I would recommend this book as a valuable resource for teachers of management ethics and those seeking ethical management knowledge and applications for use in a wider variety of management teaching contexts. I feel it would have greater usefulness to them than to younger students as a classroom textbook. It has a well-structured, logical framework and plan, which is supported by clear diagrams, excellent discussion questions and experiential exercises for use with classes or smaller groups of students. The first section is a careful, step-by-step, orderly exposition of the stated themes. It provides detailed explanations of relevant theoretical models and concepts. The regularity of structure helps the readers to know exactly what to expect in forthcoming chapters. Each chapter has a brief and clear summary at beginning and end with discussion questions and experiential exercises. These help to draw together the learning of the chapter and make practical application of the concepts contained within it to personal life experiences and to one or more relevant minicase(s) from the second section of the book.

The applications section is of great value and interest, containing a wide variety of actual organisational events to illustrate managerial integrity (or lack of it) in the workplace, and demonstrate the vital nature of an ethical approach to each of the functions of management. Of particular usefulness is the collection of interesting contemporary cases from a wide variety of actual situations. These are of differing lengths, which makes them suitable for multiple purposes (in classes, as assignments, for discussion groups or for exam purposes).

I feel that the intended audience of the book, as stated by the authors, was rather too general, and doubt its applicability to such a wide variety of readers. The book represents an invaluable resource of applications, exercises and thought-provoking discussion questions, and, as such would be of great benefit to management educators of a broad range of students.

PAMELA M. HEDGES


*In Pursuit of Privacy* is a well-written, scholarly review and discussion of the development of the concepts of, and the right to, privacy. The various
interpretations of these concepts are discussed in relation to the contexts in which they may be considered: privacy as a legal, ethical, philosophical, and personal construct. DeCew has taken a singular approach to defining privacy and under what circumstances an individual has a right to, and a guarantee of, privacy, discussing issues around privacy, its definition, and its application from both legal and philosophical viewpoints.

In the first four chapters, DeCew demonstrates the difficulty in deriving a universal definition of privacy that would satisfy the diverse contexts in which privacy is found. In the first chapter, “Origins of History of Privacy”, the origins of privacy as a concept, and the history of legal privacy protection in United States are presented. Privacy as a concept is universally accepted as an individual’s right: however, what is embodied in that concept varies across different interest groups. The right to privacy may be characterized as either a tort right (held by individuals against intrusions by private persons or businesses) or a constitutional right (held by individuals against intrusions by the government). DeCew presents several landmark legal cases to underscore the courts’ view that the tort right to privacy is separate from the constitutional right, and to prepare the reader for her arguments to the contrary in the upcoming chapters.

DeCew, in chapter 2, “Narrow Views of Privacy Developed from the Law”, details the similarities that contradict the historical divergence between “tort” and “constitutional” privacy and that highlight the need for a more-encompassing definition of privacy. Given that the United States Constitution does not explicitly guarantee the right of an individual to privacy, some theorists in law and philosophy have argued for a narrow restriction of the term “privacy” to that of informational privacy. The author discusses this view, why it is not realistic, and again reiterates the need for a broader approach. Other proponents of a narrow definition have confused the concept with privacy with that of liberty. While they may at times be related, they are not interchangeable.

In “Definitions of Privacy, Philosophical Responses, and Conceptual Alternatives” (Chapter 3), philosophical definitions of privacy are provided, including the relationship of privacy with seclusion, confidential content, publicity, and intrusiveness. Privacy is also distinguished from secrecy. What is secret may not be private (military plans kept from the public), and what is private may not be secret (information about an individual’s debts which are known by a credit agency). DeCew then provides some conceptual alternatives to the narrow definition of privacy which she feels must incorporate both tort and constitutional claims in order to justify
both an individual’s right to privacy and certain invasions of privacy, and to explain how liberty and privacy are related.

The first section of the book concludes with chapter 4, “Defending a Broad Conception of Privacy”. DeCew argues that a broader definition of privacy is essential to protect an individual’s right in the contemporary legal and social environment. While agreeing that there are differences in the definition of privacy among different groups, she maintains that there are more similarities than differences across these groups, and that these similarities require a common broader definition of privacy than currently exists. The best way to understand privacy in a broad sense that is applicable is to think of it as “a cluster concept covering multiple privacy interests” (73), where the cluster comprises the aspects of informational privacy, accessibility privacy, and expressive privacy. This conceptual approach characterizes privacy as “a shield for us in various contexts … when augmented with a strategy for practical moral and legal assessment” (79).

Chapter 5, “The Feminist Critique of Privacy”, attempts to reconcile the concept of privacy which protects and individual from unwanted intrusion and scrutiny by others with a feminist critique of privacy where “privacy can be used to shield domination, repression, degradation, and even physical harm to women and others” (5). Supporters of this particular feminist view advocate abandoning defenses of privacy protection to stop the marginalization of women and others without power. DeCew argues that many points raised in this feminist critique are indeed valid, but do not invalidate her broad definition of privacy and the protection it provides to diverse groups, including women and the less powerful.

The remaining four chapters are applications of the broader definition of privacy to public policy issues which have engendered current controversy and public concern; reproductive rights, sexual (specifically homosexual) privacy, drug testing to enhance public safety, and advances in information technologies which pose new and/or increased threats to individual privacy. In each of these areas the right to privacy may conflict with other claims and values.

Privacy vis-a-vis reproductive rights is addressed in chapter 6, “Judicial Interpretation and John Hart Ely’s Critique of Roe v. Wade”. In Ely’s severe critique of the Roe v. Wade decision, his “fundamental criticism is that it does not follow a defensible constitutional theory” (107) in placing the woman’s interests over that of the fetus. DeCew counters that “Ely’s critique is most illuminating if we see it as highlighting the tension between mothers’ and fetuses’ interests … a conflict between the mother’s
privacy claim and concerns over harm to the fetus and the fetus’ potential for life” (108). In essence, the argument rests on disagreement over the stringency of the rights and/or claims of the mother versus the fetus, not on the irrelevance of privacy to the case.

Chapter 7, “Constitutional Privacy and the Arguments in Bowers v. Hardwick”, begins with an explanation of the case in which the Supreme Court upheld Georgia’s anti-sodomy laws and “refused to allow privacy as a defense for consenting homosexuality in one’s home” (110). The constitutional question at issue in the Bowers case is discussed at length, including the relevance of privacy to the question; the refusal of the Court to go down the “slippery slope” of allowing other practices, such as prostitution or incest, if undertaken in one’s home; and issues surrounding morals legislation. It is the Court’s insistence that privacy is irrelevant in this case and that the case has no links to prior privacy cases that actually safeguards the right to privacy. Given this insistence, the Court cannot employ Bowers to “consistently and rationally overturn . . . privacy rights” (124).

The use of drug testing programs to ensure public safety versus the violation of an individual’s right to privacy are discussed in Chapter 8 “Drug Testing: A Case Study in Balancing Privacy and Public Safety”. Arguments in favor of drug testing are presented, followed by a discussion of the threats to and intrusion on individual privacy caused by drug testing, as well as concerns with the accuracy of the testing and the consequences of both false negatives and positives. The question centers on when are the interests of others significant enough to outweigh an individual’s right to privacy. In the narrow instances when DeCew feels that drug testing can be ethically justified, procedural safeguards must be in place to protect privacy and minimize error.

The final chapter, “Information Technology: A Challenge to Privacy Protection”, discusses issues arising from database information storage, from communications services such as e-mail and caller identification, and from HIV/AIDS testing. Technological advances must not proceed at the expense of individual privacy; solutions must be sought to allow” consumers and targeted individuals (to) choose when and how much to protect or relinquish their privacy” (161).

In summary, DeCew has written a comprehensive scholarly treatise on privacy and its role in political, religious, biological, anthropological, and social contexts. Her broad definition of privacy is seen as “protecting the freedom and independence needed for individuals to develop their identities and values as self-conscious beings” (164). Her ideas and discussions
of the legal cases require the reader to bring one’s full concentration to the task. The reward is a new and fuller insight into privacy and the issues affecting privacy in contemporary society.

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