

THIS WEEK AT THE CENTER FOR ETHICS*

Friday, August 15, 2008

- **Dr. Stoll was solicited for an interview with the New York Times about a story at the Olympic Games at Beijing where a coach is proselytizing Christianity to his athletes. Katie Thomas is the reporter. Below find Dr. Stoll's comments:**

All individuals have a need for a moral life. The latest research in neuroscience tells us that we are "hardwired" for morality – that we yearn for meaning and purpose. (See Lawrence Tancredi: Hardwired for Morality, plus numerous other texts and journal articles available). Thus, discussions of the important metaphysical questions of life (Who am I? What purpose do I have? Does God Exist?) are important to our development and our welfare. How individuals go about doing this is a very personal decision. Also, when individuals believe they have found the purpose and meaning of life, most want to share it with others and seek to convince others of the importance and joy of this new meaning. We have a built in empathy and need to share with others. Your concern is about the coach who appears to be over zealous in his approach. In making a moral decision about rightness and wrongness of actions, we really are looking through a closed window and have a limited vision of what is happening. With that being said, inspiring others to lead your life's choice of "meaning" is something that we do as humans – the stickiness happens when we are too enthusiastic and force our perspective on others who are under our tutelage. That then is the moral question: Are the individuals finding this meaning on their own account or do they feel compelled to do so ... so that they have a better opportunity to compete. If they are choosing this new way to meaning – whether its Christianity, or Hinduism, or Islam – is not the issue. The issue is the power structure of the individual leading the movement, and the resultant interpretation by the followers. All of it may be well intentioned, but in practice may be doing more harm than good

- **Dr. Beller and Dr. Stoll have submitted a requested article on moral reasoning in golf populations to a text being published through the University of Kentucky Press. Titled: How Golf Builds and shapes Moral Character. The anthology is a series of philosophic papers about ethics and golf.**
- **The Center is gearing up for the next academic year. GAs for this term are Justin Barnes, David Brunner, Matthew Hellman, and Tyler Wilt. Interns are Sarah Loney and Sara Dennehy. Everyone will be back in office next week as we start the countdown to the Academic year 2008-2009. We have a busy agenda this year: Justin and David will be proposing for their dissertations, as well as doctorate candidate, Pete VanMullem. We have over 30 schools in the WWC project which will mean much data assessment as well as developing and refining all of our curriculum and texts.**
- **2008 Summer school is finalizing this next week. All three Servant Leadership in Coaching students finished their program for summer and received their CEU credits..**
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- **Coming events:**
 - Dr. Stoll is quoted in a forthcoming October, 2008, article of ChemMatters about the fairness of new athletic technology which improves performance. <http://www.acs.org/chemmatters>.