

academics to present their work. Nevertheless, the impact of the *JBE* remains high with a factor of 1.125 according to the Thomson Reuters *Journal Citation Reports* (Web of Knowledge). This is a highly regarded measure of quality and we would support the *Journal* in its efforts to retain its reputation as a leading international journal in the field of business ethics.

## References

Archer, M.S. 2000. *Being human: The problem of agency*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maclagan, P.W. 1998. *Management and morality: A developmental perspective*. London: Sage.

Pataki, G. 2000. Patrick Maclagan: Management and morality: A developmental perspective. Book review. *Organisation Studies* 21(4): 836–841.

Rabinow, P. 2000. *Michael Foucault, ethics: Subjectivity and truth*. London: Penguin.

## W. Michael Hoffman

### *Business Ethics: The Beginnings*

#### **A Brief Essay for the *Journal of Business Ethics* in Celebration of 30 Years of Publication**

Most scholars mark the beginning of the formal discipline of business ethics as the 1970s. It was then that courses and conferences began to emerge, textbooks and articles began to be published, and centers for business ethics were founded in universities such as Bentley, Delaware, and Virginia and outside the academy in institutions such as the Ethics Resource Center in Washington, DC.

What gave rise to this sudden flurry of activity is multifaceted. One might mention the ongoing maturation of the field of applied ethics generally along with particular events such as the Watergate scandal, high profile corruption cases in which bribes were paid in order to secure foreign contracts, and the passage of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act in 1977, among others.

When I founded the Center for Business Ethics (CBE) at Bentley University in 1976, social circumstances were ripe for growth in the field. Despite the skepticism and occasional derision, there was an expanding awareness that given the ever increasing influence of business on society, progress was needed in articulating its ethical context. One thing, however, was missing... a professional journal. It is essentially impossible for a field to be accorded credibility without at least one

respected academic journal that serves as the reservoir of the best in professional research and reflection. Back in 1982, the *Journal of Business Ethics (JBE)* was created to serve that function. And ever since, it has had an indispensable role in the flourishing of the field. I can speak from experience because back in May 1982, along with my colleague Jennifer Moore, I served as the guest editor for *JBE*'s second issue. There we published a collection of articles drawn from the first three Bentley national conferences on business ethics, organized by CBE. It was an important event, and *JBE* was just the publication needed to provide a forum for these views.

It will come as no surprise to note that the period since the founding of *JBE* has been one in which the world of business has undergone unprecedented change. In 1979, the United States established diplomatic relations with the then poor underdeveloped country of China. The personal computer was introduced in 1981 to be followed by the creation of the internet. The term "globalization" was coined in the 1980s around the time when the interests of shareholders was challenged by a broader notion of "stakeholder" interests. *JBE* was founded before both Enron and WorldCom came into being and disappeared under the weight of their own corruption. These and many other developments changed the context of business and even helped to change our understanding of what a business is.

Changes such as these brought with them new ethical dilemmas and new challenges to our understanding. Throughout this amazing period, the *Journal of Business Ethics* has been both the guidebook to the ever-changing ethical landscape of business, as well as the town square where the global community of scholars could come together to share ideas and discoveries, and engage in debates and disagreements. Ultimately, *JBE* has been where scholars have sought to shine a light on the vital importance of infusing the practice of business with something more important than the drive for profits – a social conscience.

And while the world of business has its hub in the United States, it took two brilliant and tenacious Canadians, Alex Michalos and Deborah Poff, to hold the reigns and guide this journal through this remarkable, tumultuous period. The business ethics community is indebted to *JBE* for providing the forum that has been indispensable for the flourishing of our field.

**Bryan W. Husted**

### *The Impact of National Culture on Software Piracy*

This article is part of a stream of research dealing with the antecedents of ethical behavior at a macro-level. This particular paper focuses on software piracy and adds to a series that also includes corruption and environmental performance. This particular article was especially well received by scholars in information technology and has been cited in relevant journals in the field. In part I think this response has been due