An Ethics of Care or an Ethics of Justice

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ABSTRACT. A conflict within the community of those investigating business ethics is whether decision makers are motivated by an ethics of justice or an ethics of caring. The proposition put forward in this paper is that ethical orientations are strongly related to cultural backgrounds. Specifically, Hofstede's cultural stereotyping using his masculine-feminine dimension may well match a culture's reliance on justice or caring when decisions are made. A study of college graduates from six countries showed that Hofstede's dimension was remarkably accurate in predicating a justice or caring orientation for decision makers from five of the six countries.

KEY WORDS: business ethics, caring, feminine, Hofstede, justice, masculine

The survival of mankind will depend to a large extent on the ability to act together. International collaboration presupposes some understanding of where others' thinking differs from ours. Exploring the way in which nationality predisposes our thinking is therefore not an intellectual luxury.

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The preceding quote comes from the opening lines of Hofstede's (1980) text on culture and work related values. His study of business people's values in 40 countries revealed four dimensions on which cultures differed. One of those four dimensions he labeled masculinity-femininity. His description of femininity as nuturance parallels the description given by Gilligan (1982) in her call for an approach to ethics based on caring.

Ethical conflicts in business are unlikely to diminish as transactions become more globalized. Understanding cultural values that underlie these conflicts is a precondition for resolving them (Habermas, 1990). Is an appeal to nurturing or caring the way to approach members of some cultures? There are those who would answer no to that question. They question the rigor of the research upon which Gilligan advances the notion of an ethics of care (Rest, 1986). Using the writings of Plato, Kant, Rawls and Kohlberg as grounding they claim that an ethics of justice provides an adequate basis for evaluating moral decisions.

An ethics of justice

An ethics of care focuses on character traits such as sympathy, compassion, and friendship. These are social virtues. An ethics of justice, in contrast, places a premium on individual autonomous choice and equality. Variations of this theory, i.e., distributive justice, libertarian justice, encompass notions of balancing rights and responsibilities. A more social variation of an ethics of justice is offered by Walzer (1983). He believes the principles of justice are the product of particular cultures. It follows from his observations that

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some cultures may stress individualistic approaches to justice while others would take a more community focused approach.

Apart from the individualistic vs. community dimension of justice a second dimension is worth noting. Ethics of justice theories appear to take one of three perspectives, focusing on principles, purposes or results. These perspectives align respectively with deontological, teleological and consequentialist ethics. Some authors stress moral principles in the form of obligations (deontos). The work of Rawls (1971) dealing with procedure exemplifies this approach. Other authors look at the purpose (telos) of and intentions behind an act. They are less concerned with procedures and more interested in the consequences of an act – the surrogate measure of fulfilled intentions. The principle behind most Western theories of justice appears to be that of equity (a characteristic of Hofstede's masculinity dimension) which, in turn, is driven by merit not by care or nuturance. The exception is the pure egalitarian theory which is driven by people's needs, usually economic needs. The pure egalitarian theory as well as the communitarian approach to justice which stresses societal virtues are more akin to an ethics of care than to a distributive ethics of justice.

An ethics of caring

Tronto (1993) argues that care can serve as both a moral value and the basis of societal achievement. She finds fault with Kant's disengaged approach to morality. Community harmony is the goal she attributes to morality – a goal attained by a care ethic. Lyons (1988) postulates that those who view the self as separated from others (a partial description of Hofstede's masculinity dimension) are likely to advocate a morality based on justice. In contrast, she claims that those who see the self connected to others are likely to advocate a morality based on care.

Waithe (1989) traces an ethics of caring back to the writings of Aristotle and notes that an ethics of justice has been the prevailing Western approach for only the last several centuries (Baier, 1987). MacIntyre (1984), in turn, with his interest in virtue and concern for others, strongly embraces an ethics of care.

If the ethics of care has one major benefit for those confronted with ethical problems in business, that benefit is its flexibility. Reitner (1996) points out that contrasted with an ethics of justice, an ethics of care allows for creative resolution of ethical conflicts. Following rules is secondary to preserving relationships.

Gilligan's break from an ethics of justice was explained in her text entitled *In a Different Voice*. As Seigfried (1989) points out that "different voice" is not necessarily confined to women. An ethics of caring or nuturance extends to men as well and is influenced by social, political and economic contexts. Her claim meshes well with Hofstede's findings that an emphasis on care for others rather than concentration on our autonomous self (to which Lyons has attributed an ethics of justice) marks the societal cultures which he has labeled as feminine.

Hofstede's findings, though, do not mesh with the conclusions drawn by Rest (1986) when reporting the intercultural applications of his text on moral reasoning. His results, plus other metaanalytic research findings (Thoma, 1984), support the view that the prevailing grounding for moral judgments is that of an ethics of justice. Yet, Rest does not rule out the possibility that some concept other than justice can provide a strong basis for explaining cross cultural ethical decisions.

Cultural considerations

If one takes the position that ethical questions arise because of conflicts of interests (Baier, 1965) and that the goal of moral discussion should be to resolve those conflicts (Habermas, 1990) then cultural approaches to moral discussion should be considered in tandem with cultural predispositions toward justice or caring. Hall (1981, 1990) notes that the context in which communications are delivered varies significantly between countries. He uses the designation's high-context (HC) and low-context (LC) communication cultures.

What makes these HC-LC distinctions impor-

tant is Habermas' admonition that moral discussion can't be successful without an understanding of underlying cultural values. This may be an obstacle when a LC party negotiates with a less than forthcoming HC party. Since "HC actions are by definition rooted in the past, slow to change, and highly stable" Hall (1989, p. 93), the LC party had best make the effort to discover the HC party's value structure. The HC person appears to be less rule driven allowing for some bending of the rules to reconcile the problem. This effort to understand the other party's reasoning and the particulars of the situation lead one to believe that an ethics of caring may be more typical than a pure deontological form of an ethics of justice in HC cultures.

The investigation

There is, however, an alternative position to the one taken by Hofstede on different cultural values and by Gilligan and Rest on an ethics of caring versus an ethics of justice. It is one put forward by Ohmae (1990). This alternative position is a pragmatic one. Simply stated, it is that all countries seriously engaged in international commerce will move toward a similar set of business values. If this is true, traditional value differences between negotiators from different countries will be superceded by the desire to resolve conflicts. This implies that business people from these countries, especially younger people, will suppress traditional deontological values and take a teleological or consequentialist approach to resolving ethical conflicts. This is one of the assumptions that is investigated in the following sections.

To focus the investigation on the issues raised in the previous paragraphs, the following propositions were posed:

Proposition 1: Negotiators from countries whose cultures were labeled as feminine as contrasted with negotiators whose cultures were labeled as masculine in the Hofstede classification scheme will express values more in line with an ethics of caring than with an ethics of meritarian justice.

Proposition 2: Negotiators from high communication context cultures as contrasted with negotiators from low communication context cultures, when negotiating ethical issues with a party from a low communication context culture, will make a greater effort than the opposing party to understand the other party's moral stance.

By analyzing the discourse of negotiators from different cultures which embody Hofstede's and Hall's distinctions of masculinity-femininity and high-low communications contexts evidence can be brought forward to support these propositions. What is needed, then, are moral issues which produce conflict and can be the subject of negotiation.

Research method

The moral issues that were chosen for negotiation were selected from a set of six issues which Kurtines (1989) had created for the purpose of encouraging moral discourse. He labeled those issues: "Fair Day's Pay," "You Broke It – You Bought It," "Lying," "Breaking a Promise," "Stealing," and "Punishment." The subjects who were paired to negotiate resolutions to these issues had chosen conflicting positions on two issues. Each pair of subjects negotiated those two issues.

Each negotiating pair came from different countries. The countries represented by the 60 subjects were France, Germany, Turkey, India, China and the U.S.A. (Hofstede had classified three – Germany, India and the U.S.A. as being high on his masculine dimension. Hall, in turn, had depicted only Germany and the U.S.A. as low communication context cultures. A synopsis of the values endemic to each of those countries is presented at the end of this section.) None of the subjects had knowledge of either contextual communications theory or the procedures of discourse ethics. All, though, had some training in negotiation techniques. Each of the subjects possessed a university degree and, after experience in the workplace, had returned to a university setting for graduate training in business.

The high communication context subjects were classified according to Hall's cultural descriptions and Hofstede's national identifications. Hofstede's masculine-feminine cultural classification system was also used to identify subjects' predispositions toward an ethics of justice versus an ethics of caring. Americans were paired with representatives from each of the other five countries. There were six representatives from each of those other countries. Each pair of negotiators were provided an audio tape and tape recorder. They were instructed to try and resolve the two issues over which they expressed conflicting views. A minor reward was offered to the negotiators for their participation, based on the sincerity of their efforts rather than on the success of their conflict resolution.

To assess the merit of the second research proposition, an extension of the Kurtines and Pollard (1989) moral discourse classification scheme was used. See Exhibit 1. Each negotiator's comment, following or preceding the other negotiator's comments became the unit of analysis. Two judges, each from a different low communications context-masculine culture, evaluated the negotiators' comments using Kurtines' taxonomy. Discrepant evaluations by the judges were resolved after a joint reanalysis of the data. The negotiators' comments that relate to the first research proposition will be presented as synthesized comments.

The two research propositions, although logically deduced from the literature are advanced with some trepidation. Change is endemic to all cultures, although some faster than others. There is emerging evidence that Hofstede's masculine-feminine dimension of culture and its demonstration in justice versus caring may be blending in some countries, especially among younger business people. If this is true, Habermas' worries about cultural value misunderstandings become moot and the potential for a common platform for intercultural business ethics gets closer to reality. That change, as it applies to the countries represented by the negotiators acting as subjects in this research, is summarized below.

France

To point out the uniqueness of the French national character, the following observation has been advanced. In France everything is permitted, even that which is forbidden (Hofstede, 1980). This observation underlines the pragmatic attitude the French people have toward life and the principles that guide it.

In his survey of European values and norms

EXHIBIT 1
Stages of sociomoral discussions

Non-productive Discussion – Statements not relative to the negotiations
Ordinary Communicative Action 1 – Statement of position
Ordinary Communicative Action 2 – Statement of interests/reasons
Ordinary Communicative Action 3 – Statement of moral values
***Reflective Communicative Action 0** – Elicitation of the other's stance
***Reflective Communicative Action 1** – Restatement of the other's position
***Reflective Communicative Action 2** – Restatement of the other's interests/reasons
***Reflective Communicative Action 3** – Restatement of the other's moral values
Integrative Communicative Action 0 – Elicitation of a new stance
Integrative Communicative Action 1 – Statement of a new position
Integrative Communicative Action 2 – Statement of a new position based on original interests/reasons
Integrative Communicative Action 3 – Statement of new interests/reasons for a new position
Integrative Communicative Action 4 – Statement of a new position based on original values
Integrative Communicative Action 5 – Statement of a new position based on new values

* Indicates statements pertinent to research proposition 2.

Meulemann (1995) found that only 57% of the respondents (the lowest portion among Europeans) mentioned that traditional moral institutions were of importance to them. Underlining this research finding is the fact that the traditional institutions, like church, political parties, workers' unions, have lost their coordination function in society (Les Coordinations) which they held for a long time as intermediaries between state and citizens, thus leading to the highly conflictual nature of social relations in France today (Corbett, 1994).

Yet, 50% of the French people belong to an association of one kind or another, potentially making the solidarite' trait a powerful force in French society. One may be led to conclude then that the French are collectivist in nature rather than being motivated by individualism or the idea of justice. In truth, France is a nation that has a very multifaceted national character. Hofstede sees France as a "feminine" or caring society accepting authority, ". . . but only insofar as it allows them to be individualistic and buffers them from life's uncertainty so that a high equality of life can be maintained" (Gannon, 1994, p. 95).

When it comes to a choice between justice vs. caring, it seems that the French and their actions are motivated by both: an ethics of caring, especially when it comes to the idea of solidarite, and an ethics of justice when individual claims are addressed.

Germany

Current discussion of values that guide the behavior of Germans reveals the phrases "Wertewandel" (change of values) and "Werteverfall" (decay of values), which depict the impact the individualization of society has on the commonly held value patterns. For example, Doenhoff (1998) warns that support for guiding principles such as law, morality, and honesty is in the process of decay.

Darendorf (1997) disagrees claiming that the values of personal and institutional freedom will prevail if only to assure competitive viability within a global business environment. Still, . . . "Germans are like many other peoples who manifest inconsistent and contradictory values . . ." (Gannon, 1994). Beck (1998) proposes the term "Wertekonflikt" (conflict of values), to describe the present situation of the Germany society. Perhaps, this conflict is embodied in recent research (Wuthnow, 1998) which reveals that the present generation is attempting to balance social responsibility with individual well being.

While Germans of today still seem to be guided primarily by individualistic rather than by communitarian values, traditional institutions and values seem to have lost their impact on the majority of the society. Still, rules and the importance of order are strong motivators of behavior and conformity is expected. Justice and especially institutional justice have not lost their importance in supporting ideas of self-actualization, but altruistic motives also beginning to play an increasing role in everyday life.

Turkey

Turkey represents a blending of old and new, East and West. Inherent in this blending for the "patriotic Turk" is the Kemalistic notion of modernity, which strives to "transform the nation culturally while at the same time retaining its distinctiveness" (Kadioglu, 1996). In this transformation, encounters between East and West result not in reciprocal exchanges but in the decline of the weaker, typified in the Middle East by the decline of the Islamic identity (Goele, 1997).

This approach toward modernization aimed at Western orientation has been criticized by groups that are tolerant toward religious images and ideas founded in Islam, while the "secular Westernists are (. . .) becoming more and more hostile to religious images by relying on and commodifying the image of Mustafa Atatuerk" (Kadioglu, 1996).

Tradition, and especially traditional institutions like family and religion still play an important role in today's Turkey. "In Turkey, one belongs to a few groups, but group affiliation is very important. A Turk's identity is largely determined by the group, such as the family, school group

or work group (. . .)." This group affiliation displays itself in the subordination of the individual's goals to those of the group. "There is a reliance on, trust of, and sharing among the members of the group but mistrust of outsiders (Dindi et al., 1989)." This tendency reflects an ethics of caring more than it does an ethics of justice. To care for the well-being of the affiliated "others" is not only expected, but is also the responsibility of every Turk.

India

As in the case with other countries, moral values in Indian businesses appear to be in a state of flux. Gupta (1994) claims that India is second to none when it comes to an erosion of cultural values. Narasimhan (1994) concurs and notes that within India there is a strong perception of widespread corruption.

Bhatia (1997) notes that in Hindu morality the concept of dharma (values for righteous conduct) embodies the goal of maintaining social order. But, is social order attained through caring or justice? Chakrobarty (1991) lists caring but not justice as a prime virtue. Dasgupta (1965) counters that justice must be present, for it is necessary for stability and social order.

England et al. (1974) claims that Indian managers are moralistically oriented. Moralists are defined as those who have a "bureaucratic humanism" orientation versus the economic orientation of pragmatists. This translates to an institutionalized ethics of caring. However, the more successful managers in India tend to be pragmatists not moralists.

Chakrobarty reports that Indian managers feel pressure to adapt to conditions that are often not under their control. In contrast to the Western cultures where individual hard work prevails, in India family and authority values hold sway. Individual autonomy may be prized as a value but it has proven difficult to implement. That implies pragmatic ethics of expediency where the success of the task allows for many means. In moral terms this is a form of consequentialism.

China

Given the strong influence of political philosophy on the cultural and educational spheres of Chinese life, the link with China's past ethical values is weaker than one might imagine (De Mente, 1989). But at least two values have survived and are evident in the behavior of Chinese business people. Those values are harmony and obligation.

Harmony as a motivating goal may emanate from past experiences with a less than tolerant justice system. Preference has been to reconcile problems individually rather than relying on formal justice channels. Obligations, in turn, can be classified as either natural or acquired. Stemming from the Confucian virtue of filial piety, there are natural obligations to family and relatives. Acquired obligations are acknowledged toward friends and a network of associates who have been built and nurtured over time. Metzger (1981) notes that obligations even take precedence over personal integrity. When obligations are not lived up to, shame, self-perceived as well as directed by one's social network, accrues to an individual. That shame and the anticipated public embarrassment which results from an unfulfilled obligation are considered worse than physical punishment.

China is collectivist, but selectively collectivist. An ethics of caring, a Confucian demonstration of *jen* or beneficence (Ma, 1988), is present in Chinese behavior but limited to familial and social networks. Justice, in turn, is also present but in an equalitarian form directed toward the pragmatic end of harmony. It, too, is most evident in the context of living up to obligations incurred within that same familial and social network.

United States

American values are in a state of change. This change is apparent in the work of Josephson (1995) as he shortened his previous list of prime values from ten to six. Among the six which he advances are both justice and caring.

The United States is a relatively young nation,

populated primarily by immigrants. The majority of those immigrants trace their ethnic roots to Europe. As immigrants they brought the values of their native countries with them. The diversity of values evidenced within the U.S. business environment bears witness to the fact that ethnic cultural values persist even when cultures are geographically transplanted.

There is one value, though, that appears to mark Americans' character. The value that arises most frequently in Americans' discussion of ethical disputes in business is that of freedom or individual autonomy, seemingly grounded in an ethics of justice. This value exists in concert with the operating philosophy of pragmatism, the telic mindset of focusing on the accomplishment of tasks. Cavannagh (1976) states that Americans are pragmatic to the point of being anti-intellectual. He claims that the effectiveness of business is not grounded on any consideration of whether business values are praiseworthy or consistent with those of society. Like other nations American values are in transition with societal concerns taking a more prominent position. But, as Cavannagh points to the future of American values, it is no accident that he lists the "Central role of the person" first and "Consideration for others" ninth (Cavannagh, 1976, p. 188).

Results

Exhibit 2 contains the values offered by the negotiators to justify their respective positions on the moral issues. These subjects' countries are listed in Exhibit 2 from top to bottom in increasing order of their scores on Hofstede's masculinity dimension. The results of the analysis of the subjects' stated values give partial support to research *Proposition 1.* Negotiators from cultures labeled as feminine did express values more in line with an ethics of caring than with an ethics of meritarian justice. But, so did negotiators from one of the three cultures Hofstede labeled as masculine. (It was possible for both parties to use either meritarian justice or caring arguments to back up each of the opposing positions for all of the ethical issues.) A summary of the negotiations is presented below.

France

The French scored the lowest on Hofstede's masculinity dimension, and our results bear this out. In each of the twelve negotiations in which the French subjects took part, they exhibited values matching an ethics of caring. Most of the thrust of their negotiations centered on an act's consequences for other people rather than on moral principles. When pressed for the moral reasoning behind their decisions two obligations stood out – obligations to friends and obligations to family. Formal notions of meritarian justice took a lower priority than was given to these two obligations.

China

The majority of the Chinese negotiators exhibited consequentialist reasoning as did the French. In contrast to the French, they were not reticent to expound quietly, if somewhat rigidly, on their moral reasoning. The principles behind that reasoning were helping or not hurting people close to them. In ten of their twelve negotiations, their expressed values embodied an ethics of caring rather than an ethics of justice. One Chinese took an ethics of justice approach on both of his moral issues, and he did so within a mixed deontological framework.

Turkey

The Turks were last of the groups analyzed that fell under Hofstede's classification as feminine in cultural values. Seven of their twelve negotiations were built on an ethics of caring foundation. The values constituting that foundation could be found in the arguments of both the French and the Chinese negotiators. The Turks, though, were decidedly less consequentialist in their orientation than were the French and Chinese. The only negotiator, other than one of the 30 Americans, to ground his arguments on deontogical religious beliefs was one of the six Turks.

EXHIBIT 2
Ethical values by country

Focus on justice	Focus on caring
France –	*France* Friendship: entails mutual help Beneficence: to friends in need Filial Piety: outweighs equal compensation Compassion: outweighs justice Utility: to society
China Honesty: as an obligation Equity: based on order and equal responsibility	*China* Nonmaleficence: in not adding to friend's pain Beneficence: in helping friends in time of pain Filial Piety: as a prime responsibility
Turkey Honesty: as a reciprocal obligation/right	*Turkey* Friendship: entails reciprocity Beneficence: to friends in need Nonmaleficence: in not adding to friends' pain Filial Piety: as a prime responsibility
India Honesty: as a reciprocal obligation/right Equity: based on responsibility for one's own actions Equity: as a basis for social order Trust: is the basis of friendship	*India* Beneficence: to friends in need Nonmaleficence: in not hurting a friend Nonmaleficence: for societal well-being Utility: to society
U.S.A. Equity: based on reciprocity Equity: based on responsibility for one's own actions Honesty: as an obligation Autonomy: as a personal right Nondiscrimination: in business decisions	*U.S.A.* Beneficence: to friends in need Nonmaleficence: in not hurting friends Friendship: entails mutual help Utility: for societal well-being Utility: as an economic calculation Utility: in good vs. pain
Germany Equity: based on responsibility for one's own actions Honesty: as a reciprocal obligation/right Justice: in egalitarian form	*Germany* Harmony: for society Filial Piety: as a prime responsibility Friendship: entails mutual help Nonmaleficence: in not endangering friends Beneficence: to friend in need

India

According to our interpretation and application of Hofstede's classification scheme, the Indian negotiators, coming from what had been identified as a masculine culture, should have argued from a meritarian justice basis. That was the case in seven of the twelve negotiations. The Indians relied more on a deontogical approach to ethics than did any of the negotiators from feminine cultures. Three particular values marked their negotiations – the obligation to be truthful and the related obligation of helping and/or not hurting friends.

U.S.A.

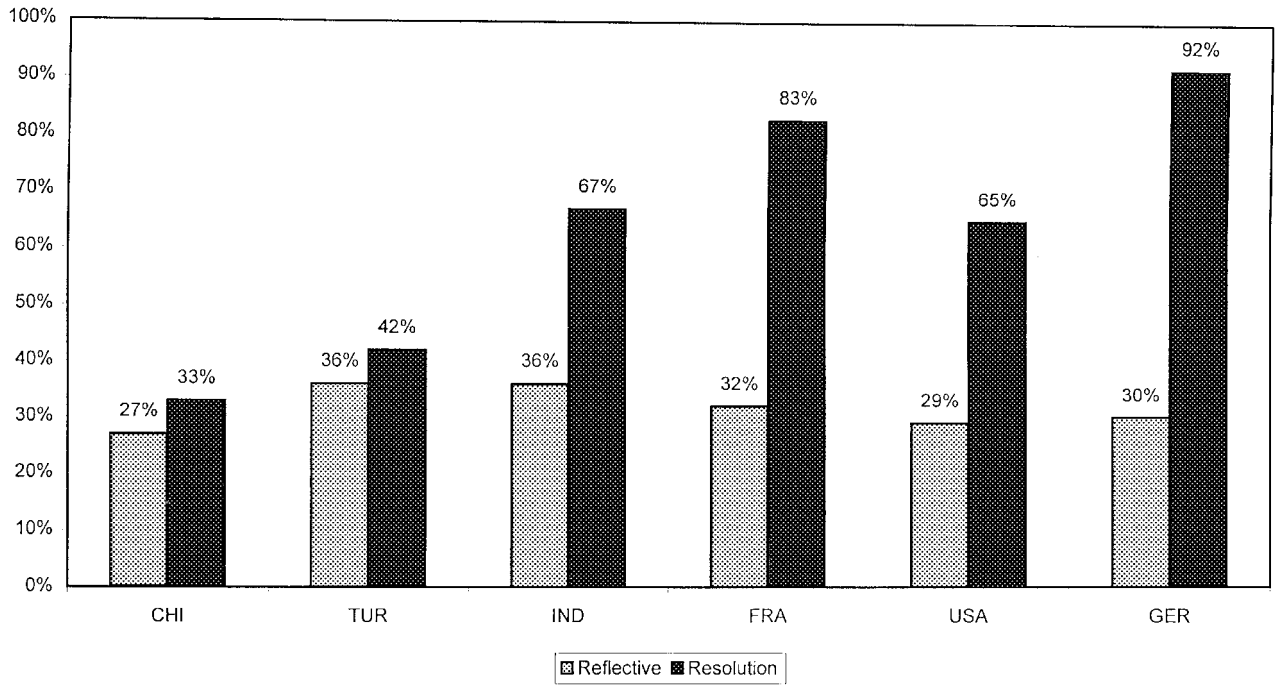
It is interesting to note that the Americans negotiating with the Indian subjects also relied on justice rather than caring in seven of their 12 negotiations. In total, the Americans used values related to an ethics of justice in 46 of these 60 negotiations verifying their masculine classification by Hofstede. They, more than any of the six cultures, relied on meritarian justice as the grounding for their ethical arguments. Underlying many of their deontological arguments was the concept of an individual decision maker's freedom, a freedom that they considered more important than the consequences of an act.

Germany

According to Hofstede's data, the German negotiators should have demonstrated the most masculine approach to the ethical issues. One interpretation of that approach is that they should have been the greatest advocates of an ethics of meritarian justice. This was not the case. Representatives from the other five cultures offered ethical rationales as one would predict from Hofstede's classification scheme. In addition, the comparative degree to which they offered those justifications was exactly as would have been predicted from Hofstede's classification data. Only in six of their 12 negotiations did the Germans rely on an ethics of justice. The other half of their negotiations reflected an ethics of care. Our prediction, based on the results from the other intercultural negotiations would have been 10 out of 12 arguments grounded on meritarian justice values. Whether the Germans adopted an ethics of justice or caring approach to their negotiations was of relatively little practical significance in the results of those negotiations. As can be seen in Exhibit 3, the Germans were the most successful of the cultures in resolving the ethical conflicts.

Exhibit 3 portrays the negotiation statements as they relate to *Proposition 2*. That proposition states that negotiators from high communications context (HC) cultures will make a greater effort to understand the opposing negotiator's moral stance than will low communications context

EXHIBITION 3
Percentage of reflective negotiation statements and successful conflict resolutions



(LC) negotiators. The rationale for the proposition is that HC negotiators need more information about the situation, including the views of the opposing negotiator (the statements classified as reflective (R) in the coding scheme described in Exhibit 1), before attempting a resolution to the ethical conflict. The percentages in Exhibit 3 were obtained by taking each negotiator's number of reflective statements and dividing by that individual's total of reflective, ordinary and NPD statements. The average of the six R percentages for each country's negotiators is what is presented in the exhibit. The countries are arranged in the exhibit from left to right to signify a range from HC to LC. As can be seen from that data, there was less than a 10% difference between the highest and lowest percentages. Thus, *Proposition 2* could not be supported. Also, there was no evidence to suggest that the use of reflective statements correlated with conflict resolution. It is interesting to note, though, that China, whose negotiators were expected to have the highest R percentage, had the lowest. They also were the least successful of the negotiators.

Discussion

It has been over 20 years since both Hofstede and Hall gathered the information for their works on cultural values and communication. Our research subjects (in their 20s and 30s) would be the age of the children of Hofstede's sampled IBM employees. Have values and communication orientations as they relate to moral discussions changed since the 1970s?

As pointed out in an earlier section, scholars in the field of cultural values seem to believe that change is occurring. Based on reports of these changes, buttressed by the findings reported in Exhibit 2, we believe that Rest's dismissal of an ethics of caring is dated. Even in the U.S.A. where an ethics of meritarian justice receives strong support, it does not provide the sole rationale for ethical decisions. Perhaps, the thought attributed to Thomas Acquinas that justice without mercy is meaningless is slowly penetrating the younger business people from the cultures represented by our sample. The only way to conclude that an ethics of justice holds sway is to broaden the definition to include egalitarian justice. That broadening, de facto, would subsume an ethics of caring under the term justice.

In effect, the nuturance component of Hofstede's femininity dimension is both noticeable and operational in countries such as Germany and the U.S.A. which he labeled as masculine. This seems to be particularly true among the younger businesspeople from Germany in our sample albeit a sample of limited size. There does, indeed, appear to be a "Wertewandel" and, as pointed out earlier, "caring" motives are showing themselves in ethical decisions.

Other than the justice versus caring equilibrium in Germany, the most surprising results came from the Chinese negotiators. Pan et al. (1994) offer insights into the character of young Chinese businesspeople which may partially explain our results. China is an evolving culture which is influenced by three major forces – tradition, Marxism and, now, Western values. How these three forces are balanced in an ethical decision is difficult to predict. What can be said is that the China which Hall observed over a quarter century ago has definitely changed, especially the behavior of young business people. Is this evolution in China and in our other sampled cultures leading to Ohmae's prediction of a pragmatic drive to resolve ethical conflict by referring to an internationally accepted set of business values? Our reaction is "not yet." The ethics of care as applied in *Proposition 1* expressed by our sample should not be projected onto all of their decisions about moral conflict. Our subjects, for the most part, used it selectively by confining it to the social network of the decision maker.

Setting social networks and cultural values aside, what proved more difficult to understand were the results relating to *Proposition 2*. It might be assumed that an ideal ethical discourse in a Habermasian sense would contain a balance of Reflective and Ordinary statements as they are described in Exhibit 1. However, the effort of negotiators from different cultures to express understanding of each other's moral stances fell far from the balance one might have hoped for.

Even more disappointing in this study was while reflective statements were used in just over 30% of the discussions prior to considering alternative moral resolutions, grounding for those resolutions in the form of Integrative Communicative Action Statements (see Exhibit 1) was extremely low. None of the 60 negotiators paid reference to mutually shared values that could underlie resolution of the conflicts. In just 7 of the negotiations was there mention of any value which could provide backing for possible resolutions. Even more surprising was that only 1% of the 60 subjects tested potential resolutions against personal (non-value laden) interests. This matches the findings of Van Es (1996) with respect to Dutch negotiators – that resolution of conflict through discourse should not be expected to be based on values as opposed to mutual interests. Our results cast some doubt on the viability of Habermas' discourse thesis. To believe that discourse among intelligent, educated business people will naturally result in a different ethical position grounded on newly revealed mutually shared values may be somewhat naive. Practically speaking, can only guided discourse (French and Mühlfriedel, 1996) be expected to arrive at conflict resolution based on new mutually shared values?

In summary, if discourse ethics as a field of practical application is to be pursued further, its limitations as pointed out by Van Es must be recognized and then adjusted for. In turn, we can not expect the underlying values searched for in discourse ethics to be confined to an ethics of justice. That thinking may be at the core of Habermas' theory, but it is too narrow. In more recent literature, the ethical decision maker is viewed as one whose cognitive, analytical skills are tempered by contextual and human influences. The moral discussion of the negotiators in our study calls for this broadened approach.

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