The Moral Behavior of Ethicists: Peer Opinion

Eric Schwitzgebel  
Department of Philosophy  
University of California at Riverside  
Riverside, CA  92521  
951 827 4288  
eschwitz at domain- ucr.edu

Joshua Rust  
Stetson University  
Department of Philosophy, Unit 8250  
421 North Woodland Boulevard  
DeLand, FL  32723  
386 822 7584  
jrust at domain- stetson.edu

October 31, 2007
The Moral Behavior of Ethicists: Peer Opinion

Abstract:

If philosophical moral reflection tends to improve moral behavior, it seems to follow that professional ethicists will, on average, behave morally better than non-ethicists. One potential source of insight into the moral behavior of ethicists is the opinion of other philosophers about their behavior. At the 2007 Pacific Division meeting of the American Philosophical Association, we used chocolate to entice 277 passersby to complete anonymous questionnaires without knowing the topic of those questionnaires in advance. Version I of the questionnaire asked respondents to compare, in general, the moral behavior of ethicists to that of philosophers not specializing in ethics and to non-academics of similar social background. Version II asked respondents similar questions about the moral behavior of the ethics specialist in their department whose name comes next in alphabetical order after their own. Both versions asked control questions about specialists in metaphysics and epistemology. The majority of respondents expressed the view that ethicists do not, on average, behave better than non-ethicists. While ethicists tended to avoid saying either that ethicists in general (Version I) or individual arbitrarily selected ethicists (Version II) behave worse than non-ethicists, non-ethicists expressed that pessimistic view about as often as they expressed the view that ethicists behave better.
One might suppose that ethicists would behave with particular moral scruple. There’s something strange, or ironic, or deflating, in the idea that Socrates may have been a bigamist and neglectful of his family, that Rousseau abandoned his children to horrible orphanages, that Mill may not have properly credited Harriet Taylor, that Heidegger was a Nazi.¹ Or is it strange? We know, perhaps, too many chain-smoking doctors and too many economists who neglect their treasure to leap quickly from word to deed or profession to deed – or, well, we may not ourselves know any chain-smoking doctors, but we’ve heard of them and seen them on t.v.² So why not wicked ethicists? Maybe some candidates come to mind?

¹ On Socrates’s possible bigamy, see Fitton (1970) and the response by Woodbury (1973). We take no stand on bigamy, much less on Socrates’s particular case, but merely note how it has been perceived.

² It appears, actually, that doctors generally smoke at rates substantially lower than other professions, though the data on nurses is mixed and the self-reports of doctors may be affected to some extent by embarrassment (Squier et al. 2006; Jiang et al. 2007; Lee et al. 2007; Sezer, Guler, and Sezer 2007; Smith and Leggat 2007). Studies of doctors’ general health practices are mixed, but confounded by issues of convenience, embarrassment, and the temptation to self-diagnose and self-treat (Richards 1999; Kay, Mitchell, and Del Mar 2004).

A Los Angeles Times reporter interviewed Nobel Prize winners in economics and says that many confess to having invested badly, especially too conservatively or passively; he also reports that half of the Harvard faculty allow 100% of their retirement savings to go into money market accounts through failure to specify their investment preferences (Gosselin 2005). On the other hand, Christiansen, Joensen, and Rangvid (forthcoming) find that Danish economists are more likely to hold stocks – and thus, presumably, not fall into the common error of excessive passivity or conservatism – than are comparably educated non-economists.
The irony of such cases is easy to appreciate, but we should resist the urge to construct generalizations based on such salient but possibly unrepresentative examples. Only the conspiracy theorist assumes that members of the Motion Picture Association of America who inveigh against copyright violations routinely distribute pirated goods.\(^3\) Despite some recent high-profile cases in the U.S., supporting anti-gay legislation ought not be taken as a reliable indicator of a politician’s homosexuality. And if it seems worldly wise, egalitarian, hard-bitten, to suppose that ethicists behave, on average, no better than the rest of us, or even worse, we should still bear in mind the attractions of the opposite view, what we’ll call the *straightforward* view. Ethicists devote their careers to studying morality. Presumably they care deeply about it. And if they care deeply about it, it’s not unreasonable to expect them to act on it. Even if ethicists discover no special knowledge, shouldn’t a professional interest in ethics at least make the moral dimension of life more salient? Unless an ethicist devotes her career entirely to the most abstract meta-ethics or most general public policy questions, what she says in the classroom and reads in her books must touch upon her life. Are we to suppose that the study of moral philosophy has no morally beneficial effect whatsoever? Is philosophical moral reflection impotent to show us what’s right, or to motivate the morally right action once we discover it? If our aim is to do good, is there no point in *thinking* about it – at least in the way philosophers tend to think about things? Socrates didn’t believe so, nor Kant, nor Mill.\(^4\)

---

\(^3\) For one exception, however, see Horn (2006).

\(^4\) E.g., Plato’s *Apology* and *Protagoras* (though the end of the *Meno* jars a bit); Kant (1785/1998), ch. 1; Mill (1859/2003), ch. 2.
If we deny the attractiveness of the view that ethicists behave, on average, morally better, will we also deny that specialists in aesthetics have, on average, better taste – at least in the arts about which they write and lecture? That feminists are less sexist? That logicians are more attuned to scope ambiguities? A dark view for a professional philosopher!

Our self-conception as philosophers hangs on our thoughts about such matters. So does our sense of the role of philosophical reflection in moral education and everyday life.

ii.

How, then, does a career in ethics affect one’s character? The question has never been explored in a systematic way.

We decided simply to ask people their opinion of the moral behavior of ethicists. We began informally, soliciting in casual conversation over several years the opinions of about two hundred philosophers. Most of our interlocutors were skeptical of the practical value of philosophical ethics, describing it as behaviorally inert or even harmful. Many

5 Or consider some more problematic cases: Do decision theorists make better decisions? Do epistemologists know more? Decision theorists likely use decision theory more, but whether that helps depends on whether formal decision theory is a good strategy for everyday decision-making. The case is different from that of the ethicist who lectures on the moral imperative to be honest or to donate to famine relief and then is, or is not, more honest or charitable than others. Epistemologists’ views about knowledge and justification are generally so far removed from everyday concerns that it doesn’t seem reasonable to expect much impact on daily beliefs (though Descartes [1637/1985, 1641/1984] seemed to have high hopes). Only a minority of ethicists, we suspect, genuinely believe that both their research and teaching are irrelevant to everyday decisions about how to live.
offered up anecdotes about vicious ethicists (e.g., a Kantian formally charged with sexual harassment). Only a few (mostly ethicists) stood by the idea that the serious study of philosophical ethics is, on average, morally improving.

To test opinion more formally, we set up a table in a high-traffic area outside the book display at the April 2007 American Philosophical Association Pacific Division meeting in San Francisco. The table bore a sign that said “Fill out a 5-minute philosophical-scientific questionnaire, get four Ghirardelli chocolate squares!” Interested passersby generally sat in one of two chairs next to the prominently displayed chocolates. Before handing them a questionnaire, we assured them that their answers would be kept anonymous and asked that they place the completed questionnaire in a ballot-style collection box. We did not reveal the contents of the questionnaire in advance. Respondents completed the questionnaire on the spot without consulting anyone else. When they had finished, we asked them orally and also in writing on a debriefing sheet not to discuss the contents of the questionnaire with other people at the meeting.

Virtually everyone who received a questionnaire completed it. One respondent objected to the questionnaire on moral grounds. Over the course of three and a half days we collected 277 questionnaires from the approximately 1500 conference attendees.6

---

6 Although the near-100% rate of completion among those receiving the questionnaire encourages us to think that our respondents were not self-selected by attitudes toward the specific items on the questionnaire, we do acknowledge that underrepresented in our sample were people in a hurry, people untempted by chocolate, and people inclined to be suspicious of the intentions of two guys at a table handing out candy for completing a “philosophical-scientific questionnaire”. Although gender data were not recorded, we did have the impression that women responded at somewhat higher rates than men. Whether any of these factors is likely to interact with attitude toward the moral behavior of ethicists, we can only speculate.
A number of people stole candy without completing a questionnaire or took more than their share without permission. At one point an eminent Kantian ethicist grabbed a single Ghirardelli square in passing and announced, “I’m being evil!” Unfortunately, we were unable to study this behavior systematically.

iii.

There were two versions of the questionnaire. Version I focused on the behavior of ethicists in general, Version II on the behavior of a particular, arbitrarily selected ethicist. Each version was divided into two sub-versions (A and B) differing only in the order of the questions.

Question 1 of Version I (Sub-Version A) of the questionnaire was:

1. Take a moment to consider the various ethics professors you have known, both as colleagues and in the student-mentor relationship. As best you can determine from your own experience, do professors specializing in ethics tend, on average, to behave morally better, worse, or about the same as philosophers not specializing in ethics? (Please circle one number below.)

Immediately below the question was a 7-point numerical scale, where 4 was marked “about the same”, 1 was “substantially morally better”, and 7 was “substantially morally worse”. The same 7-point scale was used in questions 2-4.

Question 2 asked:
2. As best you can determine from your own experience, do professors specializing in ethics tend, on average, to behave morally better, worse, or about the same as non-academics of similar social background?

Questions 3-4 were essentially the same as Questions 1-2, except asking about “specialists in metaphysics and/or epistemology (including philosophy of mind)” instead of ethicists. Sub-Version B was identical to Sub-Version A, except that the two M&E specialist questions came before the two ethicist questions.

Questions 5-8 were demographic. Question 5 asked respondents their highest level of academic achievement (from undergraduate to distinguished professor). Question 6 asked respondents their level of professional involvement in ethics – response options being specialist in ethics (“AOS”), substantial secondary teaching or research interest in ethics (“AOC”), non-ethicist philosopher, non-philosopher academic, academic publisher, and non-academic. Question 7 asked the type of institution at which the respondent has done most of her teaching, if she has taught at least three years beyond completing graduate study (from two-year college to university with a Ph.D. program in philosophy). Question 8 (specially marked “optional” and “do not answer this question if you are currently a graduate student”) asked the respondent at what institution she had done most of her graduate work.

Questions 9-11 asked about prior knowledge of the questionnaire. Question 9 asked if the respondent had completed a similar questionnaire at the Eastern Division meeting in December, 2006 (where we piloted this project). Question 10 asked if the respondent knew or suspected what the questionnaire would be about before taking it. Question 11 asked if she had heard or seen any discussion of it.
A facsimile of all versions of the questionnaire is available at ****.

iv.

In all, 138 respondents completed Version I of the questionnaire. The order of the questions did not appear to make a difference. Nor did prior knowledge of the questionnaire, academic rank, institution type, or graduate institution. Results did vary by area of specialization, however, as shown in Tables 1 and 2. The majority of philosophers – both 65% of ethics specialists and 68% of non-ethicist philosophers – expressed the view that ethicists do not behave better than other philosophers. However, few ethicists expressed the view that ethicists actually behave worse, while non-ethicists were about evenly divided between seeing ethicists as better, worse, or about the same as other philosophers. Respondents with a secondary interest in ethics showed roughly intermediate results.

Insert Tables 1 and 2 about here.

7 The mean response for each of the four main questions never differed by more than 0.24 between sub-versions, and none of the differences was statistically significant at an alpha level of .05, using a two-tailed t-test (the lowest p value was .18).

8 Twenty-six respondents revealed some prior knowledge of the questionnaire by answering “yes” to at least one of Questions 9-11. Their mean responses never differed by more than 0.25 from those answering “no” to all three questions and were never statistically significant at an alpha level of .05 (two-tailed t-test, lowest p value .55).

To test for effects of academic rank and institution type we used ANOVAs with an alpha level of .01 as a correction for multiple comparisons. Characteristics of graduate institution were evaluated only post-hoc for obvious trends (e.g., prestige, location).

9 The difference in the rates at which ethicists and non-ethicists characterized ethicists as actually morally worse was marginally statistically significant (4/34 vs. 14/47, \( \chi^2 \), p = .06). It seems to be largely this difference driving the difference in the means displayed in Table 1.
Implicit in the responses is a tendency for philosophers to think that philosophers behave morally better than non-academics. Philosophers ranked both ethicists and M&E specialists better in comparison to non-academics of similar social background than in comparison to other philosophers.\textsuperscript{10} Non-philosophers showed no such tendency. Indeed, among the 11 non-academic respondents, none expressed the view that ethicists behave better, on average, than non-academics, and 5 expressed the view that they behave worse.\textsuperscript{11}

\textit{v.}

We hoped respondents would answer Version I of the questionnaire based on their experience of the actual behavior of ethicists and M&E specialists, as instructed in Questions 1 and 3. However, we recognized that many respondents might be driven by antecedent theoretical commitments, or by a tendency to overstate the value of the projects to which they are committed, or by an appreciation of irony. We were also concerned that vicious ethicists might come more readily or vividly to respondents’ minds than virtuous or ordinary ones and disproportionately influence their reflections. Version II of the questionnaire was intended to avoid or minimize these potential difficulties by asking respondents to concentrate on a single, arbitrarily (alphabetically) chosen ethicist and M&E specialist.

\textsuperscript{10} Two-tailed paired $t$-test, $p < .001$.

\textsuperscript{11} Despite the tiny sample, this result is marginally statistically significant (two-tailed binomial test, $p = .06$).
In Version II (Sub-Version A) of the questionnaire, Question 1 was prefaced by the following:

Think of the ethics specialist in your department whose name comes soonest after yours in alphabetical order (wrapping around from Z back to A if necessary). (If your department has no ethics specialist or you are the only one, consider the philosophy department at the institution where you received your highest degree.)

Question 1 was:

1. As best you can determine from your own experience, does this person tend, on average, to behave morally better, worse, or about the same as non-ethicists in your department? (The question is not about whether you enjoy this person’s company but rather, to the extent this is separable, about the moral qualities of her or his behavior – honesty, treatment of students and staff, etc.) (Please circle one number below.)

Immediately below this question was the same 7-point scale as in Version I, from 1 (“substantially morally better”) to 4 (“about the same”) to 7 (“substantially morally worse”). Question 2 asked:

2. As best you can determine from your own experience, does this person tend, on average, to behave morally better, worse, or about the same as non-academics of similar social background? (Please circle one number below.)
The same 7-point scale followed. Question 3 asked respondents to “list two or three aspects of this person’s behavior most central to your assessment”. Questions 4-6 were essentially the same as questions 1-3, except asking about “M&E specialists” (compared to “non-M&E specialists in your department” and “non-academics of similar social background”). A parenthetical remark instructed respondents to “interpret ‘M&E’ in this case to refer to metaphysics and/or epistemology, including philosophy of mind”. The questionnaire concluded with the same demographic and prior knowledge questions as in Version I. Sub-Version B was identical to Sub-Version A, except that the M&E questions preceded the ethicist questions.

vi.

The results of Version II largely mirrored those of Version I – though we discarded non-philosophers’ responses (13 out of 139 total responses) because it was unclear how they would interpret the phrase “the ethicist in your department”. As in Version I, no differences were evident between the sub-versions, or between naive respondents and those indicating some prior knowledge of the questionnaire, or on the basis of academic rank, institution type, or graduate school.  

---

12 We thank Jonathan Ichikawa for the suggestion to ask about the next ethicist in alphabetical order in one’s department as a means to select an arbitrary ethicist, and we thank Dale Jamieson for the suggestion to ask respondents the bases of their assessments.

13 There was somewhat more variance in Version II – more 1’s and 7’s than in Version I. The means on the four main questions never differed by more than 0.35 between sub-versions (two-tailed t-test, lowest p = .18).

Thirty respondents indicated some prior knowledge of the questionnaire by answering “yes” to at least one of the three prior knowledge questions. The means never
Tables 3 and 4 present the results by area of specialization. Ethicists again tended, on average, to rate ethicists more favorably than they rated non-ethicists, while non-ethicists saw ethicists as no different and those with a secondary interest in ethics showed intermediate results.\(^\text{14}\) In Version II, as in Version I, the effect appears to be largely driven by ethicists rarely describing the moral behavior of ethicists as worse than the comparison groups.\(^\text{15}\)

\[\text{Insert Tables 3 and 4 about here.}\]

\[\text{Insert Tables 3 and 4 about here.}\]

\[\text{differed by more than 0.43 between naive and knowledgeable respondents (two-tailed } t\text{-test, lowest } p = .10).}\]

\[\text{We again used an alpha level of .01 for the demographic analyses, due to multiple comparisons. There were nearly-significant trends (.01} \leq p < .05\) for opinions about the moral behavior of ethicists to worsen with rank and for professors at M.A. granting institutions to view their selected colleagues more negatively than those at other institutions. However the Version 1 and Eastern APA pilot data do not confirm these trends.}\]

\[\text{14 Although the ethicists’ preference for ethicists shows in the } t\text{-tests vs. 4.0 in Table 3 and in the binomial test in Table 4, two-tailed paired } t\text{-tests eth-dept vs. ME-dept and eth-nonac vs. ME-nonac are marginally significant to non-significant (respectively, diff } = -.60, p = .07; \text{ diff } = -.33, p = .25). \text{ We attribute the failure of significance on the paired } t\text{-tests to the high variance in the data and the relatively small sample size. The consistency of the trends among the subgroups (specialists and secondary) and between Version I and Version II suggests against a purely sampling-error explanation of the difference in means.}\]

\[\text{15 In Version II, only 4 of 40 (10\%) of ethics specialists expressed the view that the selected ethicist behaved morally worse than the non-ethicists in her department (Q1, Version II.A / Q4, Version II.B, counting responses of 5-7) and only 3 of 40 (8\%) expressed the view that the selected ethicist behaved morally worse than non-academics of similar social background (Q2 VII.A / Q5 VII.B). Non-ethicists, in comparison, ranked the selected ethicist morally worse at rates of 15/49 (31\%) and 14/49 (29\%), respectively (} \chi^2, p = .02 \text{ and } .01).\]
Overall, respondents tended to rate the arbitrarily selected individuals as better than others in their departments.\textsuperscript{16} This may reflect a general bias to regard individuals more favorably than groups. Also as in Version I, philosophers tended implicitly to express the view that philosophers behave morally better than non-academics of similar social background by rating philosophers a bit more favorably in comparison to non-academics than in comparison to other philosophers.\textsuperscript{17}

We did not detect any differences in respondents’ descriptions of the bases of their opinions. Among the more common responses were “conscientious”, “fair”, “generous”, “honest” / “dishonest”, “kind”, “selfish” / “self-centered”, and “thoughtful”. Ethicists and non-ethicists were about equally likely to receive each of these approbations and disapprobations.

\textit{vii.}

Our results suggest that non-ethicist philosophers do not tend to see ethicists, in general, as particularly well behaved. Indeed, a substantial minority of non-ethicists said that ethicists on average behave morally \textit{worse} than other philosophers. The same mediocre view of ethicists emerges when non-ethicist philosophers are asked to rate the behavior of particular arbitrarily selected ethicists and M&E specialists in their department.

Across the data, the most consistent trend was for respondents to rate their own groups a bit more favorably, on average, than other groups. Ethicists tended to rate ethicists better than they rated M&E specialists; philosophers tended to rate philosophers

\textsuperscript{16} Mean 3.7, two-tailed \textit{t}-test vs. 4.0, \textit{p} < .001.

\textsuperscript{17} Difference in mean 0.22, two-tailed paired \textit{t}-test, \textit{p} <.001.
better than non-philosophers. Though the results did not approach statistical significance, the small sample of non-academics tended to rate non-academics better than philosophers, and by some measures non-ethicist philosophers (a substantial proportion of which – about half? – must have been M&E specialists) rated M&E specialists slightly better than ethicists. The simplest hypothesis is that in-group/out-group bias is driving these effects.

The most interesting findings, however, are not the effects but the non-effects. Most philosophers expressed the view that ethicists behave no better than non-ethicists. The results are consistent across academic rank and institution type, and they look very much the same whether the question is posed in general terms (Version I) or about the behavior of specific, arbitrarily selected ethicists (Version II). The overall pattern in both versions of the questionnaire is this: Ethicists rarely rated ethicists as morally worse than either of the two comparison groups and tended to be about equally divided between rating ethicists as morally better and rating them as about the same; non-ethicists were about equally divided between rating ethicists’ behavior as morally better, the same, or worse on average than non-ethicists’; and those with a secondary interest in ethics tended to show intermediate results.

On a straightforward view, dating back to (the neglectful bigamist?) Socrates, moral reflection and philosophical inquiry into human flourishing improve our lives. This view, which we the authors also find attractive, is central to modern liberal

\[^{18}\text{On Version I, non-academics rated ethicists or M&E specialists worse in comparison to non-academics than in comparison to other philosophers 5 times, and better only once, out of 11 respondents (two-tailed binomial test, } p = .22).\]

Schwitzgebel & Rust October 31, 2007 Ethicists, Peer Opinion, p. 15
education and to justifying the role of philosophy in the university.¹⁹ And it’s central, too – isn’t it? – to our lives and self-conceptions as philosophers (anti-intellectual philosophers excluded). If we suppose that the improvement is, among other things, moral and that ethicists, on average, are more prone to moral reflection and philosophical inquiry into human flourishing than are non-ethicists, especially non-academics, then it seems to follow that ethicists will tend to behave morally better than non-ethicists.

If the majority of philosophers are correct in rejecting this conclusion, the implications are troubling. Is philosophical moral reflection of no moral value? Or are we to suppose that ethicists are no more prone to it than anyone else, or that their reflections are always so removed from everyday life as to be personally useless, or that ethicists start out worse and improve to average, or that a little reflection is good but a lot is problematic? Maybe you find one of these options attractive. We don’t. Even if, as Aristotle suggests, moral behavior has at least as much to do with upbringing and habit as anything else, it’s extreme to suppose – and Aristotle did not suppose – that philosophical moral reflection is therefore ineffectual.

Our study confirms what we’ve heard in many conversations: Most philosophers, when explicitly asked, will deny that ethicists behave any better than non-ethicists. It could of course still be the case that ethicists do on average, even if only to a small degree, behave morally better. The majority of philosophers might be wrong. We need some direct behavioral measures. You’ll be glad to hear, then – won’t you? – that we have some studies under way.

¹⁹ E.g., in Nussbaum (1997).
References:


Fitton, J.W. (1970). That was no lady, what was.... *Classical Quarterly*, 20, 56-66.


### Table 1

*Mean responses for Version I, Q.1-4, by specialization; 1 = “substantially morally better”, 4 = “about the same”, 7 = “substantially morally worse”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Ethicists vs. other philosophers</th>
<th>Ethicists vs. non-academics</th>
<th>M&amp;E vs. other philosophers</th>
<th>M&amp;E vs. non-academics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethics specialists</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.4*</td>
<td>3.1*</td>
<td>4.3*</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary interest in ethics</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.3*</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-ethicist philosophers</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-philosophers</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * indicates a statistically detectable difference from 4.0 (two-tailed t-test, p < .05)
### TABLE 2

*Distribution of responses to Version I, ethicist questions, by specialization; 1 = “substantially morally better”, 4 = “about the same”, 7 = “substantially morally worse”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>better (1-3)</th>
<th>same (4)</th>
<th>worse (5-7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethicists vs. other phil.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethics specialist respondents</td>
<td>12 (35%)</td>
<td>18 (53%)</td>
<td>4 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respondents with secondary</td>
<td>14 (44%)</td>
<td>14 (44%)</td>
<td>4 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interest in ethics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-ethicist philosopher</td>
<td>15 (32%)</td>
<td>18 (38%)</td>
<td>14 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethicists vs. non-acad.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethic specialist respondents</td>
<td>19 (56%)</td>
<td>11 (32%)</td>
<td>4 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respondents with secondary</td>
<td>17 (55%)</td>
<td>9 (29%)</td>
<td>5 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interest in ethics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-ethicist philosopher</td>
<td>19 (41%)</td>
<td>16 (35%)</td>
<td>11 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Percentages exclude respondents who left the question blank.*
**TABLE 3**

*Mean responses for Version II, Q.1-2 and 4-5, by specialization; 1 = “substantially morally better”, 4 = “about the same”, 7 = “substantially morally worse”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Ethicist vs. others in dept.</th>
<th>Ethicist vs. non-academics</th>
<th>M&amp;E vs. others in dept.</th>
<th>M&amp;E vs. non-academics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethics specialists</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.4*</td>
<td>3.3*</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary interest in ethics</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-ethicist philosophers</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.4*</td>
<td>3.5*</td>
<td>3.4*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * indicates a statistically detectable difference from 4.0 (two-tailed t-test, p < .05)
TABLE 4

Responses to Version II, by specialization, rating of selected ethicist compared to rating of selected M&E specialist (averaging the vs. department and vs. non-academics ratings)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>selected ethicist rated better than</th>
<th>same rating</th>
<th>selected M&amp;E specialist rated better than</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ethics specialist respondents</td>
<td>21 (53%)*</td>
<td>10 (25%)</td>
<td>9 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respondents with secondary interest in ethics</td>
<td>15 (43%)</td>
<td>11 (31%)</td>
<td>9 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-ethicist philosopher respondents</td>
<td>19 (38%)</td>
<td>12 (24%)</td>
<td>19 (38%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * indicates a statistically significant tendency to rate the ethicist as better (two-tailed binomial test, ethicist better vs. M&E better, p < .05). However, a 2 x 3 $\chi^2$ test (ethicists and non-ethicists only) is not statistically significant (p = .25).