Chapter 1
Introductory Remarks and Overview

Value Judgements and Professional Life

What follows is intended to assist you to think as carefully as possible about various aspects of professional life that involve *value judgements*, that is, judgements about what is right or wrong, good or bad, worthwhile or not. Many university courses of professional preparation predominantly ignore such matters or simply take for granted a series of value stances concerning 'professional ethics' – sometimes these have been codified as a Code of Ethics for the profession. Or, even if various value judgemental issues are raised and discussed, students are not trained in the skills of critical thought prerequisite for a *rigorous* exploration of the issues. Even when courses attempt this task, little is available in the published literature to assist students to carry it out. Largely speaking, the book aims at helping you to reason in a rigorous way about such professional ethical matters. Its intent is to assist you to identify professional issues that are value judgemental and to form *considered* views on those issues. There are two elements here. First, identifying value judgemental issues; second, forming a considered view on them. Let us look at them in turn.

Some Particular Value Judgemental Issues Concerning Professional Life

I will not be able to cover all professions or all ethical issues, so these will be just a few illustrations. As we will see, however, there are a few broad themes within which most particular ethical concerns can be placed. What I will do is illustrate matters using the teaching profession as an example, identify some themes, draw some connections to some other professions and suggest that the themes are general ones governing any profession.

Teaching as an Illustration

Compulsory schooling is an extended exercise in forcing individuals to do what someone else wishes them to do. Apart from such school students, the only other people in society who are deprived of their liberty for such extended periods of time are criminals and the insane. Of course some students may enjoy what they learn and some of the curriculum might be what students would have chosen for themselves if given the choice but I think that it is safe to say that much of the time this is simply not so.

If people are to be subjected to loss of freedom of action (and thought) for such extended periods then there had better be a reason for doing this. And not just any old reason but *good* reason – a case that would *justify* such force. As soon as one is talking this way, matters have become *value* judgemental. So, presumably the general form of such a 'good reason' would be something like: 'Johnny and Janie should learn such and such because it is so worthwhile for them to do so that it is worth forcing such learning on them if necessary'. That is, *we* (or someone or other, anyway *not* Johnny or Janie) have a goal as to how we wish students to be and that goal is considered to be of such importance that it outweighs our normal granting of freedom of action (and of thought) to individuals.

The upshot of this is that one matter that is clearly value judgemental is *setting the goals* (or aims, or purposes) of schooling. We cannot avoid having *someone* decide such aims, for clearly teaching cannot go on in a goal-less vacuum. There had better be some direction for what is occurring in schools or schooling would be *literally aimless* activity, mere flailing about.

What would such goals look like? For a start, the goals operate at different levels of generality. At the detailed level, the purposes governing day-to-day teaching decisions are set by teachers. A teacher values having some pupil carrying out some particular language activity because that will help her understand sentence structure. But why bother having the goal of having one's pupils understand sentence structure? Perhaps in service of the cause of having them able to express their own ideas and understand the ideas of others. Why bother with that? Perhaps because being able to do that allows them a better chance of being gainfully employed than otherwise. But why consider that important? and so on. In short, one's rationale for considering the activities of schooling worth bothering with is, if pursued in some depth, likely to take one beyond the immediacy of schooling to broader and more fundamental *value* positions about what society should be like, what sorts of citizens it should have, how we should treat each other, the rights of various individuals and groups in society and so forth.

We have here a hierarchy of goals from nitty gritty ones concerning daily teaching tasks through to 'life, the universe and everything' goals of a very general sort. And it is the latter goals, the very general ones, which govern what are chosen as more particular goals. Look again at the chain of goals in the illustration of the last paragraph and you will see how the more general ones are appealed to in justification of earlier, less general, ones. So, who decides on goals at which levels?

Generally speaking, as I have noted, individual teachers' power in choosing the directions of what they do is limited. Other people choose the policies, the broad aims, that lay out what it is that teachers should be trying to achieve (like: 'students being employable') and it is the stipulated task of teachers to act in ways that serve those preset aims – they only get to choose the detail of the means to achieving ends chosen by someone else.

Or, at least, that is how things *are* now. I will return in a moment to question whether that is how things *should* be. But even if the task of teachers is not seen as

the setting of broad aims but merely as the achievement of broad aims set by other people, it seems to be their professional duty to enter into the debate as to what those goals should be. After all, teachers are the counterparts of prison warders or psychiatric ward staff, those other institutional enforcers of lost freedom. If they have not thought about the aims that their actions are directed towards and satisfied themselves that the directions of the institution they are part of are *proper* directions, indeed, ones important enough to outweigh individual freedom, then a crisis of conscience surely looms for them (or *should* do so). And, on pain of unprofessional superficiality, their value judgements on these issues had better be well thought out – clearly conceived of and thoroughly explored as to the arguments which could be raised in their defence or in objection to them. Part of the task of what follows in the book is providing assistance for those readers who are (or will be) teachers to think through some ideas about what they judge schooling should be trying to achieve (at that 'broad aim' level of decision) and to do that thinking as rigorously and deeply as possible.

So, one value judgemental aspect of schooling for teachers to have a good hard think about is: What should schools be trying to achieve? *What broad aims should their activities be directed at satisfying?*

I remarked that, at the moment, teachers do not get to decide these things. (They have individual power at the nitty gritty end of the spectrum and some power collectively in setting things like school mission statements and whatnot but *broad educational policy* setting is something outside the hands of practising teachers.) And this raises another value judgemental matter concerning schooling. Who on earth has the moral right (or perhaps the duty – not the same thing, an issue we will return to in a later chapter) to decide upon those broad policy directions that lay down a framework governing, ultimately, what individual students learn at school? That is, who *should* have the power to decide the broad aims of schooling? (Note that this is *not* the legal matter-of-fact question: 'who *does* have the power to decide the broad aims of schooling?'.) Perhaps, you might think, this should be a decision for teachers even if it is not that at the moment – after all, are not teachers the relevant educational experts? Or perhaps it should be parents that decide – it is their children of whom we speak. Or perhaps it should be the students themselves who decide; is it not a basic moral right to be in control of the contents of one's own mind? – and schooling aims *do* dictate some of what goes into a student's mind. Or perhaps it should be someone else or some combination of various parties – and so on. The point is that once one goes beyond simply noting who *does*, as a matter of fact, decide the broad aims at the moment to working out who *should* decide them, immediate ethical controversy ensues.

So, another value judgemental aspect of schooling for teachers to have a good hard think about is the following sort of 'second level' question: *Who should have the power to decide the broad aims of schooling?*

So far, we have focused upon the goals, or ends, or aims of schooling. But ethical questions also arise concerning the *means* to be chosen in achieving those ends. You might not see there to be any ethical dimensions here; surely, you

might think, the educational research literature will simply provide matter-of-fact guidance as to what means are most efficient and effective in producing this or that learning outcome, in achieving various valued goals. Perhaps so, but sometimes the most efficient and effective method, even if known, *should not* be employed. As a dramatic illustration, allow me the assumption (quite plausible in my view) that the most efficient and effective way of getting children to learn arithmetic is to threaten them with amputation of finger segments if, in the teacher's judgement, they are not working as hard as possible at their arithmetic – and to mean it and to have various students trundling around with less than a full count of fingers. One's objection to that could not be how successful it was in getting arithmetic learnt; it is, by assumption here, more *successful* than anything else. Rather, despite its efficacy, the objection to it would be that it was *unethical* to adopt such a means to achieving the learning outcome. A less dramatic illustration, and one which involves current practice in schools, is the use of positive reinforcement as a way of shaping behaviour. Arguably this is immoral. I mention it now to emphasize that schooling involves actual, not just hypothetical, practices that are deserving of careful critical scrutiny. As another 'real-world' example, consider the controversy concerning the use of corporal punishment in schools or the widespread practice of incarceration (detention) of disobedient students – indeed the whole business of punishment and behaviour control is up for critical scrutiny.

So, a third value judgemental aspect of schooling for teachers to have a good hard think about is: *What ethical constraints should there be on how teachers achieve the broad aims of schooling?*

And, as you might guess, a further, second level, question is: *Who should have power to decide what ethical constraints there are to be upon teachers' choices of means to ends?*

That will do as illustration of the point that teaching is hardly a value-free business. To summarize, most value judgemental issues concerning teaching can be grouped into four main themes:

1. What should schools be trying to achieve? What broad aims should their activities be directed at satisfying?
2. Who should have the power to decide the broad aims of schooling?
3. What ethical constraints should there be on how teachers achieve the broad aims of schooling?
4. Who should have power to decide what ethical constraints there are to be upon teachers' choices of means to ends?

Other Professions

Although it is but one profession, I have explored the case of teaching in some depth because most readers will have some familiarity with schools and because much of what is said about teaching transfers across to other professions. Consider the first theme above. *Every* profession has aims. Generally speaking, you might

feel that a fairly clear-cut answer is available as to what each profession should be trying to achieve, that is, what broad aims those employed in its institutions (or self-employed) should have their professional activities directed at satisfying. I suggest, however, that when it comes to pinning things down in more than the vaguest way, things become controversial fast. For instance, what about a scientist? What should a scientist be aiming to achieve? Let us put the following as a counterpart to our above question: *What should science be trying to achieve? What broad aims should scientists' activities be directed at satisfying?*

Well, it might be thought that the answer is clear cut and uncontroversial: qua scientist, one should be attempting to discover what reality is like. It might be surprising to you, but even at this 'broad brush' level, controversy exists (for instance: should science bother to try to find out truth about reality or is it enough to merely learn how to control it? – the latter is something achievable even with false theories, as human history has demonstrated). Anyway, even if one were to be happy with the 'pursuit of truth' broad aim, issues arise concerning which truths one should pursue. What is more important to find out than what? Where should our priorities lie? Should we fund pure, curiosity driven, research or only research of a more applied sort that, in some fairly direct way, benefits us? (And if both, then with what priorities?) Indeed, should some research be performed at all? Some decades ago, the so-called Race and IQ controversy flared. Two psychologists, Hans Eysenck and then Carl Jensen, reported upon some research that they had (individually) carried out comparing the IQ of three racial groups in America. Roughly speaking, Asian-Americans seemed to score more highly than white Americans and black Americans scored the lowest. All sorts of ordinary scientific debate occurred as to whether the research had been carried out competently or not but one interesting element was the suggestion that even if the research were to be competent and it were to be true that IQ differs across races, then it would have been better had we never known that. Such knowledge is divisive and dangerous and thus, it was argued, the research that led to it should never have been permitted. In short, some aims that scientists might have are held to be improper because some truths should not be known. I hope that I have said enough to illustrate that genuinely controversial issues arise concerning the settling of the aims of science.

How about a social worker? Again, let us try a counterpart question: *What should social work be trying to achieve? What broad aims should social workers' activities be directed at satisfying?*

Again, it might be thought, the answer is clear enough is it not? – *Assist people in disadvantaged circumstances*. Well, perhaps. It depends a bit upon what is meant by 'assist' and by 'disadvantaged'. There is room for differing interpretations here and such differences might mean different social workers committed to conflicting goals. To illustrate: am I assisting someone if, as a result of my intervention, he is now better able to *do what he wants*? Surely so, you might think; but what if what he wants is not good for him (whatever that means)? Anyway, even if, in assisting him, one is acting for *his* good, what if what is for *his* good is *not* for the good of

someone else (say his spouse, or society generally)? Or, what if he emphatically rejects what one thinks is good for him? Anyway, what (or who) is to determine what is 'good' for someone anyway?

The above bit of thinking aloud should do three things I hope. The first is persuade you that, not only is social work an activity directed towards goals that involve moral stances, it is unclear and controversial just what those valued goals *should* be. The second is to illustrate that some obvious-looking and attractive answers can be seen to be murky and troublesome after a little thought (yet too often things do not receive such thought but are left at a slogan-style level). The third is to illustrate some issues which not only appear in this little monologue but which tend to be recurrent issues in many discussions of professional ethics – not just in social work. One is *personal autonomy* – individual freedom of thought and/or action (and respect by others for that autonomy). Another is the well-being or *welfare of the individual* – what is good for her. Another is *what is good for the group*. (And note: all of the above are both murky and might conflict.) Finally, given that people will have different views on various professional issues involving moral values, is there any way of working out who is right (if it even makes sense to talk of any one view being right)?

Clearly, given that controversy will exist concerning the legitimacy of various suggested aims or goals for the guidance of Social Workers' professional practice, we are led to the question: 'who should set those goals?'. So: *Who should have the power to decide the broad aims of social work?*

I won't continue down the list of professions but I trust that it is clear that each profession *has to have some aims* and, given controversy about what those aims should be, a further issue arises concerning the locus of *legitimate* power to set those aims.

As you might predict, counterparts of themes 3 and 4 above (concerning teaching) exist for other professions as well. I will not laboriously work through them but will content myself with a few quick illustrations.

For the sake of illustration, assume truth as an aim of science; now, is it legitimate for a scientist to cause another creature to suffer in the pursuit of truth? Assume clients' welfare as an aim of social work; now, is it legitimate for a social worker to lie to a client even if it is for the client's own good? Assume patients' health as an aim of nursing; now, should a nurse ever dispute or, more seriously, subvert, the judgement of a physician, even if to do so would benefit a patient's health? Assume assisting clients to solve their problems as an aim of counselling; now, can a counsellor ever properly breach confidentiality to serve that aim (and if so, in what sorts of circumstances)? And so on. I think it clear that issues can arise concerning the *morality* of the *manner* of one's pursuit of one's professional goals.

And, I suggest, given that controversy will ensue as to what the right answer is on any of these issues, the last of our themes will arise. Who should decide what the moral constraints upon professional practice should be? Should it be a matter for the conscience of individual professionals or should they be governed

somehow – morally answerable to someone else? Note that, for these 'Who should decide?' questions, you will not automatically have the same type of answer for each profession. Moreover, you might, even within the one profession, judge different sorts of people to appropriately have ethical control over different particular matters. But such complexities lie ahead of us. For now, all I hope to have done is suggest to you that *any* profession is involved in making moral value judgements in at least our four areas; put crisply:

1. What should be the profession's aims?
2. Who should decide the profession's aims?
3. What moral constraints should there be on the way practitioners achieve its aims?
4. Who should decide those constraints?

Many practitioners are impatient with these matters and just want to get on with their jobs and students want to focus on practical stuff that will bear directly on practical everyday professional tasks. But, on pain of being a mere 'hired hand', a sort of mercenary, uncaring about the rightness or wrongness of what you do, you had better have some views on these matters. And, on pain of unprofessional superficiality, your views had better be something better than just the first thing that comes into your head or pops out of your mouth (and onto 'butchers' paper') in a one-day professional development workshop or whatnot. As will emerge, the issues are complicated ones and having a clear, rationally supported stance on them is not easy to achieve. Almost certainly, you will come to find that your initial views on these topics will prove to be muddly and open to awkward objections. Do not worry about that; ideas cannot be easily improved without criticism. Which brings me to the next of the two points raised in the section Value Judgements and Professional Life above. What is it to have a *considered* view on these topics and how does one manage to build one?

Values and Argument

Having a considered view on these matters is a matter of having a view that is *clear* and *well argued for*. The former can take a while to achieve but is important because one can hardly argue for (or against) a proposal that one does not even clearly understand. The latter involves more than what you might be familiar with, namely rattling off a bunch of 'for' arguments for one's position. It is not even just a matter of being 'balanced' and also having a bunch of 'against' arguments and then somehow or other plucking a conclusion out at the end. It is not much good advancing any such arguments without subjecting them to critical scrutiny. That such and such is an argument in favour of, or against, some proposal is not of much help in trying to come to a considered judgement unless one knows whether that argument is any good or not. So, what is involved in having a well thought

through stance is *not* just *listing* arguments but *judging their worth*. This is a key point and constitutes the 'core business' of this book. Appraising the merits of some line of reasoning in support of (or against) some value stance concerning schooling involves a collection of high-level cognitive (and metacognitive) skills. Most undergraduates do not possess those skills to any great extent but have the capacity to learn them (to differing degrees of course). However, learning them is rather hard work and will involve you in a style of thought that most of you will find unfamiliar and frustratingly difficult to improve in. For quite some time, it will involve you in building up competence in some sub-skills before you are able to link them together and engage in the sort of extended reasoning in depth that is involved in argument appraisal and forming a considered view on the topic. There is no quick and easy way of developing these capacities; it is just a matter of coaching and practice – it *is* worth the effort though.

Layout of Remaining Chapters

In this section, I wish to outline briefly the chapter plan of the rest of the book (and explain my choice of layout).

I said above that extended reasoning involved a suite of sub-skills and items of knowledge concerning reasoning. Some of these skills concern the crafting of a single piece of reasoning, a discrete, or individual, argument. In discussions of an extended sort, such arguments form the building blocks, or elements, of the discussion. A basic skill, then, is being able to lay out an argument in a way that manages to say what you are trying to say in a clear and complete manner. My experience, and that of other reasoning tutors, is that those new to the task of careful statement of arguments tend to leave bits out and, moreover, when attention is drawn to this and they are asked to fill in the missing pieces, most people find it difficult to do so. In short, they have trouble portraying in a clear and complete way what they are trying to argue (or, as the other side of the same coin, unable to easily interpret, and portray, the arguments of others). For instance, say someone said that Harold did a wrong thing because he hit Horace. The argument is incompletely stated and rests upon the (unstated) moral principle that hitting people is wrong. So, put more completely, the argument might go: hitting people is wrong and Harold hit Horace so what Harold did was wrong. Or, laid out a bit more formally:

> Hitting people is wrong.
> Harold hit Horace.
> So,
> Harold did something wrong.

Simple enough in this case perhaps, but, as you might guess, rather more difficult at other times when the topics are more involved. And, as you will see when I go

on to discuss the task of criticizing arguments, it is important to have arguments stated completely because if you leave bits out, then the bit left out might be what should be being challenged. Obviously it is hard to challenge something you do not even realize is there as a part of a given argument.

So, a key task is learning how to do this sort of thing: taking an initial attempt at an argument (*yours* as well as those of others) and portraying it with all of its bits and pieces stated clearly and explicitly and in the right sequence. Chapter 3 – 'Structuring Arguments' addresses that task of portraying arguments in a clear and complete manner and introduces some simple theory concerning the elements of an argument and a way of methodically checking what you are writing down in order to avoid various errors.

Note that I have skipped Chapter 2 and leapt ahead to Chapter 3, which, as we have just seen, is about portraying arguments clearly and completely. Now I wish to return to Chapter 2 – 'Proposition Types'. As will be outlined in Chapter 3, arguments about what it is *right* to do, or what people *should* be like, introduce a complexity that is not present in arguments on some other subject matters. Some of the propositions that go to make up the argument are of a distinct type or category from the others. For instance, to say that Harold hit Horace is simply to (purport to) describe what occurred. To say that what he did was *wrong* is to pass moral judgement upon it – a quite different sort of proposition. Yet both sorts of proposition might occur as elements of an argument concerning Harold's conduct (as happened in our illustration of a couple of paragraphs ago). Understanding what is happening in an argument involves being able to distinguish these (and other) different types of proposition from one another and Chapter 2 introduces and illustrates some basic theory concerning proposition types.

Say that you have progressed to the stage of being able to state some argument clearly and completely and with the nature of all of its component elements understood – what next?

Recall that I observed above that, for serious enquiry, it was not enough that one could stipulate a reason for some moral stance that one is taking, or some proposal as to what should be done; one wants the reason to be a *good* one, one that one could have confidence in as a rationale for one's position. So, how can one tell whether an argument is any good or not? Not a bad way is to see how it stands up to persistent criticism. Chapter 4 – 'Subjecting Arguments to Criticism: Logic Criticism' and Chapter 5 – 'Subjecting Arguments to Criticism: Premise Criticism' introduce to you the two core tasks involved in argument appraisal. The idea here is that the extent to which an argument successfully withstands criticism is the extent to which you should rely (*tentatively*, always) on it as a ground for thinking, or doing, whatever it was an argument for, as a sound argument for its conclusion. So if, after careful investigation, you think it *factually true* that Harold hit Horace, *and* consider the principle 'Hitting people is wrong' to be morally *correct*, *and* judge that it really does *logically follow* from these two accepted propositions that Harold's hitting of Horace was wrong, then you seem to have a sound argument in support of your *value judgement* that Harold did something wrong (in hitting

Horace). But is it factually true? And is the principle morally correct? And does the conclusion of the argument really logically follow? Chapters 4 and 5 focus on such questions and are the last of the chapters of the book to introduce various basic sub-skills and associated theoretical ideas to you.

Although Chapters 4 and 5 introduce you to the basics of argument criticism, the process of critically examining an argument in order to see how good it is can be quite drawn out. Think about it: just because an argument has been criticized does not mean that it is not any good; it all depends on how good the *criticism* is. Criticisms can themselves be criticized and on it goes. Things become complicated fast here and in Chapter 6 – 'Extended Reasoning: the Basics' I introduce to you some techniques for methodically working your way through the maze of criticism, possible response to criticism, response to the response and so on; in short, argument *in depth*.

Chapter 7 – 'Extended Reasoning: Some Complexities' follows on from Chapters 3, 5 and 6. You will recall that Chapter 3 was concerned with the task of taking a half-formed intuitive argument and getting it laid out clearly and completely in a structured way. However some arguments are more complicated than others and so the structures capturing what is going on in them will also vary in complexity. In Chapter 3 I discuss only the simplest structures and defer consideration of more complex argument patterns until this chapter (I do this because I think it wise for you to become confident and competent walkers before trying triple somersaults). So, one task of this chapter is to introduce to you some of the more complicated forms that arguments concerning some stance or proposal might take. The other part of Chapter 7 follows on from Chapters 5 and 6. Remember that Chapter 5 introduced you to the task of mounting a certain sort of criticism against an argument (premise criticism as it happened, that is, the challenging of the assumptions an argument is starting from – things like the moral principle 'hitting people is wrong' of our little Harold and Horace example above). In Chapter 6 we considered (among other things) reaction to such criticism (does it succeed? can the original argument resist the criticism? and so on) – in short, reasoning in an extended way as the merits or otherwise of some line of thought are teased out. This sort of extended reasoning can be quite involved and complex and this chapter explores some of those complexities. In particular it discusses what might occur when you think that you have some issue that has emerged in such an extended enquiry sorted out: how do you close off a particular thread of dispute and work out what implications that closure has for your topic of interest?

Although some of the book's techniques and ideas apply to any exercise in critical thinking and almost all of it applies directly to thinking critically about any old moral matters, Chapter 8 – 'Babble and Murk' is focused directly on some concepts that seem prevalent in much thinking about moral problems that arise in professional circumstances. There are some horribly muddled and intellectually disreputable ideas concerning issues within our four themes listed above for various professions. As the name suggests, the chapter is simply an exercise in conceptual tidying up, one of attuning you to what is wrong with some common slogans,

'buzz words' and obscure ideas so that you can move on to better conceptualized views concerning the ethical issues arising in, and surrounding, your professional life. I would have liked to make this an earlier chapter so that the waters could be un-muddied more swiftly but some of what I say would, I suspect, not be understood until you have some sub-skills of analysis and reason under your belt. So, I have deferred the task until we finished portraying our suite of techniques. If you want to jump ahead a bit to read this, then I recommend at least waiting until you have a fairly solid grip of Chapter 3.

Chapter 9 – 'Some Ethical Theory' is intended to provide some background for your critical thought about your value judgements (especially those that connect with professional life, although it is not limited to that). I draw upon some standard ethical theory and I try to draw as finely judged a line as I can between overwhelming you with moral philosophy (a result of which can be that you lose sight of your professional motivations and engage with various philosophical puzzles as an end in itself – which is fine for philosophers but, for practising professionals, is losing sight of the point a bit) and underwhelming you with too cursory a treatment of what are quite complicated and abstract matters. As an illustration of the sorts of issues addressed, try this: given that different people will have different views on our topics, is there any such thing as objective moral truth on these matters, *right answers* if you like, or are wrongness and rightness, like beauty, subjective and 'in the eye of beholder', that is, merely a matter of personal commitment or preference? As you might guess, there is a considerable amount of argumentation in moral philosophy about such questions and I try to chart some of the territory. I probably err on the side of underwhelming you but, in any event, my experience with students has been that, despite the importance and clear connection of such matters to their professional ethical concerns, most students are almost totally unaware of them and resistant to wishing to engage with such abstractions. Yet it seems important to make some attempt at wrestling with these issues, despite their difficulty. Accordingly, when you get to Chapter 9 you should find the spread of theoretical positions quite a voyage of self-discovery and challenge as you try to place your own intuitions about your moral principles into some place in the network of theories that I present to you and consider some of the problems with those views.

Closure

So, there is a sketch of the role and layout of the book. Know in advance that most of you are probably not used to thinking about these matters in such a relentlessly rigorous and in-depth way. This means that you will have to work hard for some period of time at getting some critical thinking/reasoning skills robustly in place before you are ready to be 'let off the leash' to *use* those skills when reasoning about some morally vexing professional concerns. Expect to be frustrated at times when things are not 'clicking' and it all seems rather involved and complicated.

Keep at it though, reread the section of the book relevant to whatever it is that is puzzling you, try to put things in your own words. In short, actively engage and re-engage with the subject matter and it will usually 'click' at some point. Understanding this sort of stuff is definitely assisted greatly by discussion with your peers (either in formal or informal settings) and, if you are not following things, then discussion with your tutor/instructor is, of course, also advised. The effort is worth it, though; to the extent that you can reason in depth you will have a potent suite of intellectual skills that you will find you will apply as (almost!) second nature in all sorts of situations (not just professional ones).

One last thing: when you are out practising your profession, *please* try to foster clear and rigorous thought about ethical matters in those you encounter in your professional lives. Such thinking will, perhaps, not be as formally pursued as you have been introduced to in this book but quite a lot can be done short of that and still be worthwhile. As I said at the start, there is more to professional life than the practical everyday matters you have to contend with and those matters are important enough to think properly about.