Task 5c Ethics

Reader 5 has given me a wealth of information on the subject of ethics. There is a lot to look at regarding this subject so I felt creating a wiki would allow me to explore more rather than just posting a blog.

Ethics is a fascinating and interesting area of study into which I have not touched on before. However the more I look into it the more relevant I find it to both my personal and professional life. Ethics can sometimes be a tricky subject to deal with as you have to respect many different aspects as well as the people you are dealing with. On occasions ethics and morals can vary depending on culture and country, also there can be sticky territory with ethics in religion and law so you have to tread carefully. I feel ethics are going to play a big part in our inquiries so its important to understand them fully.

The reader looks at the three main contexts in which ethics are applied: personal, professional and organisational. All of which link together in order to promote the greater good. However often by applying all three of these you can in turn create conflict. For example what do you do if your personal ethics interfere with your professional ethics. A lot of performers and performing unions believe that actors and actresses should not work for free, however many do whether its to boost their Cv or gain experience. This is where my personal and professional ethos cross over as I am currently in the running for a profit share show, which means at the end of the show all cast and crew get an equal share of the profits, but sometimes the show makes no money so in essence you could end up working for free? What do I do?

I wanted to apply each context into a scenario involved in my inquiry as I was interested to see how they may effect each other.

Personal ; In order to undertake a successful interview I would need to research different methods and decide what would be more effective. Also understand that I would need consent to use the information for my inquiry. Not only would i need consent but I would need it in a written form.

Professional ; To conduct my interview In a professional manner I would look to the BERA for the official guide lines to make sure I adhered to their ethos and carried out the interview and gained consent in the correct way.

Organisation ; I will basing my Inquiry on self employed actresses like myself, therefore there won't be a specific organisation like a school ethos to comply too. However I will be respecting people's privacy and involving some of the ethical principles I touched upon in Task 5B towards my professional peers.

Society ; The people taking part in my inquiry will be made fully aware of how it will benefit both them and other people with their industry. They will also have freely signed and given consent

for me to use the information and understand that the inquiry will be taken out in an ethically sound way.

The History of Ethics

Ethics trace back to the likes of Aristotle.

"The word ethics originates from the greek word Ethos which means character."

M.U., Reader 5, P.6, 2012

I personally feel our character is determined by our upbringing, involving parents, religion, friends,all of this creates the environment we grow up in. Reader 5 highlights the fact that some of the ancient greats including Aristotle would consider character and would look into what makes people good. I think our personal ethics which have been built into us from an early age will decide whether we are either "good" or "bad".

As with any subject there is a lot of debate and other philosophers have added their input.

"to achieve peaceful, co-operative social order we need to adhere to a set of moral rules"

Hobbes (1651) M.u., Reader 5, p.7,2012

Hobbes believed that unless everyone stuck to the rules we would be in a continuous state of disarray. Immanuel Kant (1779) also believed in the sense of moral rules but wanted these based on reason not religion. Kant was strongly linked to the ideas that lying was always bad no matter what even if you were lying to help the greater good. Like most theories there is a strong counter argument to Kants views by JS Mills. JS Mill (1861) fought strongly to show people that its all about the greater good.

"JS Mill (1861) developed a theory of moral obligation which proposed to choose that which will tend to produce the greatest good for the greatest number."

JS Mill (1861) M.u., Reader 5, p.7,2012

Theoretical Approaches to Ethics

The reader looks at the three areas in which we can use to evaluate ethical issues.

Consequentialist ; This theory relates back to the likes of JS Mill. If an act is taken place which will help the greater good then it is ethically correct. The reader gives a good example;

"Hence to kill 1 person in order to save 9 is justified within this paradigm."

M.u., Reader 5, p.8,2012

Deontology ; Here we explore that lying is always wrong, which links back to Kant who believed good will has to be behind your actions. In order for something to be morally right the motivation behind the action has to be out of good will. This is a rule based theory with motivation being the key.

Virtue Ethicist ; The emphasize on this theory is looking more towards the character rather than rules or consequences created in the process. Here we follow the likes of Aristotle and focus on the person rather than their actions.

Research Ethics

Due to the nature of my inquiry I felt it was a very vital part of the reader. Considering I have never undertaken a professional inquiry in the manner I am planning to do so I should pay close attention to the ethos that I should adhere to.

First of all the reader brought to light that its a good idea to look at the motivation behind the idea and also if its going to bring benefits to the greater good. As a researcher we will carry a mountain of responsibilities from participants to truthfully analysing the data. We are solely responsible for making sure that this inquiry is carried out with an ethically sound method. In order to reduce the risk or harm to both the participants and you the researcher. The reader points us towards BERA which highlights the main tasks and precautions we should undertake.I found these extremely helpful guidelines, you can find these either on page 18 of the reader or on their website.

From indulging in this reader I have become more aware of several ethical issues and now realise how important it is to adhere to ethics while undertaking my inquiry. There is one main point and responsibility from BERA that has really stuck with me and whenever I need

reminding of how to conduct my research and evaluate my date I am going to remind myself of it. It is;

"To provide accurate, truthful and complete reports, and disseminate the research outcomes through authorised and agreed channels, and ensuring that the work is available for critical review."

BERA M.u., Reader 5, p.18,2012

References

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