an individual and his reference group. Since Hosmer's paradigm are largely based in prescription, he never directly addresses the influence of the reference groups. Excellent descriptions of the Social View Theory have been presented by Archie Bahm, Rosenthal and Shenadi and Guy Stroh.

One way to begin this discussion is by examining the work of Archie Bahm. Bahm explores the possibility of moving ethics research toward an empirical science. He argues that recent advancements of the study of ethics have been hindered by the fact that the discipline of ethics has been
traditionally contained within the philosophical domain. As philosophers have remained obsessed with the development of moral principles, the science of ethics has been neglected. There is a considerable amount of confusion as to what constitutes a "good" moral principle. He asserts that the removal of such confusing dogmatic principles will open the door to an empirical investigation of ethical practices. In other words, perhaps it would be more appropriate to inquire why people behave the way they do, in other words, what motivates ethical or unethical behavior than to ask whether a particular action is necessarily considered desirable. Ethics debates are often difficult to resolve. The point here is that perhaps it is not important to resolve them. Bahm suggests that to continue in the direction of debating morale principles is to ignore the importance of ethics. The title of Bahm's book suggests a new direction for ethics research which is toward behavioral science. Researchers could then use standard social science methods of inquiry to study the development of ethical standards, the role of the individual as well as the influence of the group.

Rosenthal and Shenadi present a similar argument. These authors contend that the objective truths in ethics are few if any and that moral judgements are no more than the expression of personal feelings and desires. More importantly, they argued that any moral argument can appear convincing as long as the argument appears to be consistent and rational. As evidence to support their claim the authors offer the example of Hume.11

"In an essay on suicide Hume produced a number of powerful arguments in support of his (ethical) view that a person has a right to take his own life for an example, when he is suffering without hope from a painful illness. Hume specifically opposed the traditional rational view that since life is a gift from God, only God may decide when it shall end.
About this he made the simple but provocative observation that we "play God" as much when we save a life as when we take it. Each time a doctor treats an illness and thereby prolongs a life, he decrees that this life shall not end now. Thus if we take seriously that only God may determine the length of a life, we have to renounce not only killing but saving as well. This point has force because of the general requirement that our arguments be consistent, and consistency, of course, is the prime requirement of rationality."

Rosenthal and Shenadi raise an interesting question when they ask whether there are any objective truths in ethics or moral principles. It is very likely that the only objective truths lie within the domain of observable actions and to a lesser degree the factor and motivations for those actions. These authors argue that ethics research must take into account the role of epistemoiogy and the conceptual features of ethical theories. Once these criteria have been met ethics researchers may move closer to an empirical investigation of ethical behavior.

Guy Stroh continued the call to a more empirical approach to ethics research. In his book, American Ethical Thought, Stroh contends that a "metaethical view" is needed to move ethics research forward. Metaethics is not concerned with espousing any particular school of moral principles. Instead, metaethics seeks to clarify the concepts themselves referred to in moral debates. Stroh contrasted metaethics against normative ethics by saying that normative ethics is "concerned with propounding principles of virtue or guidelines for the pursuit of a good life. This does not mean that metaethics is unconcerned with normative issues ... metaethics must indeed discuss and analyze moral judgements and norms; but discussion and analysis of moral judgements is not the same as recommending any
particular moral judgement. Metaethics can be viewed as the investigation preliminary to normative ethics or as an inquiry to replace the pursuit of normative ethics." 12

All of the authors mentioned thus far seemed to be proponents of a logical positivist approach to ethics inquiries. Stroh refers to the work of J. Ayer who claimed that "any attempt to explain the ultimate nature of things is cognitively meaningless." Stroh like Ayer and the other authors favor an empirical means to the investigation of ethics. Stroh contends knowledge must be capable of being verified. In the realm of ethics not all moral principles are verifiable but certainly some things can be verified. Behavior can be verified. Attitudes may be verified and practices may be verified. Perhaps it is more relevant to discover what is than what ought to be. Because of the lack of verification, Stroh finds other paradigms such as the emotive paradigm of little use since emotive arguments can not be settled by "rational or cognitive means". Conflicting values and emotions which underlie emotive arguments can not be resolved and therefore can never be evaluated.

The work of Stroh, Rosenthal, Shenadi, and Bahm are all part of the Social View paradigm. Provided below is Milton Fisk's Group Ethics Theory which is also a Social View theory and is the particular theory on which this dissertation is based.

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Fisk's Group Ethics Theory

What Milton Fisk asseverates above all is that ethics has a social basis. Society, however, is not homogeneous. Various groups exist within a society. These groups are solidified by mutual interests, goals and tendencies. Fisk rejects individualism as the level at which ethical decisions occur. According to Fisk, man in general, does not control or determine his ethical behavior. Fisk acknowledges that his contention is not likely to be a popular one. Still, he argues that individualism has resulted in a high degree of inequality within societies. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer. Therefore, group members cooperate with one another in order to enhance their own survival and achieve maximum levels of satisfaction. Fisk joins the others in the Social View Paradigm who say that the absolutist view has dominated ethics literature for far too long. It is the social nature of man which must be acknowledged, and in particular, the group dynamics which shape him. Fisk says it this way:

"If I read in the wind-carved sands, Eat no fowl! I cannot say that eating fowl has thereby an ethical dimension. This principle has a claim to making this action unethical only if eating fowl is a potential trouble point between certain persons and their groups. In short, the principle must be relevant to person-group conflict. It is then this conflict and not the principles themselves that is the origin of ethical life. The word of God has ethical import not because of its alleged divine origin but because of its relevance to the conflict between people and their groups."

Milton Fisk views ethical responses as being governed by the influences of group dynamics and social structure. Fisk asserts that ethical responses
are the product of an interdependence of needs. A particular act is obligatory for an individual for without it, the effort to advance the needs of the group would be thwarted. These group needs may be viewed as survival needs within a particular group or class of society. Good is identified as that which advances the group’s interest. Bad is that which threatens the group’s interest or survival. What is good for the group is determined by what achieves the maximum group satisfaction. Survival is enhanced by cohesive group membership. Interdependence then becomes a need in which in itself should be protected. Fisk states that when we consider not just survival needs, but needs characteristic of a particular class, such as women, minority groups, unions are we able to see the group’s influence on ethical responses. Fisk explains:

"The social nature of human agents must be recognized to deal adequately with (ethical) matters since a person is formed in a group some of his needs or interests will be formed by the group and their realization will be promoted by the group. A policy of ignoring interests characteristic of the group will be, then, one that goes against the grain of the persons in it. There are two reasons for this. First, the adequate realization of common needs Second, the special need for cooperative behavior would be frustrated the group would thereby be weakened. That is not to say that there is no ethics at all, but only too often the absolutist abstraction has blinded us to its limited role."

Fisk's theory has compelling implications for public administration. If ethical behavior is defined as what best serves a particular group's needs and interests, then it follows that different groups could have significantly different behaviors based on common perceived needs. Each group's ethics
would be as legitimate as the ethics of the next group. These subgroups then, could have a major impact on upholding or destroying the parameters of organizational ethical behavior.

To repeat for purposes of clarification, Fisk says group norms as determined by survival needs shape ethical behavior. Fisk views ethical responses as a product of an interdependence of these needs. An organization then could be viewed as a society. Since the organization is not a homogeneous society, it has within it several subgroups. Each subgroup has its own needs and interests with survival foremost among them. Examples of this might be a group which is greatly concerned about retirement and health care issues verses another group which might be deeply concerned about promotional policies and allocation of organizational resources. Ethical behavior at the organizational level would be identified as that which advances the interests of the organization, and yet individuals would also be expected to perform in ways which protect their groups' interests. By protecting the group's interests, the individual is also protecting his own interests. If the group's needs are in balance with the organization's needs then the employee not only enhances the survival of the group and therefore himself, but the organization as a whole. When all of these needs are taken into consideration it allows us to see the following paradigmatic relationship:
The model is in balance when top managers incorporate the needs of employees into the ethical structure of the organization. In order to achieve this balance managers and employees must start at the base of the model and answer questions regarding the organization as a whole and the subgroups within it. Questions to be considered at the organizational level are: What objectives are critical to the survival of the organization and how can those objectives be transformed into norms of ethical behavior? Questions at the group level are: What are the objectives which are critical to the survival of the group and how can those objectives be transformed into norms of group ethical behavior? Lastly, but perhaps most importantly:
How can the needs of the groups and the needs of the organization be coordinated to ensure the kind of ethical behavior that will enhance both the survival of the organization and the groups?

Moving upward through the model, employees and managers must then translate these survival needs into objectives. Ideally, these objectives should be measurable. For example, an organization may see as key to its survival a reputation of providing its clients with a quality product or service. An appropriate objective might be: To strive for continuous improvement in the quality of our service. The desirable ethical behavior then becomes clear. For instance, appropriate ethical behavior for the objective listed above might read: Employees of X Organization vow to strive for quality in their work and will report all lapses in quality so that defects may be corrected.

This is how the model would work under ideal circumstances. In other words, this is how the model would appear if the organization and groups were in balance, saw their survival needs in the same way. It is doubtful, however, that the model could be balanced without a deliberate effort to coordinate the needs of groups and the organization. Chester Barnard addresses the influence of groups on the formal organization. He described informal organizations as groups of two or more people within an organization who have a joint purpose and similar interests. Together these informal group members establish attitudes, customs and habits. These customs and attitudes may be contrary to the "legitimate" customs endorsed by the organization. These powerful subgroups band together to enhance their own survival and in doing so have a major impact on the formal
organization. An organization may have one such group or it may have several. These groups are not likely to see their interests and survival needs in the same way. These group differences set the stage for conflicting ethical standards between the groups and the organization.

The Influence of Cohesive Groups on Individual Behavior

Central to Fisk's theory is the concept of groups. No doubt his conclusion was influenced by the plethora of group dynamics literature. Simply stated, the influence of groups on individual behavior can not be overemphasized. Cited here are just a few relevant sources. For purposes of illustration, consider this statement from Chester Barnard:

"Sometimes we are aware of the fact that our emotions are affected by being in a crowd. ... We infer such effects by using the phrase 'mob psychology', by recognizing imitation and emulation, by understanding there are certain attitudes commonly held and very often by our use of the phrase 'consensus of opinion'."

Barnard contends that the factors which create cohesive groups are similar attitudes, shared emotions and common understanding. Organizations must acknowledge the existence of groups and the influence these groups have on the formal organizational structure. The more opposed the attitudes and values of the groups from the organization's values, the more difficult it will be to integrate the groups' attitudes into the formal organization. The potential always exists for a group's ethical behavior to operate contrary to organizational goals.
The focus of this research primarily concerns the influence of informal groups of which there are primarily two types, friendship and interest groups. Friendship groups are typically more permanent in nature than interest groups. Interest groups will remain solvent as long as common interests such as retirement, promotions, travel, resources, rights, etc. persist and the likelihood of achieving them is enhanced through group membership.

Since groups coordinate the efforts of individuals, groups strongly influence the behavior of individuals. Influence and control are accomplished through the development of group norms. Ricky Griffin and Gregory Moorhead provide the following insightful commentary about group norms:

"A norm is expected behavior in a certain situation. Norms make group interactions much easier because they limit the number of behaviors. Norms serve four purposes: they facilitate group survival, they simplify the behavior expected of group members, they help avoid embarrassing situations and they express the central values of the group. Norms usually regulate behaviors of group members rather than their thoughts or feelings. The pressure to conform to group norms can be very powerful."

The concept of group norms is particularly relevant to ethics research. As stated above norms are the acceptable patterns of behavior within a group. Norms are different from rules in that norms are unwritten policies which enable the group to achieve its goals. When individuals initially form a group, the creation of norms will follow. Since norms develop as particular situations dictate, they require only subtle behavior changes on behalf of the individuals in the newly forming group, especially if the group
norms are in sync with the behaviors members would normally practice as individuals. In the scenario described above the ethical norms of individuals would probably need to change very little.

In the instance, however, of an individual joining an already established group, the new member may be forced to alter his behavior considerably in order to conform to the norms already in existence. Group members could make a new member conform to group norms by using either positive reinforcement such as reward or recognition for desired behavior or by negative reinforcement such as threat of ostracism. In either event, a substantial change in the ethical behavior of the new member may be required.

Group norms serve four major purposes. First, norms aid group survival. For instance, a group within an organization may develop an ethics norm whereby members would "cover" for one another when one member must take time away for personal problems. By providing this assistance and keeping the operation running smoothly, the jobs of all group members are more secure.

Second, norms simplify the expected ethical behaviors of the group members by providing guidance for what could otherwise be confusing situations. For example, it may be acceptable for a work group to use the copy machine for personal business. With this understanding, members need not feel uncertain when faced with the dilemma of whether or not this behavior is acceptable.

Third, norms provide a more secure and comfortable work environment by
eliminating potentially embarrassing ethics situations such as discussions involving disparities in salaries among workers. By providing the boundaries for acceptable behavior members may avoid situations which would cause discomfort or embarrassment.

Fourth, norms provide the group with its own identity apart from all other groups. Identity norms may be evident in dress, speech or other behavior patterns. Identity norms often serve to unify the group members, and cue certain ethical behaviors automatically through such things as dress as in military or police uniforms. Such identity norms help to create a more cohesive group.

Another relevant group concept is that of cohesiveness. Group members who are unified and strongly committed are said to be a cohesive group. The stronger the desire for members to remain a part of the group, the more cohesive the group becomes. A group whose members share a strong commitment to its goals would be highly cohesive. Several different kinds of goals could serve to unite group members within the work environment. For instance, a group consisting of older members might be strongly committed to the goal of securing reasonable retirement benefits. Such a goal would serve to unify group members. Financial security would be contingent upon receiving viable retirement benefits. Such financial security could be very motivating in terms of commitment and cohesiveness. A goal which would be especially important to younger workers might be the goal of advancement. Fair promotion policies would be of great concern for these workers. They would unify to ensure they received fair consideration concerning promotion opportunities.
Closely related to cohesiveness is the concept of groupthink. Frequently, too much cohesiveness can result in a phenomenon known as groupthink. Within the realm of ethical behavior one symptom of groupthink would be a high degree of ethics conformity among group members. It is also likely that the group’s ethical behavior would be inflexible even when a particular ethical behavior may no longer be a viable approach to a situation. The conditions of conformity and inflexibility are both symptoms of groupthink. Irving Janis who developed the concept of groupthink noted that there are several warning signals which are apparent when a group is in danger of succumbing to the groupthink phenomenon. Three of the warning signals are especially relevant to the ethical behavior of groups.¹⁷

One indicator of groupthink is a feeling of invincibility which creates excessive optimism among group members. An example of invincibility and excessive optimism and groupthink in the public sector is the air traffic control strike of 1981. Despite being legally forbidden to negotiate for wages, the controllers engaged in negotiations with the Federal Aviation Administration and surprisingly were offered a pay increase of $4,000 for each controller as well as additional benefits and incentives. Feeling invincible and indispensable, the controllers held out for a $10,000 raise for each controller. Ninety-five percent of the unionized controllers supported an illegal strike in order to gain the $10,000 raise. Optimistic that the air traffic control system could not operate without them, they believed that the Federal Aviation Administration would quickly give in. Instead, President Reagan fired the striking air traffic controllers temporarily replacing them with military air traffic controllers until new controllers could be hired. In this case, groupthink ethics resulted in nearly 13,000
controllers loosing their jobs.

Another important indicator of groupthink is the perception that the group's chosen morals and ethics are the only appropriate morals and ethics. This narrow view often results in conflicts between groups who view their own ethical practices as the standard and find the ethics of other groups lacking or perhaps less realistic. It is also likely that the ethics chosen by the group are different from the officially sanctioned ethics of the organization.

Lastly, another important indicator of groupthink is the direct pressure an individual receives when that member voices an opinion contrary to the group's perceptions or practices. Behavior which deviates from the group's norms is not tolerated in a groupthink situation. It is unimportant whether the deviant behavior is viewed as being more or less ethical than the established group standards. Not only are differences not tolerated, but they are often viewed as a threat to the welfare of the group as a whole.

The influence of groups on individual behavior remains a popular research topic, indeed entire journals are devoted to the phenomenon. One of the more interesting recent contributions was offered by Mei E. Schnake in his article entitled, "Equity in Effort: The Sucker Effect in Co-Acting Groups." Schnake acknowledges that the effect of the "mere presence of others" on individuals is well documented. The effect may either add to individual performance or detract from it. There is some indication that individual performance declines as a group size increases. To substantiate his point Schnake references the work of researchers Kravitz and Martin (1986) in which a simple tug-of-war rope experiment demonstrated individual

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performed as the number of participants increased. Schnake contends there are two possible explanations for this phenomenon. First, since individual contribution is not likely to be identified, workers remain unconcerned about blame or praise. The second possible explanation is what Schnake refers to as the "sucker effect"; workers who withhold effort because they fear that others are withholding effort and they don't want to be "taken for suckers". Schnake suggests the decline in individual performance may be avoided by identifying individual performance in groups and through implementation of a formal evaluation system.

Schnake's assertions raise interesting questions for the study of ethical behavior. For instance, does ethical behavior "decline" more in larger groups than in smaller groups? Can workers break free of group influences and establish new group norms? What effect does the "sucker effect" have on ethical behavior? Though these are all interesting questions, the more fundamental question remains: Does ethical behavior differ according to cohesive group membership?
Why Gender, Age and Longevity are Likely to Create Cohesive Groups

There is substantial moral development literature which suggests a theoretical basis for the variables of age, gender and longevity creating cohesive groups. Contained below is a brief summary of some of the relevant literature concerning the influence of gender, age and longevity on groups and ethical behavior.

Gender

Psychologist Lee Willerman states that the factors creating differences between the sexes is the result of both innate and socialization influences. Some of the more common innate contributors include hormones such as androgen, testosterone and estrogen as well as the events of pregnancy, childbirth and breast feeding. Much of the research cited by Willerman provides conflicting results about the role of hormones in behavior. Willerman summarizes his impressions of one experiment performed by Yalom, Green and Fisk:

"The general findings suggested that the male children who received the estrogen hormone were less masculine (less athletic, assertive and aggressive) than the control group.....An additional finding was that the children of the treated mothers were marginally shorter than the control group, a fact that might have contributed to their more feminine behavior.....the findings are a bit unclear, but they reinforce the
The events of pregnancy and childbirth are indisputable in that they tax men and women differently. Such disparate demands result in differences of behavior in men and women especially in the early stages of pregnancy and child rearing. With advances in birth control, the innate differences between men and women are beginning to blur. While these technological advances serve to moderate the effect of innate differences, social roles respond to change more slowly.

Willerman notes that the internalization of the socialization factor "typically takes a long time". The socialization of gender roles usually begins in infancy and continues throughout adulthood. Aspects of gender roles include attire, acceptable levels of assertiveness, primary child care givers, primary "bread winners", preparing food, fixing the car, sports participation and social correspondence. These aspects of male and female roles are so prevalent that it unnecessary to state which task typically falls to which gender. Though there are those who increasingly operate outside of these roles, their challenges to these norms do not go without repercussions. As role expectations differ so do the behaviors which allow one to accomplish those roles. An ethics survey should be able to provide evidence of those behavioral differences. Since male and female roles are internalized over a long period of time, it seems reasonable to conclude it will also take a long time for roles to change.
Age

Lee Willerman contends that age has been an important indicator in social development, and it is important to acknowledge its role in any treatment of behavioral differences.

There are two studies which address the influence of age on behavior and moral development which seem particularly worthy of comment within an ethics context. First, is a study performed by Cumming and Henry in which they explored the phenomenon of “disengagement”. Cumming and Henry assert that disengagement (withdrawal from social interactions as one ages) is the natural result of experiencing the death of family members or friends, the departure of children as well as retirement. These experiences result in a shifting in values. It seems likely that such a shifting in values would be evident in the ethical behavior of older employees. The question is, however, are subjects likely to grow more or less ethical according to organizational standards?

Perhaps the best known research on the influence of age on moral development is provided by Lawrence Kohlberg. Kohlberg has attempted to illustrate universal moral development through his moral dilemma research. In particular, Kohlberg focused on the moral reasoning of his subjects. In his early research in which he studied 10, 13 and 16 year old boys, Kohlberg concluded that moral development follows a universal moral progression which is revealed in three stages: preconventional in which behavior is
is governed by the desire to conform and postconventional in which behavior is governed by the needs of society. Robert Liebert questions Kohlberg's conclusions and makes the following comment:

"Kohlberg's claim is quite remarkable because Kohlberg's own report of his longitudinal data (a follow up of his initial sample of teenage boys) actually shows little systematic change over time. One of the clearest findings seems to be that a number of subjects displayed a lower level of moral reasoning than they had in high school."

Kohlberg's theory has been widely read and tested with researchers both disputing and supporting Kohlberg's findings. There has been considerable discussion on whether the best investigative approach concerning the influence of age on moral development is cross-sectional or longitudinal data. Clearly, in his criticism Liebert expresses a preference for research using longitudinal data. Still, even Liebert concedes the following point:

"There is little doubt that the moral justifications offered by both children and adults are related to age, gender, social class, IQ and other demographic variables. The cognitive-behavioral approach interprets these relationships as reflecting differences in information, knowledge and experience possessed by different demographic groups....moral maturity...involves the expression of...pursuing one's own self interest."
Liebert's belief that different experiences create different moral judgments, provides the rationale for the third independent variable under investigation in this dissertation, longevity. Implicated in Liebert's statements is that one's experiences shape one's self interests thereby influencing one's ethical behavior.

There are two aspects to the variable of experience, personal experiences originating in social interactions and professional experiences originating in the work environment. Professional experience is defined by nature of the position as well as duration, otherwise known as longevity.

It seems logical to assert that employees with greater longevity will have different self interests than vice employees with very little longevity. Vested employees may be more or even less concerned with the long term viability of the agency for which they work. Novice employees, on the other hand, may have stronger interests in promotion and compensation policies. Without testing for the influence of the variable longevity, it would be difficult to say exactly how this special aspect of experience may effect ethical responses. If Liebert is correct in saying that different experiences result in different moral judgements then differences should be present in the ethical responses of survey subjects according to levels of longevity.

Many of the questions about the influence of gender, age and longevity on
ethical behavior are presently unanswered in public administration. Fisk's theory states that cohesive groups will develop different ethical norms from other dissimilar groups. Researchers such as Kohlberg, Liebert, and Willerman demonstrate how age, gender and longevity are likely to be factors which form cohesive groups and influence ethical behavior. The different interests of men and women, young and old create different ethical responses. For example, considering innate and social factors women are likely to have different self interests than men; considering the concepts of disengagement and moral development older employees are likely to have different self interests than younger employees; considering contrasting experience levels, vested employees are likely to have different self interests than novice employees.

As noted earlier, Fisk asserts that people with similar interests typically band together in order to enhance the likelihood of achieving those self interests. Investigation is needed to determine if gender, age and longevity are truly characteristics which create a basis for common interests thereby yielding different ethical responses. This investigation seems particularly appropriate to the domain of public administration where the concern for ethics has emerged once again. First, however, a summary of three investigative approaches regarding the ethical behavior of public employees.
Ethics Research in the Public Sector

Compared to other areas of urban management and public administration research, there is not an abundance of existing research concerning the ethical behavior of public employees. The research that does exist concerning ethics in the public sector is diverse and includes three investigative approaches. First is the use of analogies or case studies which are intended to illustrate common dimensions of ethical dilemmas and serve as foundations for further discussions among practitioners and scholars. The second area of research is comparative studies such as John Rohr's "Ethical Issues in French Public Administration" and Andrew Stark's "Public Sector Conflict of Interest at the Federal Level in Canada and the United States" both of which will be presented below. The third area of research is survey research in which authors have attempted to measure the attitudes of urban managers and public administrators in regard to their beliefs and perceptions. Many studies of this third kind have lacked a theoretical basis and have not delved into the actual norms or practices of public employees. First, however, the analogy and case study method is presented below.

Analogies and Case Studies as an Investigative Approach

Frank Marini utilizes a most unusual approach in investigating the ethical behavior of public officials. Marini contends that a literary analogy
approach is useful in understanding and influencing the ethical behavior of public employees. He believes that by studying literary works such as Sophocles' Antigone we will be provided with an important and relevant case study in public administration ethics. He asserts that the play raises many issues which are relevant within the public sector. Marini provides a very brief summary of the play in order to make his point.22

"When Oedipus (who unknowingly married his mother) discovered the fact of his incest and also the fact that a stranger that he had killed was actually his unknown biological father he blinded himself and abandoned his kingdom. His sons battled for the kingdom...and in the ensuing battle killed one another...... Creon (the new King) declared that (one son) be given a hero's burial but the (other son) as punishment for the treason of attacking with his foreign army (in attempt to gain the throne) be denied burial; and that anyone providing burial rites for him be put to death by stoning."

Antigone, sister to the two brothers provided her dead brother with a proper burial against the wishes of the King. After being walled into a cave to be starved to death she hangs herself. Marini argues that while studying this famous tragedy we have neglected to focus on the actions of King Creon as an administrator. The actions of Creon have special relevance to administrators and ethics researchers.

Marini ties the actions of King Creon to a variety of key ethical issues in public administration: ethics and conscience, ethics and emotions, ethics and bribery, ethics and popular opinion and ethics and administrative responsibility.

Marini contends that plays and stories of this kind "display the various
'right' positions and demonstrate the dilemmas and the complicated ways in which these events actually occur in real life. There is little question that Marini's approach is an unique and interesting one. Literary fans might find it pleasing to delve into such classics and explore them within a new context. Providing that readers are familiar with the work under study, this approach could provide a basis for interesting discussion, but probably no more than that. The questions of how these ethics were shaped and what motivated the actions of Creon are left unanswered. Researchers are no closer to being able to predict the unethical actions of public employees or understanding the social norms which developed them. It seems this kind of analogy/case study approach is at best a means for stimulating discussion.

In addition to Marini's unique case study approach to the ethical behavior of public officials, the Business and Professional Ethics Journal contains a virtual plethora of ethics case studies many of them concerning public employees.

Cottrill presents an interesting case study in employee ethics in which university professors are the focus. Cottrill speaks about what Fisk would refer to as the survival needs of faculty, publication. As a response to these survival pressures, many university faculty have turned to the practice of multiple authorships because many faculty now believe it is better to have three publications in which you share authorship than to have no publications at all. The ethical dilemmas which have occurred in regard
to this issue have been multi-faceted. Some of the points that he raises are: neglecting to credit your coauthor/s, making only small adjustments to a paper and requiring coauthorship, and using the research of graduate assistant without proper recognition.

The problems of the university are complicated by the lack of clear ethical guidelines for professors. Cottrill cites the recent court case of Weissman v. Freeman. The defendant Freeman delivered a paper which he coauthored with Weissman. In presenting the paper to a professional conference, he deleted Weissman's name and made some slight modifications of the original work. Weissman sued Freeman for copyright infringement. Cottrill writes the following summary of the first court's decision:

"The district court found against her, specifically ruling 1. Freeman was a joint author and therefore co-owner of any copyright 2. Weissman's new additions were too trivial to qualify for copyright protection as a derivative work under the statute 3. even had the two foregoing issues not been resolved in favor of Freeman, his use was 'fair use' within the purview of section 107 of the Copyright Act."

Though the court's decision was later overturned and the higher court sided with Weissman, it is easy to see that unethical behavior often lies somewhere between what is legal and what is illegal. In other words unethical behavior is somewhat intangible and difficult to legislate.

While both Creon and university professors make for interesting case
studies, what is lacking in both instances is a theoretical framework in which to explore these issues. Cottrill's case study, as well as Marini's could prove more useful to the reader if the case studies could be explored in reference to a particular theory. For instance, in Cottrill's case study we can see how the application of Fisk's theory or some other Social View theory would be helpful. For example, do college administrators and professors have different ethical standards? According to Fisk different ethical standards would be likely since each group has different survival needs. Professors need to publish and administrators have entirely different success criteria. A comparison of these groups might be interesting. Cottrill's case study does provide a glimpse of what happens when survival depends on something which is difficult to attain.

The following method of comparative studies assumes a different approach to the investigation of ethics in the public sector.

**Comparative Studies as an Investigative Approach**

For the purpose of illustration, two examples will be provided which demonstrate how authors have used comparative studies as a vehicle to study the ethical behavior of public employees. The first of these studies is an article by John Rohr entitled "Ethical Issues in French Public Administration: A Comparative Study". In his study, Rohr investigated the parameters of American ethical standards by comparing American standards to the French approach to public administration ethics. Two of the concepts
on which Rohr focuses are conflicts of interests and oaths of office. As Rohr states that the two countries are as one in the overall objective of discouraging conflicts of interests between personal financial and the exercise of power of state. Where the two countries differ sharply in regard to conflicts of interests is financial disclosures. In the United States, financial disclosures have been required of federal judges, congressman and all senior servants since 1978. Rohr notes that these disclosures can be examined by anyone. The French who are well known for fiercely guarding their right to privacy would never allow such an invasion into their financial affairs. This dichotomy seems to underscore the differing values of the two countries. The influence of societal values on the ethics of public employees is readily apparent. Much of the value structure which influences the ethical behavior of public employees is directly influenced by the unique history of each country. This is especially true when we consider the second focus of Rohr's article; the role of the oath of public office.

In regard to public oaths the influence of French history is especially apparent. Rohr makes the following comment:

"The oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States is the moral foundation of American Civil Service. In France, no such oath is required. Indeed, one knowledgeable commentator remarks that "the very thought of such an oath makes today's Frenchman shiver". It has not always been so in France. Both before and after the Revolution of 1789, mandatory oaths to support the established order were commonplace. As France lurched and reeled from one regime to another in the chaotic aftermath of the Revolution, civil servants continued to swear their loyalty to whatever form of government happened to be in power. There were at least 726 relatively high ranking officers who survived the constant political upheaval between 1789 and 1815 and solemnly pledged their fidelity to each regime in its turn. They came to be known as les girouettes (the weathervacks). Today in France, the idea of compulsory oaths carries fascist overtones."
While Rohr does not intend to suggest that one country can simply imitate or adopt another country's standards which appear to be working well, he does believe that comparisons of this kind are of great utility in understanding the origins of the expected behavior of public employees.

Another example of comparative studies in public employee ethics is an article by Andrew Stark entitled, "Public Sector Conflict of Interest at the Federal Level in Canada and the US". Stark's approach is very similar to Rohr's. Specifically, Stark looks at the differing circumstances of conflicts of interest, postemployment questions, historical influences on private interests and independence of judgement as an office-holder. Of the three of these subtopics, Stark's comments on private interests and independence of judgement are interesting contributions to the comparative studies literature. Stark makes the following point:

"In essence this final difference can be described in the following terms: In the United States, a congressman's possession of private interests is generally regarded as an impairment on his or her capacity to exercise unbiased judgement in office....by contrast, the conception of conflict of interest prevalent in both Canadian and British traditions has, historically been skewed...toward the idea that legislators who receive their remuneration solely from the public treasury are more likely to find their judgement compromised. Those legislators in Canada and Britain who rely on income from private interests have been thought relatively more likely to retain independence of mind and and integrity of judgement, i.e., relatively more likely to serve their constituents or the public interests in a faithful and unencumbered way."

Stark's statements are reminiscent of Woodrow Wilson's comments about the effectiveness and the integrity of monarchs as heads of state. Stark
comments that the difference between the Canadian and British philosophy regarding private interests are profoundly divergent. He notes:

"None of the century's four British royal commissions on civil service had given any significant attention to conflicts of interest posed by public officials holding private interests and pursuing outside activities. In the United States, by contrast, legislation prohibiting officials from possessing various types of private interests dates back to the nineteenth century."

Comparative studies like Rohr's and Stark's provide a more objective look (as opposed to case studies) at the expected ethical behaviors of our own public employees within the United States. Only by looking at other countries can the American approach be placed in its proper perspective. Proponents of the positivist approach, however, may be left feeling somewhat frustrated with such a method of inquiry. Comparative studies, not unlike the telling of history, rely heavily on the interpretation provided by the researcher whose methodology is made imperfect by his biases, prejudices and private agendas.

**Survey Studies as an Investigative Approach**

James Bowman presents a survey study in which he completed a national survey of public managers. Within his survey he targeted three topic areas: Ethics in government, ethics in public agencies and ethics codes as moral standards. A questionnaire consisting of primarily agree or disagree
current members of the American Society for Public Administration. Usable replies were received from 59 percent of the administrators. While Bowman's statistical analysis is strictly descriptive in nature, he reveals the following results to his survey.

70 percent think that interest in ethics in the public sector is growing
67 percent believe that ethical concern empowers agencies
50 percent believe supervisors are pressured to compromise ethics
75 percent dispute senior level managers have more rigorous standards
60 percent believe civil servants are more ethical than politicians
79 percent believe employees are responsible for their own actions
66 percent believe agencies lack a consistent approach to ethics
Only 40 percent believe an ethics code makes a difference in conduct
40 percent of ASPA members didn't know ASPA has an ethics code

In the comments portion of the survey, respondents indicated they were somewhat unsure as to how to improve the ethical behavior of public employees. Suggestions included focusing on leadership by example, training programs and administrative controls.

Below are other examples of survey research regarding the ethical behavior of public employees.

Hunt and Kouliamas recently completed survey research focusing on business students as they entered the job market. Their research attempted to identify the ethical practices and beliefs of business students. Hunt and Kouliamas also wanted to determine if ethical behavior varied between
undergraduate and graduate students. In order to evaluate the students, the researchers developed a 20 item questionnaire in which students were asked to consider situations that employees typically face on the job. The students were then asked to rank their answers one to five according to how acceptable they found the particular practice. A score of one denoted very acceptable and five denoted very unacceptable. All of the scenarios were considered at best to be ethically questionable. Three situations which were clearly unethical practices revealed significant t-scores at the .05 level when comparing graduate and undergraduate students. They were: reporting overpayments, undergraduates were more ethical; charging personal entertainment expenses to the expense account, graduate students were more ethical; shipping out a substandard product in order to meet deadlines, undergraduates were more ethical. Hunt and Kouiamas conclude that graduate students do not show a greater concern for ethical behavior than undergraduate students. Indeed, in several situations depicted within the survey undergraduates were found to be more ethical than graduate students.28

Lastly, Hahn, Colin and Bart also used the survey method of ethics research to study the behavior and beliefs of minority students. Citing a dearth of ethics research focusing on minorities, Hahn, Colin and Bart performed a survey study that looks at the differences and similarities between minority students and white majority students. The authors also looked at other variables such as gender, age, academic status, and whether the students were employed by private organizations or public agencies. The questionnaire used to survey the students was a 15 item Likert Scale. A
22 item biodata instrument was also administered. Their sample consisted of 202 students in an historically black college in Georgia. The researchers note that they used intact groups rather than a random sample of students. Using inferential statistics gender, age, number of years employed, income level and religious affiliation all revealed significant F-ratios. Females scored higher than males, older people scored higher than younger people, and upper level income groups scored higher than lower income groups. The race variable did not reveal a significant F ratio.29

Limitations of Ethics Survey Research

All of the survey research described above lacks a theoretical basis. Even if differences are found there is no explanation as to why these differences might exist. In addition, many, in fact most of the surveys used in ethics research suffer from a lack of construct, content and even face validity. Again, this is largely caused by a lack of a theoretical basis. One ethics survey attempt which is not contained within this dissertation attempted to gauge ethical behavior by asking questions about alcohol and drug use. Clearly questions of this nature are far removed from the domain of professional ethics practices.

Secondly, many of these ethics survey articles conclude with making recommendations for organizations to provide training programs for their
workers. How can training be provided if the causes of the problems have not been clearly identified? An analysis of group behaviors within the organization must certainly precede any attempt to develop meaningful ethics training programs.

Thirdly, greater efforts must be made to create ethics measuring instruments that have improved content and construct validity. Part of the validity problem is caused by the fact that inquiries into ethical behavior are relatively new. Ethics tests are not contained within such texts as Burrow's Mental Measurements or other similar sources of validated testing instruments. Since ethics research is still exploratory even greater care and rigor is required.

**Structuring Ethical Responses: The Role of Ethics Codes And Why They Are Doomed to Fail**

One way that organizations have attempted to deal with the conflicting ethical standards between diverse groups and organizations is to develop codes of conduct. These codes might also be referred to as code of ethics or statements of beliefs. Ethics codes are attempts by organizations to structure the ethical responses of employees. Provided below are examples of ethics codes in the military, government service, a state university and other public and urban agencies. Below each code is a brief analysis.
The military was among one of the first in this country to institute a code of conduct. It is referred to as the "Fighting Man's Code" and includes the following statements:

1. I am an American fighting man. I serve in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense.

2. I will never surrender of my own free will. If in command, I will never surrender my men while they still have the means to resist.

3. If I am captured I will continue to resist by all means possible. I will make every effort to escape and aid others to escape. I will neither accept parole or special favors from the enemy.

4. If I become prisoner of war, I will keep faith with my fellow prisoners. I will give no information nor take part in any action which might be harmful to my comrades. If senior I will take command. If not, I will follow the lawful orders of those appointed over me and will back them up in every way.

5. When questioned, should I become prisoner of war, I am required to give only my name, rank, service number and date of birth. I will evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability. I will make no oral or written statements disloyal to my country and its allies or harmful to their cause.

6. I will never forget that I am an American fighting man, responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and the United States of America.

While the military has a lengthy publication called The Uniform Code of Military Justice which outlines unlawful behavior, the UCMJ does not give guidance as to what might be considered unethical behavior. The above code of conduct provides guidance on the gray area between illegal and unethical behavior.

Fisk's theory of interdependent group needs is clearly present in the military code. Cooperation between prisoners would enhance their chances for survival. Provided below is another example of ethics in government.
The following paragraph was adopted for civil service employees and public office holders. Instituted in the year 1980, this code of ethics is displayed in every federal building.

Code of Ethics For Government Service

1. Put loyalty to the highest moral principles and to country above loyalty to person, party or government department.

2. Uphold the constitution, laws and regulations of the United States.

3. Give a full day's labor for a full day's pay; giving earnest effort and best thought to performance of duties.

4. Seek to find and employ more efficient and economical ways of getting tasks accomplished.

5. Never discriminate unfairly by dispensing special favors to anyone. Never accept for oneself or one's family favors or benefits which might be construed as influence on the performance of government duties.

6. Make no private promises upon the duties of office since government employees have no private word which can be binding in public duty.

7. Never use any government information for the purpose of making a profit.

8. Engage in no business which is inconsistent with your government duties.

9. Expose corruption wherever discovered.

10. Uphold these principles ever conscious that public office is a public trust.

The Code of Ethics For Government Employees addresses the issues of loyalty, efficiency, bribes and conflicts of interests.
In all cases, it is clear that government employees are to operate with loyalty to the constitution. It is interesting to note that the concept of efficiency is addressed as well as the issue of bribes. For years those working in government service were exposed to a system of favors such as private parking spaces in exchange for supplies as a means of getting things done. Many workers viewed the favor system as necessary in order to accomplish difficult tasks or to acquire scarce resources.

Many political cartoonists have seen the inefficiency of government as a source for cartoon material. Journalists began to report on such stories as the wrench that cost $1,300 and the toilet seat that was purchased by the government for $1,800. A hotline was developed to encourage the reporting of such inefficiencies. The hotline connection was called the Fraud Waste and Abuse Hotline. Clearly, there is a growing intolerance for inefficiencies and favors within government service.

Moving away from the federal government for a moment, it is interesting to view a state university's code of ethics. Listed below is Old Dominion University's Code of Ethics for Faculty and Administrators. It is a called a Statement of Work Values and it is contained within the Faculty Handbook.

1. Individual freedom and dignity are respected and supported while each member pursues the university's goals.

2. Personal and career development are emphasized and understood so that employees will be content in their work environment.

3. Trust is fostered by truthful working relationships.

4. All staff treated equitably with affirmative action and equal opportunity emphasized.

5. Adequate communication with clearly defined work goals.
The university's work values emphasize freedom, personal development and professional opportunity. These concepts are of special value to faculty members as they desire to go about their research and teaching with autonomy; unencumbered by administrative constraints. It is interesting to note that there is no mention of efficiency, fraud or waste. The emphasis of the work value statement lies in philosophical issues. As more states across the nation face severe budget cutbacks in higher education, it will be interesting to see if ethics codes will be altered to address pressing financial issues.

It would be remiss to conclude this discussion of ethics codes in the public sector without including the code of ethics for the American Society for Public Administration. ASPA's code of ethics, while a lengthy document is paraphrased here and includes the following central points:

- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty and fortitude in all public activities.
- Serve in such a way that we do not realize undue personal gain.
- Avoid any interest or activity which is conflict with our official duties.
- Serve the public with respect, concern, courtesy and responsiveness.
- Promote affirmative action to assure equal opportunity for all elements of society.
- Eliminate all forms of illegal discrimination, fraud and mismanagement.
- Strive for professional excellence.
- Approach duties with a positive attitude; support open communication.

Fraud and conflicts of interest take center stage in ASPA's Code of Ethics. It is interesting to note that this code requires public administrators to
support affirmative action, a program which many people feel is rather controversial. The public may be heartened to see that responsiveness, and courtesy to citizens is also mentioned.

Overall, the issue of quality service is seldom addressed in the codes of ethics of public agencies. This phenomenon is not unusual for organizations which enjoy a monopoly in proving a particular service. Often the motivation to excel in providing a quality service is missing. In summary, the three public credos contained within this proposal reveal some themes.

* Codes of ethics belonging to government agencies concentrate on issues of conduct as it relates to governmental interests rather than conduct issues pertaining to department or even organizational interests.

* Above all governmental agencies desire that employees be loyal to the country and to the constitution.

* The characteristics of quality service and reliable products are not emphasized and are seldom mentioned in most public sector codes of ethics.

These codes and others like them risk great failure when they are developed by supervisors independent of the needs of subgroups. Half of ASPA members don't even know that ASPA even has an ethics code. Often these upper level supervisors are isolated from the varied concerns of the diversified groups found within the organization. As long as the concerns
and interests of workers are not addressed in these codes workers will continue to act in ways they believe to be in their own best interests, which may or may not be in harmony with the stated organizational code. According to the Group Ethics Theory, one way to increase the chances of a harmonious ethical effort on behalf on the entire organization would be for supervisors to consult with the varied groups. Employees need to be assured that supervisors will treat them fairly and acknowledge their concerns. For managers to ignore such concerns would in itself be unethical.
Chapter Three: Methodology

The weaknesses identified in the research methods of case studies, surveys and comparative studies suggest a methodology for this dissertation. This research effort uses a marriage of Fisk’s Group Ethics Theory and survey research to explore ethics differences between public employees characterized by group cohesiveness and the variables of age, gender, and longevity.

Research Questions:

Are there ethical differences between cohesive groups within the same organization? Two related questions are: Does ethical behavior vary according to gender, age and longevity? Do gender, age and longevity influence group cohesiveness?

Ethical Behavior as a Construct:

For the purposes of this dissertation, ethical behavior was defined as: a set of actions an individual undertakes to safeguard the welfare of others. This construct is based on the theory developed by Fisk. According to Fisk, actions will differ because groups will view their needs differently.
Research Strategy:

An ex post facto study was performed testing the ethical behavior of public employees within a single urban university. The university used in this study was Christopher Newport University located in Newport News, Virginia. A complete description of the university and the departments involved in the study is provided within the "subjects" paragraph of this chapter. The primary independent variable under study was group membership. Data was also be collected on gender, age and longevity. Data on these variables was collected because of the literature referenced earlier (Kohlberg, Willerman, Cumming and Henry) which indicates that these variables are likely to create cohesive groups and ethical differences. The dependent variable was the ethics score obtained on a 20 question ethics survey.

Subjects:

The subjects targeted for this study are public employees of an urban university. Specifically, the university under study was Christopher Newport University located in Newport News, Virginia. Christopher Newport University, hereafter referred to as CNU, is a state supported, comprehensive, co-educational urban institution of higher learning. The self professed purpose of the institution is to "develop and maintain programs of professional education that respond to students' learning interests,
combining theoretical knowledge and practical problem solving. The affairs of the university are directed by the Board of Visitors appointed by the governor of Virginia. CNU is located in Newport News midway between Norfolk and Williamsburg and serves approximately 5,000 students. An organizational chart is provided within the appendix.

Since high levels of education make university faculty atypical of public employees, support departments were chosen from outside the ranks of academe. The departments were coded and are described below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5 F/4 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10 F/16 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>all female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2 F/9 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4 F/5 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16 F/2 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranberry</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7 F/17 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8 F/1 M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List 1.

Education level as well as educational disciplines within the departments vary. For instance, in the Pink Department workers have high school diplomas all the way through and including Ph.Ds. The highest level of education in the White Department was a master's degree.
which is possessed by the supervisor himself. The same was also true for the Yellow Department and the Orange Department. The levels of education in the Cranberry, Green and Blue Departments was somewhat lower. The Red staff possessed the highest level of education of the eight departments with several of its staff members holding master's degrees, typically within the same discipline. The ages within the eight departments range from the early twenties to the mid sixties. There was also a wide longevity range with employees who are in their first few months of employment to employees who have over 26 years of service with the university.

Materials:

There are two primary materials used in this research. One was the Sociogram Questionnaire and the other was the ethics survey itself. The Sociogram Questionnaire was used to identify cohesive groups and was developed using the guidelines provided by researchers Gronlund and Linn. In this type of questionnaire, subjects were asked to list only those with whom they enjoy interacting with on a frequent basis. The other information contained within the questionnaire was name, department, years of service and sex. Great care was given to the formation of the ethics survey which contains 20 questions. A more thorough discussion on the development of the ethics survey is presented below. The ethics survey was limited to only 20 questions in order to control for subject mortality. It was estimated that the survey would take approximately five minutes to answer. The subject matter contained within the survey was derived from actual ethical
dilemmas cited by public employees during earlier interviews. Those interviews are contained in the Appendix of this dissertation.

Development of the Survey Instrument:

Essential to the success of this dissertation is a survey that accurately measures ethical behavior. At the current time, no ethics survey exists which has been validated as having construct or even content validity. Since ethics research in the public sector is still largely an unexplored area, great care was given to creating a survey for this research that would measure ethical behavior in a meaningful way. In order to accomplish this the development of the survey included a four pronged approach.

First; in order to identify common ethical dilemmas that public employees encountered at work, a series of six in-depth interviews was done. The interview subjects came from various aspects of the urban and public sectors including universities, public health, public libraries, the military, the police department and city government. In each case, a structured interview took place. The questions that were asked as well as the entire interviews themselves are contained within the Appendix. The ethical dilemmas which were identified became the basis for the questions contained within the survey. Some of the ethical dilemmas identified by the interviewees included: abuse of sick leave and health policies, coming to work late, poor quality service or performance, intimidating workers, setting unrealistic standards in order to motivate employees and accessing company records to obtain private information. Virtually all of the
Interviewees believed that age played a major role in ethical behavior. Half of the interviewees believed that ethnic background also played a role in differences in ethical behavior, and two of the interviewees believed that gender was an important variable in ethical differences. All of the experiences and observations of the interviewees were taken into considerations during the development of the ethics survey.

Second; after the survey was developed other ethics surveys were studied in order to identify strengths and weaknesses of previous surveys. They were also studied to see how to best "grade" or score the survey. After looking at several different surveys, a Likert five point scale was decided upon.

Third, the survey was then considered in the context of Milton Fisk's theory to see if the survey questions fit meaningfully into Fisk's theory and would highlight differences in ethical behavior.

Fourth, the survey was then pretested on subjects who were not part of the final survey results in order to ascertain if there were questions that were ambiguous or confusing. The survey was tested on public employees including the initial interview subjects as well as students and faculty. After this feedback, several questions were reworded in order to provide greater clarification.

**Collection Method:**

The collection of the data was accomplished in two phases. Phase one's
task was to identify cohesive groups within the various departments. In order to accomplish this, each subject was sent a letter explaining the purpose of the research and asked to fill out a questionnaire in which each subject lists approximately five workers whom he or she prefers and interacts with the most. This method of identifying cohesive groups is called the Sociometry Technique and is described by Norman Gronlund and Robert Linn in their book *Measurement and Evaluation in Teaching*. Sociometry is commonly used to identify cohesive groups and patterns of interaction. The time involved in filling out this initial questionnaire would probably not exceed two minutes. The completed questionnaire was then immediately placed in a sealed box and collected by the researcher. The results are kept completely confidential. Each subject's list was then compiled on a matrix form which records the frequency and direction of interactions. Once the matrix sheet was completed for each department, the information was then transferred to a diagram which provides a picture of the pattern of interactions among group members as well as individuals who may not possess membership in any group. If the collected data did not attest to the existence of a cohesive group, that particular department was not used in the group analysis part of this research. If the department under study *did* reveal the existence of cohesive groups then that department was included in the analysis of group differences. All subjects in every department were used to test the influence of the variables gender, age and longevity.

Phase two of the data collection required a second visit to the department at which time each subject filled out an ethics survey consisting of 20 ethical dilemmas which are commonly encountered within a
public employment setting. All data obtained from the ethics survey was then analyzed. The dependent variable was the ethics score. The independent variables was group membership or lack thereof, as well as gender, age and longevity. It was explained to all participants both verbally and in writing that neither ethical nor unethical answers are being sought simply honest answers. It was also explained that their names will never be associated with their answers and their supervisors will never have access to their survey results.

Statistical Analysis:

The primary statistical tool used to analyze the results of the study was Analysis of Variance. Each independent variable had at least two levels. These levels are as follows:

- Group Membership (number of levels to be determined after phase one)
- Longevity (less than seven years/seven years or more)
- Gender (Male / Female)
- Age (under the age of 36/36 and older)

The level of significance was .05. F tests were performed on the main effects, the first order interactions and the second order interaction between the all main effects. Specifically, the ANOVA tests the following hypotheses:

1. One group's ethics score will differ from another group's ethics score.
2. Group members will score differently than nongroup members.
3. Men and women will score differently on an ethics survey.

65
4. Younger employees will score differently than older employees.
5. Employees with longevity will score differently than novice employees.
6. Gender, age and longevity will be related to group cohesiveness.

Limitations of the Study:

This study is limited in three major ways. These limitations are described below:

Methodology: This study contains a relatively small sample size. Only 46 subjects participated in the research from start to finish. In order to guard the identities of the subjects it was necessary to use only categorical data. More specific information on age and other demographics was not collected. In addition, the pattern of responses made many desirable analyses impossible.

Theoretical Model: This study focuses on only one theory, Fisk's Group Ethics Theory. Fisk's theory was chosen because it had not yet been explored in an organizational setting and for its potential relevance to public administration. Other theories, while perhaps equally compelling, were not explored.

Inferences: This study does not intend to make inferences about behavior in other settings; nor is it the intention of this research to predict one's behavior based on a particular ethics score. Such predictions are contrary to Fisk's theory.

Other Considerations: The most serious threat to this study is whether subjects will respond honestly. In order to encourage honest
answers, subjects were told both verbally and in writing that the intent of the study was not to determine if one group was more ethical than another just if there were ethical differences. Every attempt was made to gain the trust of the subjects by ensuring them anonymity. It was also explained that this research is in no way connected with the university's policies or objectives. In order to encourage honest responses, subjects' names were omitted from the ethics surveys and completed forms were placed within a sealed box.

In reference to external validity issues, the sample was not a random sample of public employees, however, only staff and hourly wage workers were used (no faculty or students) in order to improve external validity.

Lastly, it is hard to determine how the experimental arrangements might effect responses. The questionnaires and the surveys were filled out at work. Again, although no names were recorded on the ethics survey, respondents may still be hesitant to answer in a completely honest fashion.
Chapter Four: Findings

In order to best organize the findings of this research, this chapter will be divided into three major parts. First, the subjects who actually participated in this research will be described in general terms. Secondly, the three research questions will be discussed, and thirdly, the results to the hypotheses will be presented. First, however, it is important to identify the subjects who participated in this study.

Subjects Who Participated in this Study

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, eight departments were targeted for the purpose of this ethics research. Seven of the eight departments agreed to participate with the Red Department electing not to participate for the reason of "time constraints." The Red Department contained 18 employees with 16 females and 2 males. Almost all of the employees within the Red Department have a master's degree. Overall, the Red Department offered little diversification of gender or education and its loss should not have an impact on the results of this study. All of the other departments agreed to participate. The total number of individual participants across all departments for the first part of the data collection which was the Cohesive Group Membership Questionnaire was 63. Specifically, the participation results were as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7 (3M/4F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14 (7M/7F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12 (12F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6 (4M/2F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5 (2M/3F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranberry</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10 (8M/2F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9 (1M/8F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[N = 63\]

**List 2.**

In order to answer the primary research question: Are there ethical differences between cohesive groups within the same organization, a four step approach was necessary:

1. A matrix had to be created which organized the participants and their interactions with other subjects.
2. Sociograms had to be drawn which would illustrate the social structure in each department.
3. A comprehensive list was needed to record cohesive groups and their members.
4. A statistical test must be employed to test for differences between cohesive groups within the departments and throughout the organization.
Step One: Interpreting the Results of the Matrix

The Cohesive Group Membership Questionnaires were summarized on matrix data sheets. These matrixes are located in the Appendix. The names of the individuals were removed and replaced by their respective genders and the number of times that individual was chosen by his or her peers. The subjects are listed in descending order with the subjects who were chosen most frequently listed at the top of the matrix. On the vertical axis of the matrix are the "choosers" and on the horizontal axis of the matrix are the workers who were chosen. The most important information which is contained within the matrix is the number of times an individual was chosen by his or her peers. The number of times that each person was chosen is tallied at the bottom of the matrix. Note that some subjects were chosen many times, some as many as 12 times and some subjects were chosen not at all. This is partially a function of the size of the department. Almost every department, however, had some subjects who were chosen once or not at all. Also contained within the matrix is the symbol *. This symbol was used to denote a person who was frequently chosen by one's peers but elected not to participate in the research. Each person is identified on the matrix in two ways first by gender and then by letter. So for example the first person in the Yellow Department would be referred to as "Yellow Male A" and the second person would be referred to as "Yellow Female B". The information contained within the matrixes was then transferred to the Sociograms.
Step Two: Interpreting the Sociograms

The sociograms contained within this dissertation are patterned after the sociograms depicted in Anthony Nitko's *Educational Tests and Measurements*.

Each individual department is illustrated separately on a sociogram. The rings within the sociogram represent the number of times that each subject was chosen. Depending on the size of the department, the rings may represent being chosen anywhere from zero to twelve times. The rings which are at the center of the sociogram are always the highest frequency observed within the department. The frequency of being chosen decreases as one moves to the outer rings. For example: In the Yellow Department, the center of the sociogram would represent any subject who was chosen five times. In the Yellow Department, however, the highest number of times that any subject was chosen was four times. Subjects h and i were each chosen four times. Since their letters are written in lower case it means that subjects h and i elected not to participate in this research. The subject who received the next highest votes were subjects A, B, C, D and E. Notice that each of these subjects are represented by capital letters. This means that they were active participants in the research. Subjects A, B, C, D AND E were each chosen three times while subjects F and G were each chosen twice. There are no other subjects represented in the Yellow Department Sociogram.

In order to differentiate female from male subjects, male subjects are represented by a box (□) and female subjects are represented by a circle (○). The total number of participants is listed at the bottom of each sociogram. In keeping with the recommendations of Nitko, only mutual choices have
been diagramed. That is to say that if subject B chose subject C and subject C chose subject B then a line is drawn connecting these two subjects as is the case in the Yellow Department Sociogram. Since only mutual choices are recorded, it is possible that an individual may be located at the center of the sociogram but not have any connecting lines to other subjects. This can be seen in the Orange Department. Subject A has received four votes, but has no lines connecting her to other subjects. This is true because while Subject A was frequently chosen she did not choose any of the subjects who chose her. This allows the researcher to see a rather interesting social phenomenon, a kind of self-imposed exile. There is also a very practical reason for diagramming only mutual choices, diagramming single choices would make the social structure too difficult to discern especially in large departments where there are many employees.

Subjects who are located near the center of the sociogram and have three or four lines connecting them to coworkers are called stars. Subjects who are located within the outer circles of the sociogram and have been chosen only once are called neglectees and subjects who are depicted on the outer fringes chosen by no one are called isolates.
Figure 2.

YELLOW DEPARTMENT

□ = male

〇 = female

Number of Participants = 7
Figure 3.

PINK DEPARTMENT

= male

= female

Number of Participants = 14

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Figure 4.

ORANGE DEPARTMENT

= male

= female

Number of Participants =12
Figure 5.

BLUE DEPARTMENT

- = male
○ = female

Number of Participants = 6

76
GREEN DEPARTMENT

= male

= female

Number of Participants = 5
Figure 7.

CRANBERRY DEPARTMENT

☐ = male

〇 = female

Number of Participants = 10
Figure 8.

WHITE DEPARTMENT

□ = male

○ = female

Number of Participants = 9

79
Step Three: Identifying the Cohesive Groups

The ethical differences between cohesive groups must now be determined. It is also important to know if the ethical practices of a cohesive group are different from the ethics of isolates and neglectees. For instance, consider the Yellow Department Sociogram. Group One has B C D and E as members. Group Two has A F and G as members. There are no isolates or neglectees present in the Yellow Department. In the case of the Yellow Department the question to be asked is: Do Group One's ethics differ from Group Two's ethics.

All of the groups have been numbered throughout the departments. The cohesive groups as revealed in the sociograms have been assigned the following numbers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>A F G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; 3</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>A B C D E G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; 4</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>B H J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; 5</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>B E H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; 6</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>J K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; 7</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>F I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 8</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>A B D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 9</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>A B C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; 10</td>
<td>Cranberry</td>
<td>A C E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; 11</td>
<td>Cranberry</td>
<td>B D F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 12</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>ABDE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 13</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>AF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 14</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>CH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 15</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>DG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**List 3.**

The following paragraphs provide descriptive information on the social structure found within each department's sociogram. Pertinent questions concerning differences in the groups' ethics are also proposed.

**Yellow Department**

Male and female subjects are evenly represented in the Yellow Department. Interestingly, there are no neglectees or isolates. The subjects who received the most votes, however, are employees who elected not to participate in this research. There are some employees in each department who elected not to participate in the research. In some instances, these workers were not available during the study. In other instances, some people elected not to participate because they found the nature of the study, ethics and group membership, threatening. These latter subjects voiced their objections rather openly and of course could not be made to participate.

There are two distinct groups within the Yellow Department. It is interesting to note that the two groups are both single gender groups. One group is all female the second group is all male. The pertinent question is:
Is Group One’s ethics different from Group Two’s ethics?

**Pink Department**

The Pink Department also has an equal number of male and female participants. The rather large size of the department makes the social patterns more difficult to discern. Essentially, there are two major groups. Group Three has A B C D E G as members while Group Four has B H J as members. Note that subject B has membership in both groups. Group Four is an all male group while Group Three is group of mixed gender. Subjects A B C may truly be referred to as *stars* for they have each been selected 12 times. Subjects F L K and M are neglectees and subject N is an isolate never having been chosen by any of her coworkers. The questions to be considered in the Pink Department are: Is Group Three’s ethics different from Group Four’s ethics? Are the neglectees’ and the isolates’ ethics different from group members’ ethics?

**Orange Department**

The Orange Department is unique in that the entire department at every level is female. The total number of participants in this department was 12. Three individuals were each chosen four times by their coworkers. Notice, however, that Subject A did not choose any of the subjects who chose her and although she is located at the center of the sociogram she remains unconnected to others in her department. Subjects B and E come the closest to being *stars*. There are three distinct groups within the Orange
Located in the upper right hand corner of the sociogram is one isolate, Subject L who was chosen by no one. The questions which pertain to the Orange Department are: Do Groups Five, Six and Seven have different ethics? Does the isolate have different ethics than the group members?

**Blue Department**

The Blue Department has a total of six participants. This department has only one cohesive group, Group Eight which has A B D and E as members. None of these group members can really be referred to as stars. Subject F is an isolate while Subject g who received the most votes, elected not to participate in this research and is therefore represented by the lower case letter. The question to be considered within this department is: Does Group Eight's ethics differ from nongroup members' ethics?

**Green Department**

Of all of the departments which participated in this research, employees in the Green Department voiced the greatest reluctance. Three employees who did not participate voiced strong opposition to the nature of this study. One actually pretended not to speak English! Consequently, the sociogram reveals that the Green Department is rather splintered with only one loosely defined group. This Group was labeled Group Nine and has A B and C as members. The relevant question in the Green Department is: Does Group Nine's ethics differ from the nongroup members' ethics?
**Cranberry Department**

The total number of participants in the Cranberry Department was 10. Only two of the participants are female which is not unlike the gender distribution throughout the department. The subject who was chosen most often, subject k, was not a participant. Two other nonparticipants each received three votes. There are two groups: Group Ten with A C and E and Group Eleven with members B D and F. There are three isolates, H I and J, who were never chosen by any of their coworkers. Subject G is a neglectee. The Cranberry Department, though larger in size, is similar to the Green Department in that its members are rather fragmented. The questions to be asked in the Cranberry Department are: Is Group Ten's ethics different from Group Eleven's ethics? Are the ethics of the isolates different from the ethics of group members?

**White Department**

The White Department has a total of nine participants with eight females and one male. Only two employees elected not to participate and each of these nonparticipants received five and three votes respectively. There are four groups within the White Department: Group Twelve with subjects A B D and E; Group Thirteen with members A and F; Group 14 with members C and H and Group Fifteen with members D and G. Subject A actually belongs to two groups. Subjects A B D and E may all be referred to as *stars*. There is also Isolate I who did not receive any votes. The only male in the department is included as one of the group members. The questions to be asked in this department are: Do the groups' ethics differ? Does the isolate have different
ethics than the group members?

Step Four: Statistical Analysis of Group Differences Found Within the Ethics Surveys

Ethics surveys were returned by 47 of the 63 individuals who began this study by participating in the cohesive group questionnaire. These individuals are depicted in the sociograms as noted earlier. In order to determine if the ethical behavior of one cohesive group differs from that of another cohesive group, two analyses were done, one at the department level and one which contrasted all groups throughout the organization. A comparison of group members and isolates/neglectees is also important. This part of the analysis is central to testing Fisk’s theory. Overall, the group analysis requires:

a. groups within departments be compared
b. groups throughout the organization be contrasted
c. group members be compared to nongroup members

In order to accomplish the comparison of groups within departments, only departments in which groups returned a sufficient number of surveys could be analyzed. Groups within the Yellow, Pink, Orange, and Cranberry Departments met this criterion. The analysis provided the following results:
Table 1.

**Yellow Department Mean Scores For Groups One and Two**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.447</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.767</td>
<td>.104</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A score of five is the highest possible score a subject could achieve. See chapter Three for a further explanation of the ethics survey scoring procedure.

Table 2.

**A Comparison of the Mean Scores For Groups One and Two**

**Yellow Department Analysis of Variance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.175</td>
<td>.175</td>
<td>7.391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>p = .0418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.294</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.

Yellow Department Standard Deviation Scores For Groups One and Two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.957</td>
<td>.256</td>
<td>.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.607</td>
<td>.293</td>
<td>.169</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.

A Comparison of the Standard Deviation Scores Achieved By Groups One and Two.

**Yellow Department Analysis of Variance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>2.843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.368</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>p = .1526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.577</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.

Cranberry Department Mean Scores For Group Eleven and the Isolates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eleven</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.456</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.325</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A Score of five is the highest possible score a subject could achieve.

Table 6.

A Comparison of Mean Scores Achieved By Group Eleven and the Isolates.

Cranberry Department Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.789</td>
<td>1.789</td>
<td>20.647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>p = .02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 7.

Cranberry Department Standard Deviation Scores For Group Eleven and Isolates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eleven</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.942</td>
<td>.193</td>
<td>.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.461</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>.193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.

A Comparison of Standard Deviation Scores For Group Eleven and the Isolates.

Cranberry Department Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>6.501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>p = .084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.472</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9.

Pink Department Mean Scores For Group Three and Isolates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.236</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.642</td>
<td>1.474</td>
<td>1.042</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A score of five is the highest possible score a subject could achieve.

Table 10.

A Comparison of Mean Scores Group Three and the Isolates

Pink Department Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.505</td>
<td>.505</td>
<td>1.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.444</td>
<td>.489</td>
<td>p = .3562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.949</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11.

Pink Department Standard Deviation Scores Group Three and Isolates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isolates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.031</td>
<td>.399</td>
<td>.282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12.

A Comparison of Standard Deviation Scores Group Three and Isolates.

Pink Department Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.543</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>p = .6352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.571</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13.

Orange Department Mean Scores For Groups Five, Seven and Isolate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.711</td>
<td>.435</td>
<td>.251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.425</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isolates</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.842</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A score of five is the highest possible score a subject could achieve.

Table 14.

A Comparison of Mean Scores Groups Five, Seven and Isolate.

Orange Department Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.208</td>
<td>.604</td>
<td>4.656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.389</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>p = .1203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.597</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15.

Orange Department Standard Deviation Scores Groups Five, Seven and Isolate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.254</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.989</td>
<td>.346</td>
<td>.244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.688</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16.

A Comparison of Standard Deviation Scores Groups Five, Seven and Isolate.

Orange Department Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>2.504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>p = .2293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.417</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 17.

Mean Scores for the Eight Cohesive Groups Within the Organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.447</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.825</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.236</td>
<td>.261</td>
<td>.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.711</td>
<td>.435</td>
<td>.251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.665</td>
<td>.253</td>
<td>.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleven</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.546</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelve</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>1.689</td>
<td>.975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A score of five is the highest possible score a subject could achieve.

Table 18.

A Comparison of Mean Scores of the Eight Cohesive Groups Within the Organization.

Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.176</td>
<td>1.025</td>
<td>2.621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.651</td>
<td>.391</td>
<td>p = .0496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.827</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

94
Table 19.

Standard Deviation Scores for the Eight Cohesive Groups Within the Organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.972</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.447</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.254</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.989</td>
<td>.346</td>
<td>.244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.748</td>
<td>.482</td>
<td>.278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleven</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.041</td>
<td>.355</td>
<td>.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelve</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.602</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.066</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20.

A Comparison of Standard Deviation Scores of the Eight Cohesive Groups Within the Organization.

Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.514</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>p = .0605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.055</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 21.

Mean Scores of Individuals Who Belong to Groups (Members) and Isolates and Neglectees (Nonmembers).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>member</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.551</td>
<td>.745</td>
<td>.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nonmember</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.958</td>
<td>.935</td>
<td>.382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A score of five is the highest possible score a subject could achieve.

Table 22.

A Comparison of Mean Scores of Individuals Who Belong to Groups (Members) and Isolates and Neglectees (Nonmembers).

Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.715</td>
<td>1.715</td>
<td>2.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18.264</td>
<td>.609</td>
<td>p = .1036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19.979</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23.

Standard Deviation Scores of Individuals Who Belong to Groups (Members) and Isolates and Neglectees (Nonmembers).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>member</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.932</td>
<td>.353</td>
<td>.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nonmember</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.042</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24.

A Comparison of Standard Deviation Scores of Individuals Who Belong to Groups (Members) and Isolates and Neglectees (Nonmembers).

Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.004</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>p = .5112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.063</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next, the research question: *Does ethical behavior vary according to gender, age and longevity* was analyzed. In order to answer this second research question, a three-way analysis of variance was performed. In addition, an one-way analysis of variance was also done investigating the single variable of age and two correlations were performed on the relationship between longevity and age, as well as the relationship between mean and standard deviation scores as dependent variables. These analyses provided the following results:

**Table 25.**

**Mean Scores of Subjects According to the Variables of Gender, Age and Longevity.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.421</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.325</td>
<td>.542</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age &gt; 36</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>.407</td>
<td>.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age &lt; 36</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long. &gt; 7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.557</td>
<td>.337</td>
<td>.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long. &lt; 7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.182</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td>.135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 26.

A Comparison of Mean Scores of Subjects According to the Variables of Gender, Age and Longevity.

Three-Way Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gender (A)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>1.972</td>
<td>.1695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age (B)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.486</td>
<td>.4905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>.5876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>longevity (C)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.753</td>
<td>1.753</td>
<td>7.634</td>
<td>.0093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.258</td>
<td>.258</td>
<td>1.125</td>
<td>.2965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.8101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.363</td>
<td>.5512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>error</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7.756</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Each independent variable assumed two levels and was organized in the following way: gender (male/female); age (under 36/36 or older) and longevity (six years or fewer/seven or more years).
Table 27.

Standard Deviation Scores of Subjects According to the Variables of Gender, Age and Longevity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td>.395</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.886</td>
<td>.409</td>
<td>.105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age &gt;36</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.726</td>
<td>.376</td>
<td>.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age &lt; 36</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.048</td>
<td>.311</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long. &gt; 7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>.792</td>
<td>.372</td>
<td>.076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long. &lt; 7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>.993</td>
<td>.369</td>
<td>.081</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 28.

A Comparison of Standard Deviation Scores of Subjects According to the Variables of Gender, Age and Longevity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gender (A)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.272</td>
<td>.6052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age (B)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>1.016</td>
<td>.3208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>1.659</td>
<td>.2067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>longevity (C)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.356</td>
<td>.356</td>
<td>2.952</td>
<td>.0951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.151</td>
<td>.151</td>
<td>1.253</td>
<td>.271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>.4955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.9262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>error</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3.982</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If the variable of age is isolated and investigated further, an analysis of variance reveals the following results:

Table 29.

A Comparison of Mean Scores of Subjects Below the Age of 36 and Above the Age of 36.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.643</td>
<td>1.643</td>
<td>6.959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>9.68</td>
<td>.236</td>
<td>p = .0117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 30.

A Comparison of Standard Deviation Scores of Subjects Over the Age of 36 and Under the Age of 36.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.011</td>
<td>1.011</td>
<td>8.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>.126</td>
<td>p = .0071</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to the analyses above, correlations between two sets of variables were also investigated. First, a comparison of the dependent variables of mean scores and standard deviation scores was done; and second, a comparison of the independent variables of age and longevity was done. The results of these correlations are provided below.

Table 31.

The Relationship Between Standard Deviation Scores and Mean Scores.

Standard Deviation and Mean Scores Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Covariance</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>R-Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>-.156</td>
<td>-.764</td>
<td>.583</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 32.

The Relationship Between the Independent Variables of Age and Longevity.

Age and Longevity Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Co-variance</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>R-Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>-.079</td>
<td>-.326</td>
<td>.106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, the last research question was investigated: Do gender, age and longevity influence group cohesiveness? In order to answer this question, the gender, age and longevity compositions of the groups must be analyzed. The nature of this analysis and the smallness of the groups suggest that it is best to answer this question simply by providing a description of the compositions of the significant and nonsignificant groups. First, the departments which yielded significant group differences were investigated.

Departments with Significant Group Differences

Yellow Department:

Group One was a single gender group, female. In reference to age, two members were under the age of 36, one member was over the age of 36 and one member's age was unknown. Three of the four members had been with the university less than six years.

Group Two was also a single gender group, male. In reference to age, all members were over the age of 36. All of the members of Group Two had been with the university seven years or longer.

Cranberry Department:

Group Eleven had two females and one male. In reference to age, two of three members were over the age of 36. All members had served the university seven years or longer.

The isolates in the Cranberry Department were both male. One was over
the age of 36 and one was under the age of 36. Both members had served the university six years or less.

Departments with Nonsignificant Group Differences

Pink Department:

Group Three was predominately female. Four of five members were female. Three were over the age of 36, one was under the age of 36 and the age of one subject was unknown. In reference to longevity, three had been with the university seven years or longer and two had been with the university six years or less.

The isolates were both female. One was over 36 years of age and one was under. Likewise, one had over seven years of longevity and one had less than six years of service.

Orange Department:

*Note: all members in the Orange Department are female

Group Five was a single gender group as the note above indicates. Two were over the age of 36 and one was under 36. All three members had six or fewer years of service.

Group Seven had two members, both female and both over 36 years of age. In reference to longevity they were split with one over seven years and one had served the university less than six years.

The Orange Department also had two other members who returned surveys, one member belonged to Group Six and the other member was an isolate. As stated earlier all subjects were female. The Group Six member
was over 36 years of age and had been with the university less than six years. The isolate was under the age of 36 and had been with the university seven years or more.

The Hypotheses Revisited

In revisiting the hypotheses stated earlier in Chapter Three, the following conclusions can be made:

Hypothesis One: One group's ethics scores will differ from another group's ethics scores.

Accept. Groups' ethics scores differed significantly throughout the organization. Scores also differed significantly even within individual departments such as the Yellow and Cranberry Departments.

Hypothesis Two: Group members will score differently than nongroup members.

Reject. The ANOVA yielded a p value of .1036 for means and a value of .5112 for standard deviations. Group members scores were not significantly different from individuals who did not belong to groups.

Hypothesis Three: Men and women will score differently.

Reject. Surprisingly, contrary to earlier findings such as Hahn, Colin and Bart (1990) gender did not prove to be a significant variable. The three-way
ANOVA yielded a p value of .1695 for mean scores and .3208 for standard deviation scores.

**Hypothesis Four:** Younger employees will score differently than older employees.

While this hypothesis must be rejected in the three-way ANOVA, when the data was run again in a one-way ANOVA the p value for means was .0117 and .0071 for standard deviation scores. It would be incorrect to say that age is totally unrelated to ethical decisions.

**Hypothesis Five:** Employees with longevity will score differently than novice employees.

Accept. The variable of longevity had a p value of .009 in the three-way ANOVA. Note that there was no significant interaction between age and longevity nor was there an especially high correlation between age and longevity.

**Hypothesis Six:** Gender, age and longevity will be related to group cohesiveness.

Inconclusive. When studying the compositions of the departments which had significant group differences, it did appear that the departments which had significant group differences were more similar in their gender, age and longevity compositions. The similarities in gender, age and longevity is especially apparent in the Yellow Department. However; the gender, age and longevity compositions of the departments with significant group differences and the departments that did not have significant group
differences was not dissimilar enough to safely make a definitive statement regarding the influence of gender, age and longevity on group cohesiveness. The result of the analysis is therefore inconclusive.

The following final chapter will provide a discussion on these findings as well as recommendations for further research.
Chapter Five
Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter provides a discussion about the research questions undertaken in this dissertation. Second, the implications for managing the ethical behavior of urban and other public employees will be addressed. Third, the chapter offers three suggestions for further research. Lastly, a discussion of the challenges facing ethics research will conclude the chapter and the dissertation.

Are there ethical differences between cohesive groups within the same organization? The analysis of the eight cohesive groups within the organization indicate that there are ethical differences between groups within a single organization. The analyses of the Yellow and Cranberry Departments indicate there are even ethical differences between cohesive groups within specific departments. What makes this latter finding especially interesting is the close proximity of the groups in which these differences were found. The Yellow Department reveals a p value of .04 while the Cranberry Department reveals a p value of .02. Fisk's theory states these ethical differences between the groups are due to divergent goals and perceived threats within their working environments. These findings support Fisk's theory, however, this research does not necessarily rule out other alternative theories such as Kohlberg's Moral Development or Liebert's theory which references the shaping influence of experience on ethical behavior. The variables of gender, age and longevity were explored to
see if they had a spurious effect on group differences. Fisk's theory does not necessarily negate the contributions of Kohlberg's or Liebert's theories. It is even possible that age and experience play a role in group needs and the ethical behavior which then follows. Another pertinent and pressing question which has not yet been raised: Why would two groups who perform within the same work environment perceive different threats and possess different goals? It may be tempting to explain these different goals and perceptions by citing divergent gender roles or maturation factors. This explanation, however, is not satisfactory because in many instances the gender and age compositions of the groups are mixed. That is to say, that groups in which significant differences were found contained both men and women, as well as various ages and stages of longevity. Therefore, one cannot make the claim that divergent gender roles or maturation factors account entirely for the different goals or perceptions.

There is, however, another plausible explanation as to why these groups have developed different goals and perceive different threats within the same working environment. It is likely that the different goals and perceptions have been influenced by groups performing disparate functions. For instance, in the Yellow Department it may appear that the groups' perceptions and goals have been influenced by gender differences. A closer inspection reveals, however, that Group One's members are all administrative assistants while Group Two's members are all officers of the university. Disparate functions are also present in the Cranberry Department. Group Eleven's members all work together in a similar function while the work responsibilities of the Isolates require that they perform on their own, removed from their coworkers. In the Orange and Pink Departments where no significant group differences were found, the
departments do not contain separate functions or occupations. While cohesive groups do exist within the Orange and Pink Departments, they are not based on function and consequently no significant ethical differences exist.

This is only one plausible explanation for the divergence in goals and perceptions among groups in close proximity. Clearly, more work needs to be done to investigate the forces which shape group goals and ethical behavior.

It seems likely there is another phenomenon which helps to create and sustain ethical differences between groups, this phenomenon is the ethical evolution of the group. As a group’s membership grows and eventually stabilizes, the group’s ethics continue to evolve as the group responds to a wide range of variables such as functional responsibilities, a new boss, budget cutbacks, or a myriad of other events. Since these changes are not likely to effect all groups in the same way, the groups become specialized according to their specific environmental threats. For instance, a new boss may be viewed as as a threat to one group, but not threatening to another group; one group may be negatively affected by budget cuts, while another group is unaffected by the budget cuts. It is the accommodation of these environmental conditions which will eventually differentiate one group’s ethics from another.

It is possible given the limitations of this study, in particular the limited sample size, that different analyses and assumptions could result in different findings. This study focused on Fisk’s theory only, and in doing so performed the comparisons which were possible.

Does ethical behavior vary according to gender, age and
longevity? Simply stated, ethical behavior does not vary according to gender; ethical behavior does vary, however, according to age and longevity, especially longevity.

Of all the findings in this research, the finding of no significant differences between men and women was perhaps the most surprising. Intuitively, it is reasonable to assume that men and women would score differently on an ethics survey. In fact, they do not. The three-way analysis of variance revealed a p value of .1695 for gender. In the gender, age and longevity literature covered earlier in this text, psychologist Lee Willerman states that the factors creating differences between the sexes are the result of both innate and socialization factors. The innate factors cited by Willerman such as hormones, pregnancy, childbirth, etc are now largely controlled and manipulated by modern science. The socialization factors of assertiveness, career-orientation and child care responsibilities have experienced some change through the years and continues to change as women make even greater gains in nontraditional professions. It would be unreasonable to presume that women's ethics would remain unchanged as they integrate into what were once male dominated fields. If this dissertation were done 50 years earlier, gender may have proved significant. These findings, however, indicate that it is possible that any early ethical differences between men and women were more likely due to lack of opportunities for women rather than innate differences. Today, women have as many opportunities and reasons for unethical behavior as their male counterparts. Diversity in career opportunities, advancements in medical technology and changing social roles have rendered gender less significant than perhaps was originally assumed.
Several years after Kohlberg's original work on the influence of age on moral development, age remains an interesting variable in relation to ethical behavior. Since this research used only two levels to the variable of age, it is not possible to detect the moral progression of subjects to which Kohlberg refers. While the effect of age is not evident in the three-way analysis of variance, its effect becomes clearer in the one-way ANOVA. In the one-way ANOVA age is significant and by a rather large margin, .007 for standard deviation scores and .01 for mean scores. The p value of .007 indicates that individuals under the age of 36 are less consistent in their ethical behavior than individuals over the age of 36. In other words, their ethical behavior is more likely to vary according to the situation encountered. The p value of .01 suggests the typical everyday practices of subjects below the age of 36 is different from that of subjects over the age of 36. The three-way ANOVA indicates no interaction between age and longevity. The question that remains concerning the variable of age is whether the differences found are due to a natural aging process, a la Aristotle's School of Naturalism or whether these differences are the result of societal pressures to conform. The information available from this research makes it difficult to provide a definitive answer to this question, however, the longevity results indicate that pressures to conform may explain the differences in ethics scores according to age. In the work environment, the pressures to conform come from organizational policies as well as more subtle influences from co-workers.

The one variable which proves significant in nearly every case is longevity. Its influence is present on both groups and individuals. It was
Liebert who contended that experience is what shapes one's ethical behavior. In other words, experience in terms of ethical behavior becomes a kind of *conditioning mechanism*. As one's experiences unfold, one learns to act in ways which will bring the greatest rewards or perhaps in some circumstances the least negative consequences. Subjects who have greater longevity have been through a kind of conditioning process and have progressed to a certain stage in their ethics education. Subjects with little longevity within the organization have not encountered the same kind of experiences as a vested employee who has been with the organization for several years.

To summarize the discussion on the second research question, the data suggests that as an influence age is secondary and longevity is the more meaningful predictor in terms of finding differences in ethical behavior. People who are diverse in age such as three subjects 35, 45 and 55 years of age all having served the university for over seven years will be more similar in their ethical behavior than three other subjects all of whom are the same age, but have been with the university for varying lengths of time. While gender did not prove significant in this study, it must be noted that other types of analyses such as an item by item analysis of the survey questions could possibly provide different results.

**Do gender, age and longevity influence group cohesiveness?**

Stated another way: Are groups in which the members are alike in terms of gender, age and longevity more likely to have similar ethical behaviors, making differences between cohesive groups more apparent? It appears that
similar gender, age and longevity descriptions may *initially* make group cohesiveness more attainable; however, cohesiveness created by similarities in gender and age will be overridden by the variable of longevity. While the findings in Chapter Four suggest that the groups which did reveal significant differences within departments are somewhat more similar in terms of gender and age; the reference sample of four departments is simply too small to provide a definitive answer. The only clear answer seems to be that while these similarities may get the group *started* they will not *keep* the group going in the same ethical direction. An example of this would be a cohesive group of five female subjects all of whom are in their thirties who start work for the university on the same day. If all of these subjects *stay* with the university they will develop similar ethical behaviors. If three of the subjects leave after six years and three *new* subjects come in, the three new subjects will not have the same ethical behavior as the two remaining subjects. The similarities of gender and age will be overridden by the differences in longevity. Therefore, it is safe to say that *longevity* will create a stronger foundation for group cohesiveness than gender or age.

Another consideration is how similar work functions effect cohesiveness among group members. The two departments, Yellow and Cranberry, which produced groups with significant ethics differences were groups which were divided primarily according to function. It appears that groups whose members perform the same function for the organization are likely to be very cohesive groups.

Although this research focused on the differences *between* groups, a related topic is what is happening *within* groups. Therefore, it seems
appropriate to briefly comment on a related question: Are individuals who are members of cohesive groups more similar in their ethical behaviors than individuals who are not members of cohesive groups within the same organization?

Though it is difficult to make a definitive statement regarding this question because of the pattern of responses and the small sample sizes, there is some indication provided in the descriptive statistics tables in Chapter Four. The standard deviation scores between the isolates in the Cranberry Department is larger than the standard deviation score between the members of Group Eleven (.46 versus .156). This is also true in the Pink Department where the standard deviation between isolates is 1.474 while the standard deviation between Group Three members in the Pink Department is .261. In fact, individuals not in groups have a larger standard deviation in virtually every case throughout the organization. The standard deviation score for Isolates and Neglectees was .935 while the standard deviation score for group members was .745. Such consistent differences in standard deviation scores does indicate that group members are more similar in their ethical behavior than individuals who are not members of cohesive groups. It is likely the similarity in ethical behavior of group members is the result of established group norms. Isolates and Neglectees are not influenced by such norms and therefore their behaviors would be more dissimilar.
Implications for Managing the Ethical Behavior of Urban
and Other Public Employees

This research supports Fisk's theory that ethics differ according to cohesive group membership. Ethics norms result from the interaction of group members who have been brought together by mutual interests and goals. Fisk asserts that ethical behavior will differ from group to group within a heterogeneous society. These findings suggest that group differences are even present within a single organization. The more cohesive the group is the more solidified their interests become thereby creating consistent ethical standards by which the members live and work. This research also explored three variables gender, age and longevity and their role in ethical behavior. Of these three variables, longevity proved significant in every analysis.

The results of this research has interesting implications for urban managers and public administrators, especially for public managers who hope to mandate a particular set of organizational ethics for all employees to follow. These findings confirm that ethics mandates developed by insulated managers are doomed to fail because such mandates ignore the influence of cohesive groups. It is not sufficient for managers to include the opinions of various scattered individuals throughout the organization because such random input does not guarantee that the voices of the cohesive groups have been heard. This research demonstrates that cohesive groups must be recognized and their needs heard or group members will simply operate independent of organizational objectives. Failure for a manager is especially likely when the mandates appear contrary to the interests of cohesive groups. How then is the public manager to proceed in order to ensure
relatively uniform and desirable behavior among all employees? The findings of this study indicate that the manager should consider the following points:

First, urban and other public managers must familiarize themselves with a variety of ethics theories, especially the schools of thought presented in this research. This suggestion is likely to be greeted with skepticism by public managers who question the utility of theory in the life of a practitioner. It is essential, however, that managers understand that employees do not necessarily operate from similar ethics philosophies. While there are not many people who practice absolute ethics, otherwise known as universal ethics, there is a considerable number of people who believe in absolute ethics. It is surprising to see there are also a great many people who believe in what Fisk refers to as Devil Theory Ethics, an ethical system which is derived from one's religious affiliation or beliefs. In the daily execution of public business, the pragmatic approach, also known as situational ethics remains very prevalent. Employees are perhaps best acquainted with this pragmatic approach to ethics. Though the vast majority of public managers are not familiar with the Social View School of Thought, in particular Fisk's theory; the findings of this research make it clear that group membership plays an important role in the everyday ethics practices of public employees. Managers must be aware of the rich variety in ethics beliefs and practices. Employees do not naturally assume the ethics philosophy or objectives of the organization. In fact, the ethics objectives of the organization may be very contrary to the needs of employees. Such contradictions immediately cause ethical dilemmas in the minds of workers.
Secondly, it is important that managers have an understanding of cohesive groups and learn to identify the various groups within their organizations. Employees form groups in order to enhance the likelihood of achieving goals and prospering within the organization. It is important to know how the various groups perceive their needs and goals. Once this is done, it is actually an on-going process because needs change, these needs must be woven into the ethical fabric of the organization. For example, suppose that a manager suspects that employees are calling in sick and missing work when they are really perfectly healthy. The question is why are the employees engaging in this practice? From the employees perspective it is likely that some free time is occasionally needed outside of normal days off in order to accomplish some personal business. If the organization has a restrictive personal leave policy, employees may believe that calling in sick when well is acceptable behavior. An ethics conflict now exists. This conflict can be avoided by simply recognizing that employees will occasionally need "personal days" to conduct their private affairs. Such recognition on behalf of management would encourage a more cooperative effort between managers and employees. Ironically, probably fewer employees would take sick leave or personal days.

Thirdly, employees should be given a formal voice in the formulation of the ethical principles which guide the organization. To omit the employees from such a process is to encourage covert tactics on behalf of the employees. There are a few different ways that employees and their groups could be included in this process.

One alternative is the formation of a panel of ethics representatives.

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All organizational members would be allowed to vote for a seven person ethics panel. Panel members would be replaced after serving a two year term. Employees' votes would be private and solicited via an organizational ballot which would ask employees to list their top three choices for ethics representatives. The employees who received the most votes would serve as members of the panel. The role of the panel members would be to serve as voice pieces and organizers of an ethics structure which would guide the organization. Care must be given to ensure that ethics representatives are just that, representatives. The intent is that they represent the needs and goals of their constituencies. The panel members would also act as researchers gathering information to determine if organizational objectives and employee practices are in sync with the ethics structure outlined by the ethics representatives. The use of the term "ethics structure" is a deliberate effort to redefine the ethics process which in the past typically began and ended in a list of ethics mandates. The emphasis in this alternative is on process. The ethics representatives are active throughout the year. They aggressively solicit feedback and opinions from the employees. An important part of the ethics process is that all employees are able to speak to their representatives confidentially without fear of reprisal. Any written statement or understanding which delineates the responsibilities of management and employees will likely be modified as needs and goals change.

A second alternative much less involved, but also perhaps less effective is for an open floor discussion between managers and employees at a mandatory bi-annual Ethics, Needs and Fairness Meeting. At this bi-annual meeting employees would voice their concerns and problems with the
policies which govern them or other pertinent matters which could lead to conflicts of interest between employees, groups and the organization. For this format to be successful employees would have to be convinced that what they would say or reveal would not be held against them. This format would also require a skilled moderator to lead the discussion so that all facets of the organization could be heard. The opinions and concerns of the employees would then be part of the ethics structure of the organization. Again, the attendance at these meetings would be mandatory and the employees must be assured protection from retribution in order for this format to succeed.

A third alternative and perhaps the quickest, the manager simply appoints an ethics panel. In order for this alternative to be successful, the manager must make a deliberate attempt to select employees from among different cohesive groups found within the organization. It is important that the various groups be well represented in order to allow their needs and concerns to be voiced. Thereafter the manager must agree to let the ethics panel determine the ethics structure of the organization. Once this panel is formed it would operate like the panel described in the first alternative listed above. Each ethics representative would serve a two year term. At the conclusion of that term, the manager would select another person from the outgoing member's cohesive group. Managers must take care to truly identify cohesive groups and not make assumptions about common interests based on gender or age.

Suggestions for Further Research
Like all research, this dissertation answers some questions while raising still others. Presented here are three ideas for further ethics research efforts in public administration.

First, the bulk of this research has addressed the issue of what goes on between groups while forgoing the subject of what is happening within groups. These are two related but separate phenomena. The first investigation naturally leads to the second. More research needs to be done in both of these areas. Additional research is needed which explores the ethical differences between groups, especially those groups in close proximity. Why have these groups developed different norms in response to the same work environment? Why do they see their goals and threats to their well-being differently? What role does similar function play in producing similarities in ethical behavior? In reference to what is happening within groups: Are group members who perform similar functions more likely to have similar ethical behavior than group members who perform dissimilar functions? The few descriptive statistics that were available within this study indicate that similar function does play a role in creating more cohesive ethical norms. More research is needed which addresses what is happening between groups, as well as the issue of what is happening within groups.

Second, further research is needed to gage the influence of groups on the ethical behavior of individuals. Specifically, how exactly does an individual’s ethical behavior change after joining a cohesive group? In order to answer this question, a before and after research design is needed. Subjects could be obtained during the organization's orientation process and
given an ethics survey like the one contained within this text. After being with the organization for two years, subjects would be given the ethics survey again. Such a delay in the retest would control for any pretest sensitization while detecting changes in ethical behavior which occurred since orientation. Obviously, a cautious interpretation is key to this kind of ex post facto study.

Third, further efforts similar to this research need to be done in other organizational settings. Research in other settings is needed to further substantiate that the influences of group dynamics, gender, age and longevity in ethical behavior, and to ensure that these findings are consistent in alternative settings. One might argue that this study can only be generalized to a handful of other similar urban universities. It is the contention of this researcher, however, that these findings would hold true in other organizational settings within public administration. Some potential sites for additional research include a public health agency, a large library, a military setting or a police department. Such additional research would further test Fisk's Group Ethics theory and lend support to these findings. The challenge to ethics research is the acquisition of the necessary data.

The Challenges of Conducting Ethics Research

It was clear throughout the duration of this research that the topic of
ethics places the typical public employee on edge. Ask the public employee about his or her own ethical behavior and in most cases the researcher has a reluctant subject at best. It was this atmosphere of fear and suspicion which dominated this effort. In particular, the subjects' fears and suspicions had a profound effect on the data gathering and analysis. For instance, categorical data had to be used concerning the biographical information of the subjects such as age over 36/under 36, and longevity under six/over seven because subjects did not want their identities tied too closely to their answers. Even using categorical data, several subjects still refused to divulge any biographical information.

It can not be said that "ethical" subjects were any more willing to participate than "less ethical" subjects. The ethics surveys which were returned indicated a wide range of scores. In addition to the reluctance expressed about the survey answers, subjects were also anxious about the cohesive group questionnaires. In particular, they were concerned about listing the names of their coworkers despite numerous assurances that names would not be included in the intermediate or final documents. For those who agreed to participate in the Cohesive Group Questionnaire, 74 percent of them went on to complete the ethics survey, a surprisingly large percentage given the nature of the study and the sensitivity of the data.

Another challenge encountered with this study, both with the pretest subjects and interviewees was a resistance to accept even for the purposes of discussion, the Social View Ethics Paradigm. Pretest participants wanted to know if their scores were high or low, a question irrelevant to Social View Theory.
In order to deal with these challenges, ethics researchers must guarantee absolute anonymity to subjects. In addition, the researcher should in no way be connected with the organization which is under study. Lastly, participating subjects should be invited to a presentation of the research findings in order to waylay fears of misuse of information and loss of confidentiality.

In summary, groups are an important influence on the ethical behavior of individuals. Managers must formally recognize the existence of cohesive groups and their needs when developing the organizational ethics structure. To ignore the influence of groups is simply to drive their tactics and practices underground. While the influence of gender proved insignificant in this study, it is important to remember that an item by item analysis was not performed. It is possible that such an analysis could yield different responses between men and women in a given scenario. This possibility warrants further investigation. While further research on the influence of age is also desirable, the task of protecting the identities of the subjects makes this analysis difficult. The role of longevity of service on ethical behavior can not be ignored. The vested employee simply behaves differently than the novice employee. Philosophically speaking, the majority of subjects in this research expressed a belief in universal ethics, an absolute standard to which all could aspire. The survey responses, however, indicate most employees choose not to actually practice universal ethics. Lastly, it is important to note that this study explored Fisk's theory, but did not test it. The small sample size and the pattern of responses made a more rigorous test of Fisk's theory impossible within the parameters of this study.
Appendix One

Interviews: Profiles of Six Public Employees

Being successful in the private sector does not necessarily guarantee success in public service. What differentiates government service is its scope, impact, accountability and political nature. Public service is strongly influenced by the public employee. Public employees need to be able to deal with the wealthy and the powerful as well as the impoverished. Underlying all of this is the necessity of public employees to be loyal to the organization while remaining responsive to the needs of the public. These conflicting expectations often result in ethical dilemmas.

In order to identify the common ethical dilemmas that public employees face, six public employees were interviewed. These interviews became the foundation on which the ethics survey was based. Within these interviews are the voices of the public employees themselves. They represent various aspects of the public sector including federal, state, county and city governments. Understandably, none of the interviewees wanted his or her real name revealed, and so they are referred to in general terms only. In each instance, a structured interview took place. All participants were
asked to respond to the following questions:

**Interview Questions**

1. Are you more concerned about your own ethical behavior or the behavior of your employees/co-workers?

2. Is it your perception that unethical behavior is becoming more of or less of a problem within your organization?

3. What do you identify as the variables or causes which contribute to unethical behavior?

4. Do you think that you could identify a group (by using such variables as age, gender, ethnic background, longevity, seniority, education, etc.) which you believe would be likely to behave unethically?

5. What opportunities are present which encourage unethical behavior?

6. How do you think that unethical behavior could be best controlled within your organization? For instance; through education, punishment, awards, modeling, etc.

7. Can you think of an occasion where you chose what you consider to be an unethical response?
Public Employee Number One:
Military Officer. Male. Age 45. 21 years of service.

This subject believes and lives the "officer and a gentleman" concept. He credits his parents' "rigid and consistent" upbringing for being a major influence on his ethical behavior and beliefs. Today, he remains more concerned about with his own ethical behavior than the ethical behavior of his employees. He cites the potential for influencing his subordinates as the reason for his concern. As a senior military officer he feels that junior personnel look to him to set the standard. He feels he must live and exemplify that standard.

Surprisingly, this military officer believes that unethical behavior is less of a problem now than in recent years. Despite the headlines involving the incident at the now infamous Tailhook Convention, he believes that there is an increased sensitivity in today's military toward the rights and the welfare of others. The interviewee identified strong senior officer leadership as being responsible for the improvement in the ethical behavior of military employees. When asked if he felt like the officers as a whole were more ethical than enlisted personnel he replied that they were not. He also attributed the improvement in ethical behavior to the watchful eye of the media. People under scrutiny are less likely to behave unethically if they are going to be held accountable by the media for their actions.

Reasons for the remaining unethical behavior in the military include
senior officers who send mixed messages and perhaps the most common cause of unethical behavior is ignorance. Junior employees are simply not told what is expected of them. Employee Number One identified what he referred to as "little" things like telling employees they are expected to work hard, show up to work on time and follow orders. Sometimes just these simple instructions will turn a marginal employee into a productive and reliable worker.

All interviewees were asked if they believed that they could identify a group which they believed would be more likely to behave unethically. This public employee felt if he were to identify a group likely to have ethical problems it would be workers who grew up in single parent homes. He argued that many of "life's lessons" are lost in single parent situations. This reflected his belief that ethics are taught in the home and are well ensconced (or missing) by the time that young employees enter the workforce. Unethical behavior can be further encouraged by an indifferent work atmosphere and the ambiguous actions of supervisors. In addition to these variables, Employee One expressed concern that the ethnic background of an individual might also be a predictor of future unethical behavior.

At the conclusion of this interview, this particular public employee ruled out punishment as a means of controlling unethical behavior simply because he felt that it was too little too late. The behavior had already been reinforced. Instead, he felt that supervisors modeling expected behavior as well as an educational approach such as schooling employees on ethical behavior, were the two ways most likely to result in achieving ethical behavior.
When asked to relate an incidence in which he was faced with an ethical dilemma, this public employee was not able to identify an incident in which he behaved unethically. He did remember an incident in which as a married man he was presented with the opportunity of accepting the advances of an attractive female admirer. Several of his coworkers were present at the restaurant in which the event occurred. In the end, he declined. When asked why, he responded that with his subordinates present he felt a special responsibility to set the "proper standard" and be a positive role model. When asked what he would have done if his subordinates were not present, he smiled and replied, "I probably would have decided differently."

Public Employee Number Two:
Female. 47 years old. Assistant City Manager

Employee Number Two is employed by a small New England city as assistant city manager. Her primary duties include overseeing the financial aspects of city management as well as some additional duties within the realm of human resource management.

Upon beginning our discussion, this employee wanted to explain her own criteria for determining ethical behavior. Ethical behavior, she said, is an action which upon review would be appropriate as universal law or written public policy. When asked if there were informal operational practices that were acceptable but would not pass the written policy test, she replied those were situations in which those actions either became policy or are eliminated. She reasoned that this approach was necessary because she
dealt with five different city unions which were often in competition with one another. Informal arrangements, otherwise known as the favor system could not be tolerated and could only lead to future conflicts and disruptions.

As assistant city manager she has the opportunity to deal with blue collar, white collar, union and nonunion members. The diversity has provided a good contrast. While she supports that most workers are capable of ethical behavior only those who pursue a deliberate ethical philosophy will be successful in achieving it.

While many in public administration are arguing whether administrators can or should operate as a businesses, Employee Two argues that a business approach to city management is the corner stone of an ethical approach. She believes that those in city management should be ardent practitioner of the rational approach to decision making. She contends that "bottom line awareness" is simply part of an ethical rational method.

Like Employee One, she too, credits her family upbringing and church for shaping her ethical persona today. She seldom worries about her own actions which she largely believes to be ethical, but does spend considerable time worrying about the actions of other city employees with whom she associates. As an example she cited a recent case which involved one of the city's police officers.

The New England town in which she works offers employees worker's compensation benefits. The intent of this benefit is to provide injured workers financial support as they recover. One police officer while donning
his police shirt in the locker room felt a twinge in his back. The officer had a history of back problems caused by an earlier injury, a pre-existing condition. The officer filed for worker's compensation arguing that his latest injury occurred in the job. This assistant city manager questioned his request and called for further investigation. Ultimately, the request was denied, but not before the officer filed a grievance against the assistant city manager for requiring him to use his accrued sick leave. "Workers today are not less ethical," she said. "We are simply hearing more about it."

Although this manager was reluctant to make sweeping generalizations, she was quite definitive in saying that she believes middle to high level female executives are more ethical than other groups. She defended her opinion by saying that women who obtain high level positions have to more than equal to their male counterparts, they often have to be better. Women will commonly have more experience and be better prepared academically. She said women perhaps because many of them are primary child care providers, have learned to postpone their needs in favor of the family or the organization as a whole. Women work toward coming to a group consensus more than male managers and are more principled in their approach to solving daily problems. When asked if she could generalize about a group that tended to be unethical, she answered the younger employees under 35 were probably at greatest risk.

Environments which encourage unethical behavior are work situations in which supervision that ensures quality and completion of task is missing. Unions, she said, are prime examples of another environment which is ripe
for unethical behavior. Such behavior often starts with the influence of one or two unstable or disgruntled union members. "Management, on the other hand, is always guilty before being proven innocent."

Despite these pitfalls, Employee Two believes that in situation of "true negotiation" in which decision making is shared, an ethical and fair decision will usually result. She cautions, however, that this process can not be applied to all situations.

Ultimately, even seemingly ethical people are not without their faults. Employee Two admits to practicing the "debit and credit system" of ethical behavior.

"Sometimes I wake up at three o'clock in the morning and start thinking about problems at work. There are days when I work twelve and fourteen hours. I often work Saturdays as well. I don't think I need to feel guilty when I type my son's application on the company's computer. On the debit side of the journal I feel I'm okay. If anything, the city is ahead."

Public Employee Number Three:
City Employee. Police Department. Male. 44 years old.

Employee Number Three works as a civilian within the Police Records and Identification Department. He is the senior person in a department of six full time employees.

"I try to have high standards despite what others might think. We should all be examples to our co-workers. I want to be the kind of a person who is
known for being fair and getting the job done right.

This employee says he feels a special responsibility not only to his coworkers, but to the young delinquents who are brought in for processing. He often finds himself counseling young offenders even though it is not part of his official job description. Employee Three also says that he is more concerned about his own ethical standards than the standards of others.

"I am older than all the other employees in my department. People need an example of someone to look up to. I figure they will answer for their own unethical behavior."

Where it is possible he steps in to school younger less experienced workers who he says can have difficulty distinguishing right from wrong. Possible ethical lapses include "slacking off" or doing less than possible, and not doing their work properly. Interestingly, to this employee, a poor work performance is an unethical performance. Neat spaces and an orderly work environment are also parts of an ethical workplace.

Unlike the first two employees, this interviewee believes unethical behavior is on the rise. He cites poor leadership as one of the causes, but more importantly he feels strongly that the largest contributing factor is the unreasonable workload which has resulted from budget reductions and hiring freezes. There are literally not enough workers to accomplish the tasks and responsibilities which are assigned to them. People cut corners, he said, employees are rude to each other and the citizens they are supposed to serve. An 'I-don't-care' attitude prevails. Besides the decline in the quality of work, there are other visible symptoms of unethical behavior. Workers are abusing the sick leave policy and arriving late to work.
Interestingly, employees in the department have even begun dressing differently than when the work load was less. Men have stopped wearing ties. One female employee was recently sent home to change when she wore shorts to work. Employee Three admitted to dressing more casually though he says he stops short of violating policy. The prevailing sentiment seems to be: why should I try to look good in a situation like this? Who is going to notice? Who is going to care?

Though Employee Three says that he is hesitant to generalize, his experience he says has lead him to believe that certain female ethnic groups tend to be less ethical than other groups.

"They know that they can get away with it. Supervisors are afraid to say anything to them because there are afraid of EEO lawsuits. These workers are granted more leeway than other workers."

He also identified younger employees as ethical risks. He believe this is due largely to ignorance; they simply do not know right from wrong. He contends that our ideas of right and wrong come from our families. Despite this, he argues that adults should be able to operate independently of receiving the "wrong data" from their families. Employees possess a kind of self determination which makes them ultimately responsible for their own actions.

Of the various methods to control unethical behavior he believes that clearly defined and strict punishments would work the best. These punishments could take the form of docking pay, taking away vacation or suspension. Ideally, he believes that we should encourage ethical behavior
by recognizing outstanding performances.

"We enter with high hopes and high expectations. When recognition is missing this can lead to real trouble."

Employee Three recounted a recent incident in which he recognizes that his behavior was unethical. It began with what he viewed to be a marginal performance by one of the new employees. The new worker repeatedly left some of his work unfinished at the end of every shift. This was work that Employee Three later had to finish for him. City policy is such that workers are not required or expected to complete unfinished work beyond their normal work hours. Although Employee Three was aware of this policy he purposely spoke to the new employee in such a way that the new worker would stay beyond his normal work hours, uncompensated, and finish the task at hand. He acknowledges that although he didn't exactly tell the employee he had to stay, he purposely left his statement ambiguous so that the junior employee might misunderstand and stay to finish his work.

"I realize that I shouldn't have done it, but I was sick of this guy not doing his work."

Employee Number Four:
Female. Age 42. Public Librarian

Employee Four said she gives little thought to ethics on a daily basis.

"I set high standards for myself. I have gone to work with the flu. I lose
out on a lot of sick leave because I refuse to let my coworkers short of help. I think about the good of the whole. I put pressure on myself. It amazes me when people don't perform to their utmost."

She attributes her ethical philosophy largely to her catholic upbringing. She asserts that as a whole catholics are more ethical than the typical person. When she does think about ethics she finds herself more concerned about her own behavior than the behavior of others. In her position as a public librarian she received one of the few perfect evaluations given within her region.

"It amazes me. It's like someone saying 'hey! you're doing a good job' even on days when I feel like I wasn't."

Employee Four says the level of cooperation achieved in her Washington D.C. Metropolitan Library was and is highly unusual. Unethical behavior was never a problem. When asked to explain the high level of cooperation and ethical behavior, she found it difficult.

"I'm not sure. It is very unusual. The branch manger galvanized everyone. She speaks very well. She has frequent and productive staff meetings. The communication flowed. You never had to wonder what was going on. She was willing to interact with her subordinates. She shared meals with us. We also received a lot of training. I felt like we were striving toward a common goal. Subsequent financial constraints were the only thing that ever seemed to muddy the waters. Layoffs started to be discussed. The morale might have gone done during that period of time but the ethical standards remained constant."

Even in this apparent idyllic environment there are still opportunities and impetuses for unethical behavior. For instance, librarians are in a
position to weed out books which are personally abhorrent to them. For instance, eliminating books on hunting or abortion. It is also possible to provide preferential treatment to friends when it comes time to pay for overdue books. Since libraries are service organizations, librarians are also in a position to discriminate against patrons who are viewed as less desirable. It is also possible for librarians to violate the trust of private information requests or the confidentiality of one's record. This librarian also says that "stopping short of your utmost to help someone" is also unethical.

Employee Four was asked to identify the causes that would lead to unethical behavior.

"Several thing really. Harmless curiosity for one. It can make you snoop in someone's record. Ignorance or purposeful disregard of policies or procedures. For example, imagine that you would like to know more about your new neighbor. You would simply access his file. You find out that he has been checking out a lot of books about divorce. That's a pretty good indication of what is going on in someone's life. Imagine that the local catholic priest is one of your patrons. You access his file and find out that he has been reading a lot of Harold Robbins' books. You could really do a number with that information!"

When asked to identify a group that she felt would be a risk for unethical behavior she stated quite definitively, young people below the age of 35. "I can just see the young doctors of today; 'let's pull the plug on this one, she taking up entirely too much room!' Young people today lack the work ethic." When asked if she thought education, gender or ethnic background might play
a role she said no.

"If you are unethical it is not because you are asian or hispanic. It's inaccurate to say that for instance blacks are ethical but hispanics are not. The more you interact with people the more you realize that race is not a factor when it comes to performance or ethical behavior. I do work with a lot of women though and this might skew my perceptions. Maybe it is possible that women are more ethical than men."

This librarian doesn't believe that unethical behavior can be controlled or influenced. "Either it is with you or not." She did believe that ethical behavior could be reinforced through education or modeling. "Punishment," she said, "will only make people sneakier." Still Employee Four remains unconvinced that much can be done to control unethical behavior in the work environment.

Employee Four related a situation in which she faced an ethical dilemma.

"My son's teacher was an odd duck. I instinctively didn't like her. Imagine, she didn't think my son was wonderful! Coincidently, she was also a patron at my library. I really wanted to check her out. You know, see what kind of book she was reading or if she had made any special requests. I didn't do it but I sure thought long and hard about it. in the end, i knew i would only be letting myself down."
Public Employee Number Five:  
Public Health Supervisor. Female. Age 37.

“Ethical behavior is not just about the influence that you have on other people, it's about the ultimate effect that your actions have on yourself.”

This public employee believes that her upbringing in the catholic church has been a major influence on her ethical behavior today. She contends that the catholic "rituals" and daily practices create a strong commitment in its followers. She believes that few other religions create this kind of moral and ethical responsibility.

Employee Five spends more time scrutinizing her own ethical behavior than the behaviors of others. She says that it is a question of trust. It is important to retain the trust of her subordinates. On the occasions when she has observed unethical behavior she says that she is not always compelled to do something about it.

“Sometimes when you report things your car ends up being scratched. It has to be worth it. I'm not going to risk my car or myself for some small infraction.”

Employee Five sees unethical behavior as being on the rise. The public health employees in her region have not had a pay raise in a long time. She says that the pay is so low that the workers have an attitude of 'go ahead and fire me; you'll never get anyone else to work for what you're paying me.' Unethical behavior has taken the form of people calling in sick when they
are well, poor quality of work, resistance to change, coming in late and an excessive amount of time spent on the phone engaged in personal conversations. "People mumble under their breath a lot. They don't care who hears them."

Employee Five sees several causes which contribute to this kind of behavior.

"First, we have had no pay raises. In addition, management does not even act when unethical behavior is observed. We no longer hold people responsible for their own actions." Perhaps most interestingly, this public employee contends that legislation such as Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action has been a major contributor to unethical behavior. Such unethical outcomes may not have been the intent of the legislation, she argues, but it has been the result. Certain minority groups push the outer limits of ethical behavior with their actions and their unprofessional appearances.

"For instance, public health nurses with their nails so long they can no longer do their jobs. How are you supposed to take care of patients like that? They also wear skin tight clothing so that they are unable to bend over. Even though supervisors receive complaints from workers and patients alike they still refuse to fire them or even reprimand them because they are afraid of EEO lawsuits. An unprofessional appearance is unethical especially when it keeps you from doing your job, but nothing is being done about it.

This supervisor believes that minority groups who are protected by such legislation are the people who are most likely to behave unethically. She argues that what might have been a good idea in the beginning, EEO has now
gone askew. The fears of supervisors have left these minority groups totally unaccountable.

"I work with a lot of patients who are ADC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children recipients) and welfare clients. I think those of us who work in public health have realized that these welfare programs have failed." She contends that programs like Affirmative Action have created a kind of learned incompetency.

Employee Five supports punishment as a short term solution to unethical behavior though she feels the results will only bring temporary relief. To improve unethical behavior in the long term she believes that an educational process should take place. Mid-level and upper-level managers need to be targeted in particular. She contends that managers need to identify the reasons that employees behave unethically. What is it that motivates unethical behavior. Only then, she says, can we change the behavior of employees for the better.

Employee Five reports that she recently engaged in what she knows the organization would view as unethical behavior. "I provided services to a patient free of charge. I feel that the working poor need a break sometimes." It seems ironic that an action the organization views as unethical is perhaps in the larger scheme of things a very ethical act.
PublicEmployeeNumberSix
Male. Faculty Member in an Urban University. Age 51.

This final interviewee is unconcerned with his own ethical behavior because he says he does not try to "hide things".

"What worries me is how difficult it is to obtain the truth from people who are supposed to our leaders. I see three distinct groups within this university setting: the tenure committee, chairmen/senior administrators and then you have your friends. The problem is you can not get the complete truth from either of the first two groups. Instead, they just placate you with half truths."

Employee Six credits his "Christian background" and the upbringing provided by his grandmother as the major forces shaping his ethical behavior.

"My grandmother taught me good will and fellowship. These are good rules to work by. I believe in the golden rule. Still, I realize that that I am not aggressive enough. I can't stab people in the back and sometimes that is what it takes to move ahead in this academic environment."

This faculty member believes that the academic environment lags behind the ethical behavior of other public agencies.

"The problem is the tenure system. It leaves members who are tenured unaccountable. Before we can improve the ethical behavior of our faculty we have to change the tenure system." Employee Six believes that unethical behavior results when there is a conflict between the environment one desires and the environment in which one must actually operate.
"In short, I think that we change our environments to suit our own personal needs. If we want more free time then we stop spending time with our students or we don't show up to office hours. We know that we should be objective when we grade exams and papers, but how objective can we be when we are tired? Much of the lack of enthusiasm comes from having too many students. Advanced classes which are too large are especially problematic because you are supposed to give those students extra attention and their assignment even take longer to grade. You have to cut a lot of corners in order to get your work done and that's when unethical behavior occurs"

Within the academic area Employee Six believes that tenured professors are at greatest risk for being unethical. "No one controls them. They seem to have the idea that they can't do anything wrong." Unlike the other interviewees, Employee Six believes that the youth of today are more ethical than previous generations. He feels that the young people in his college classes today have more of a social conscience than students of the past.

This faculty member contends that it is impossible to control the unethical behavior of faculty and administrators. He states that the modeling approach would be completely ineffective because faculty members are completely autonomous. He identifies several things that can be done, however, to improve ethical behavior. First and foremost is to revamp the tenure system, evaluating all faculty regardless of seniority, reviewing student evaluations and creating a peer review process.

Lastly, Employee Six relayed an incident in which he says that he behaved
unethically. He had the opportunity to report two students who were cheating, but didn't.

"I even had a witness, but I didn't want to pursue it. I guess I took the easy way out."

**Common Themes Found Within the Interviews**

Despite the diversity of the interviewee some common themes can be uncovered.

**The Workload Factor**

One of the most common themes was that a heavy workload made workers want to give up and at times retaliate for what they viewed as an impossible situation. Employee Two first voiced this concern when she alluded to the extra hours she spent trying to solve problems at work. Twelve hour days were not unusual for her. Employee Three within the Police Department very clearly felt distressed over his workload so much so he tried to intimidate a new worker into carrying his fair share of the load. This problem resurfaced again with Employee Six at the university. He says he simply has too many students which makes doing a good job impossible. There is a feeling of hopelessness. Workers must examine their priorities. Often concepts like fairness, objectivity and quality do not end up at the top of the priority list.
Groups Perceived As More Likely to be Unethical

One half of the interviewees expressed concern that ethnic background was a factor in predicting unethical behavior. Whether these ethnic groups are truly less ethical is debatable. Perhaps what is more likely is that these groups may have different ethical priorities than their majority counterparts. Such differences are in keeping with Fisk's Group Ethics Theory and Liebert's belief that different experiences create different moral judgements. It is reasonable to assume that individuals who belong to ethnic minority groups such as blacks, hispanics, asians, etc would have different experiences as a result of varying cultures as well as the experience of adapting to a society in which policy making positions are still dominated by white males. Having offered this possible explanation for these perceived differences, one must exercise extreme caution in accepting the perceptions and assumptions of the interviewees as "fact". The survey utilized in this research did not test for the variable of ethnic membership and so conclusions cannot be made concerning the ethnic issue raised by the interviewees.

Another descriptor cited by nearly all of the interviewees as likely to predict unethical behavior was age. Young employees were consistently regarded as the group most likely to be unethical. It is important to note that the ages of the interviewees varied from 37-51 years of age with the majority of the workers in their forties. Nearly all of them identified workers in their twenties and early thirties as "high risk" groups. Again,
this finding is in line with Fisk’s theory that different needs and interests create different ethical behaviors. Every interviewee believed that young employees under the age of 35 were on a different plane in regards to ethical behavior. Only Employee Six believed that younger employees were more ethical than their older more "corrupt" counterparts. Virtually every interviewee believed that different ages resulted in different ethical behaviors. Kohlberg would probably contend that these differences were due to the subjects being in different stages of moral development, but Fisk would argue that this disparity existed because the groups simply had different survival needs and developed ethical standards accordingly. The interviewees all regarded the younger employees as being less reliant, more frivolous and less dedicated to the organization. In comparison, the older employees believed themselves to be more concerned about the welfare of the organization and the quality of the services they provided, attributes they believed to be missing in the younger coworkers. It is very possible that younger employees typically do have different interests than older employees. They may view their present positions as stepping stones to future more lucrative positions. They may also be more concerned with training opportunities or networking possibilities to further enhance their growing careers. Older employees over the age of 35 have already explored many of these issues which are of concern to the younger employee. Fisk Group Ethics Theory would suggest that these different interests create different ethical responses.
The Question of Pay

Dissatisfaction with pay was spoken of over and over again in these interviews. The belief that pay raises would not be forthcoming brought great frustration and anger. This was especially apparent in the statement of the Police Department employee and the Public Health supervisor. The sentiment seemed to be "what is there to look forward to'? Not uncommon in these situations is the system that the assistant city manager spoke of as the "debit and credit system" of ethics. Workers simply take what they feel they are owed until the ledger is viewed as balanced. When salaries fall short; sick days, company cars and illegitimate charges to the expense account makeup for the shortfall. In the long run, the organization loses both people and money.

When Organizational Policy is in Conflict with the Public Good

It is interesting to note the dichotomy which is present in the interview with the public health supervisor. Public health clinics exist to serve those who could not otherwise afford health care. Patients pay according to their incomes. Often it is the working poor who are caught somewhere in "no-man's land" not qualifying for assistance and not being able to afford medical care. The columnist William Rasberry recently asked the question: when Americans are going to stop trying to fit people to the system and start fitting systems to the people? Public employees caught in this situation of trying to uphold organizational policy to the detriment of their
clients' needs face a special dilemma. They are forced to choose between their organization and the clients they are supposed to serve. In choosing the interests of the clients they often put themselves at risk. Many of our organizational policies need to be reviewed. Until then, choosing the client over the organization may be the most ethical act of all.

Lastly, the honesty of the interviewees was impressive. It was obvious that ethics and a sense of fairness were very much in the minds of these interviewees. It was also clear that each individual's ethics was strongly influenced by his or her experiences and environments. This was especially apparent when interviewees were asked to identify groups which were likely to be unethical. Overall, there seemed to be a genuine desire to be ethical and to be public managers that their subordinates could respect. Even the best of intentions, however, get lost in the conflicting expectations of the work environment.
Appendix Two

Ethics Survey

Directions: Provided are twenty common scenarios which are encountered by employees every day. Please read each situation and indicate how likely you are to engage in each practice listed below.

Very Likely Somewhat Likely Borderline Somewhat Unlikely Very Unlikely
1  2 3 4 5
(or please indicate "N" for not applicable)

1. Accessing information about acquaintances using company records or computer files.

2. Letting work go unfinished to be completed on another day even though you could have finished the work on an earlier day.

3. Occasional use of the copy machine for personal use.

4. Using computers or typewriters at work for personal letters, homework, job applications, etc.

5. Setting goals above what is possible in order to motivate employees.

6. Hiring friends or family for positions within the organization.

7. Discussing another's private salary or privileged information with a coworker.
8. Being exceptionally friendly or flirting to increase the chances of receiving a favorable evaluation or promotion.

9. Copying computer software and taking it home.

10. Calling in sick when you want a day off.

11. Using company supplies or materials for personal use.

12. Taking extended or unusually long personal breaks.

13. Applying for workmen's compensation for an injury which actually occurred off the job.

14. Exaggerating your qualifications to gain a position or a promotion.

15. Recommending a relative's company for contracts or services.

16. Ignoring theft of a coworker. (Assume the theft is less than $25 of merchandise)

17. Ignoring the theft of a coworker. (Assume the theft is greater than $25 of merchandise)

18. Providing substandard products or services.

19. Pretending to agree with the boss in order to gain his or her favor.

20. Failing to ask for help or supervision when you lack the knowledge necessary to complete a task.
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Dear Participant,

This very short survey concludes my research for my doctoral degree dissertation. I thank you most sincerely for your help so far. Your assistance has made a major difference in my progress in this final stage.

At this time, I ask that you fill out this survey (it should take no more than two minutes) by circling the number which corresponds with your answer. PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ANYWHERE ON THIS SURVEY. I AM LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE TO ENSURE THAT YOUR IDENTITY IS KEPT COMPLETELY SECRET AND UNASSOCIATED WITH YOUR ANSWERS. SO PLEASE ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS HONESTLY, BUT DO NOT PLACE YOUR NAME ON THE SURVEY. This is your chance to say how you really feel about these issues. I am very interested in your responses.

Once you have completed the survey, place your completed survey in the Research Drop Box temporarily located in your office. Please respond within 24 hours of receiving this survey. I will pick the drop boxes up at that time. If you have any questions about this research please feel free to call me at 594-7215. As always, you may elect not to participate, but your assistance would be invaluable to me. ANONYMITY IS GUARANTEED.

Sincerely,

Patricia B. Strait
Instructor of Management and Marketing
Christopher Newport University
Dear Participant,

This visit represents stage one of my research. At this time I ask that you provide me with the following information. (Remember your name will not appear anywhere in the final document and your answers will remain strictly confidential. At NO time will your supervisor or coworkers be aware of your answers.)

Name:________________________________

Sex __________________________

Years of service with this institution __________

Department ________________________________

Please identify coworkers with whom you associate. (Association may be characterized by frequent interactions both at work or away from work, shared breaks/lunches, people you prefer to work with or coworkers with whom you share informal information about the organization.) List them in the order in which you prefer them with number one representing your most favored coworker (the one you interact with the most).

1. _______________________________________

2. _______________________________________

3. _______________________________________

4. _______________________________________

5. _______________________________________

Note: Only list those with whom you prefer and enjoy interacting. Do NOT list people with whom you are only mildly acquainted.
Dear Supervisor,

During the next two weeks I will be conducting research in conjunction with my doctoral dissertation tentatively entitled *The Influence of Cohesive Groups on the Ethical Behavior of Public Employees*. My entire research will take place on the campus of Christopher Newport University. The research will be done in two phases. Phase one will require that subjects fill out a short questionnaire. The time involved for phase one will take less than five minutes. If your department is chosen for phase two of the research, participating subjects will be asked to fill out a very brief survey about their ethical practices and beliefs as well as answer approximately four interview questions.

In all cases, the responses and the identities of the subjects will be kept completely confidential. None of the names of the participants will be used in the final dissertation document.

Your assistance with this research project would be most sincerely appreciated.

I will be contacting you by phone shortly to answer any questions that you might have about this procedure.

Sincerely,

Patricia B. Strait
Instructor of Management
Christopher Newport University
End Notes


7. Margaret Strait, Internal Auditor, Fannie Allen Hospital, (Burlington Vermont, August 1, 1991) Interview.


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Vermont, August 1, 1991


About the Author

Patricia Bellin Strait was born in Cleveland, Ohio and spent the early part of her childhood in Upstate New York. At age twelve she and her family moved to San Diego, California where she remained until she graduated from La Jolla High School in 1976. Ms. Strait joined the United States Navy in the summer of 1976 and spent four years as an air traffic controller. After obtaining her Bachelor of Arts Degree from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia she assumed various positions within airport management. In 1986 Ms. Strait received her Master of Science Degree in Management from Salve Regina Newport University in Newport, Rhode Island. Soon after she served as an instructor of management for Old Dominion University for a period of three years. In 1990, Ms. Strait began the Ph.D. program in Urban Management at Old Dominion University and was nominated to the National Honor Society for Public Affairs and Administration. In the summer of 1993, Ms. Strait finished the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree with a concentration in Urban Management. Today, she is a member of the faculty at Christopher Newport University in the state of Virginia.