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Joy T. DeSensi and Danny Rosenberg, Ethics and Morality in Sport Management, 3rd Edition

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Joy T. DeSensi and Danny Rosenberg, *Ethics and Morality in Sport Management*, 3rd Edition, Sport Management Library, Fitness Information Technology, Inc., 2010. ISBN: 978-1-935412-13-7 (paperback). \$62.00.

Many books on sport ethics are topically-oriented, going into depth on popular dilemmas such as doping, discrimination, commercialization, and corruption. Yet *Ethics and Morality in Sport Management* by Joy T. DeSensi and Danny Rosenberg goes in a different direction. Their textbook progresses from principles of ethical theory to an exploration of how the application of theory might affect real-world behavior. It offers a rich summary of ethical theories and an up-to-date catalog of issues in sport management, but it may be of limited interest to sport philosophy students and scholars.

The authors clearly intend a specific audience of sport management students. These future sport managers need a foundation of ethical theory that will inform their decisions on issues anywhere from personnel dilemmas to gender equity. This book gives students that foundation by looking at many sport management issues.

DeSensi and Rosenberg have enhanced *Ethics and Morality in Sport Management* in its third edition to try and keep up with the growing field of sport management. The layout and content of each edition remains largely the same: part one deals with ethical theories and moral discourse, part two illuminates the nature of personal and professional ethics, and part three examines behaviors in practical sport management settings. In the latest edition the authors have updated examples, scenarios, and references in these three sections that better speak to the growing complexity of the sport management industry around the world. The third edition is further updated with a fourth section that includes two new chapters addressing recent sport management issues and a “rewritten” final chapter on how recent trends in sport might affect the future of sport management (p. x).

The authors have created a pedagogically sound textbook to help future sport managers engage in ethical thinking. Thus, each chapter begins with objectives and ends with a list of discussion questions. Many charts and graphs populate the pages in ways that are helpful because they show relationships between ideas or patterns of thinking. Certain design features, however, do little to support the book's purpose. The block quotes used periodically throughout the text are insignificant because they simply repeat the written content. And keyword lists inserted among the content are distracting because they summarize the fluid material into choppy and often unconnected terms. The content remains clear throughout the text, even though it strays from ethical discourse at times.

Part One of DeSensi and Rosenberg's text begins with a robust presentation of the role of sport in the world and the value of studying ethical and moral issues. This interesting exposé provides momentum for readers heading into the density of teleology, deontology, virtue ethics, rights, and justice that follows. The authors appropriately incorporate the ideas of thinkers who are important and interesting to ethicists such as Bentham, Kant, Aristotle, Rawls, and Marx in ways that future sport managers with no philosophical background can understand. As such, DeSensi and Rosenberg succeed at chopping this rich philosophical theory and discourse into vignettes of palatable portions for undergraduate students. Those trained in ethical theory may find these sections to be refreshing reviews of the theoretical landscape. Yet the authors may cover too much ground at times, as it may be superfluous to explain language misuse in the form of amphibolies and the difference between ostensive and theoretical definitions in an ethics textbook for sport management students. These specific discussions may be interesting to motivated students and scholars, but they may also turn off less intrinsically engaged students. Meanwhile, examples of relevance to sport only sparsely populate these chapters on the core tenets of ethical theories.

Part Two includes discussions of personal and professional ethics. The authors briefly describe rights and responsibilities from the viewpoint of selected sport management individuals and organizations. Subsections on athletic directors, athletes, and coaches, along with those on intercollegiate athletic programs and professional sports organizations, indicate pertinent issues regarding the ethical and moral content of behavior. This section ends with an uninspiring discussion of the purpose and need for corporate codes of ethics along with a listing of current ethical codes from various sport-related groups. A reader may long for an explicit connection to Part One here in the form of the identification of ethical theories played out in personal and professional behavior. Unfortunately, this lack of continuity characterizes the remaining sections, too.

In Part Three, DeSensi and Rosenberg apply ethical theory to practical sport management contexts. The crown jewel of this section is a chapter on ethical decision making in which the authors describe a variety of models that display the complexity of our behavior when faced with ethical dilemmas. No other chapter in this book more explicitly weaves the central content of the book with practical application to future sport managers. The other chapters in this section describe ethical decision making in the context of particular sport management roles such as marketing, human resources, and law. These peripheral chapters are a bit philosophically thin and seem better suited for an introduction to sport management text than an ethics textbook. Nevertheless, each chapter in this section concludes with a handful of thought-provoking ethical scenarios for the readers to ponder. The authors choose one scenario to analyze at the conclusion of each chapter and they do so by presenting the best course of action and explaining why it is good. Unfortunately this analysis often omits discussion of how they sifted through the forest of ethical theories to determine the best course of action.

DeSensi and Rosenberg add two new chapters to Part Four in the latest edition of this textbook. The first deals with ecological ethics and sport. Sport managers must acknowledge the increasingly loud calls for “green” initiatives, or environmental reforms. The authors describe existing ecological ethical theory and then describe the “green” initiatives of some major sporting organizations. The second new chapter addresses the challenges of globalization. Brief historical accounts, social theories of globalization, and current practices comprise this chapter. Following these two additions is a concluding exposé on the future of sport and sport management. The ideas in this final chapter spring forth from a host of academic scholarship lamenting the corrupt present state of sport and reads more like a description of what is happening in sport rather than predictions about the future. While this chapter gives little advice about how to deal with ecological ethics, globalization, or many other dilemmas that sport managers are certain to face, it presents possible changes in the world of sport for which sport managers should be prepared.

In a sense, DeSensi and Rosenberg have hit their mark by writing a sport management ethics textbook that will challenge students to learn ethical theory that can inform the decision making of sport management professionals. This book will give students a large number of tools they will need to make healthy ethical decisions in sport management settings. Yet they could have spent more time translating ethical theory into the decision making processes with which sport managers will be faced in their careers. Despite the disconnection between theory and application that plagues the otherwise informative ethical and sport management content of this book, the book may be worthwhile for its rich review of ethical theories alone. Indeed, it provides an accessible shorthand guide to the major ethical theories and thinkers on whom most sport ethicists have based much of their scholarship. However, the philosophical richness tapers off after Part One. The last two sections, while certainly including philosophical content, seem to contain more descriptions of sport management practices and research without as much deep philosophical analysis.

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