

*Ethics for everyone* — I was recently offered the opportunity to teach a course in business ethics by the department chair. I declined, being a logic and critical thinking kind of guy. But it led me to muse . . . business ethics has become a hugely successful area of philosophic inquiry — lots of papers and textbooks published, lots of courses offered. Having been in biz myself for many a year, I won't gainsay the idea that many business people need ethics. But, curiously, you don't see *any* "applied ethics" courses offered by academics in other areas, areas that seem even more in need of ethical edification.

How about, say, courses in consumer ethics — teaching consumers not to lie to salespeople, or not to welsh on their credit cards, or not to demand government services for which they refuse to pay with *their own* taxes. You know, that kind of stuff. And how about courses in government ethics, teaching those intending to work for government (soon to be almost everyone, I reckon) not to take bribes, not to trample people's rights, not to overtax, not to run Ponzi schemes (like Social Security), not to set up concentration camps?

Indeed, should the academic philosophers ever reach the pinnacle of self-realization — something I expect to see about the time businessmen reach the pinnacle of morality — they might start offering courses in academic ethics. Academic ethics would teach those who intend a career in academe not to take hefty salaries for teaching while refusing to teach, or not to publish bogus and jargon-ridden scholarship, or not to be a grant-whore, or not to foist your asinine freaking opinions upon hapless students . . .

Yeah, fat chance we'll see *that*.

— Gary Jason