Ethics and Decision Making at the Personal Level

• Role of individuals and personal ethics in greening materials and products – in business and chemistry science
  – General issues and problems
    • Culture and cognition in organizations and life – constraints and problems
    • Change agency and leadership
  – A7D Affair case discussion

• Guest speakers
  – Robert Bergman, Gerald E.K. Branch Distinguished Professor of Chemistry, UCB
  – Marty Mulvihill, recent UCB Chemistry Ph.D & Executive Director of the Berkeley Center for Green Chemistry
Ethics of Green design

• Ethical issues comes up around two kinds of challenges
  – Stopping the production/continued production of harmful goods
  – Developing and producing of greener, less harmful goods
• Questions:
  – How much to push? How to advocate? (When to blow the whistle?)
    • What works? Doesn’t work?
    • Are their limits to one’s moral duty to do what is right?
  – How to respond, move forward?
    • How much funding and other resources to appropriate to this issue?
Typology of moral failings

  – Moral blindness – failure to recognize problems
  – Moral silence – failure to voice moral concerns
  – Moral deafness – inability or refusal to listen

• I would add:
  – Moral ignorance – especially relevant to green chemistry and green product design
  – Moral paralysis - unwillingness or inability to change course
Underlying Causes

• **Individual, personal factors (Bird)**
  – Fear of negative consequences
    • of being vulnerable and not in control
    • of implicating oneself in questionable acts
  – Sense of resignation and futility
  – Conflicting priorities and/or other concerns and preoccupations
  – Inability to voice moral concerns so that others can comprehend
Underlying Causes

• Internal cultural factors
  – Bureaucratic ethos (Jackall)
    • Importance of utilitarian thinking in business
    • Internal politics - playing the game to get ahead
    • diffusion of responsibility
      – In the welter of practical affairs in the corporate world, morality does not emerge from some set of internally held convictions or principles, but rather from ongoing albeit changing relationships with some person, some coterie, some social network, some clique that matters to a person. Since these relationships are always multiple, contingent, and in flux, managerial moralities are always situational, always relative.” (p. 106)

  » Is this OK -- or is it just (un)ethical egoism?
Underlying Causes

• External culture – American culture
  – Consumer preferences
  – Popular values and understandings
A7D case

• Where fit into typology?
  – Moral ignorance?
  – Moral blindness?
  – Moral silence?
  – Moral deafness?
  – Moral paralysis?
    • Inability or unwillingness to act?
    • Internal politics? Diffusion of responsibility?
    • Personal failings of some of the individuals involved?
A7D case

• Consequences?

• *Are their limits to one’s moral duty to do what is right?*
Question

• Is A7D case comparable to?
Greening the Science of Chemistry

• These conditions exist in universities as well as business
  – Moral blindness – failure to recognize problems
  – Moral silence – failure to voice moral concerns
  – Moral deafness – inability or refusal to listen
  – Moral ignorance – no info available
  – Moral paralysis - unwillingness or inability to change course

• This is why change agency is so important!
Our guests

- **Bob Bergman**
  - Gerald E.K. Branch Distinguished Professor of Chemistry, UCB
  - Associate Director of the Berkeley Center For Green Chemistry
    - Helped get School of Chemistry on board with BCGC

- **Marty Mulvihill**
  - recent UCB Chemistry Ph.D
  - Leader of student green chemistry movement
  - Executive Director of the Berkeley Center for Green Chemistry
• Situation in College of Chemistry until about 2009 (?)
• Why and how it changed