Coaches Who Care:

The Ethical Professional Identity Development of Moral Exemplar Collegiate Coaches

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all of the moral exemplars in the coaching profession—the women and men who have dedicated themselves to bettering generations of athletes of all ages by living and coaching with integrity, passion, and purpose, and inspiring their athletes to do the same.

Abstract

Recent media attention has highlighted the commercialization, greed, corruption, abuse, and violence occurring in "big-time" NCAA intercollegiate athletics. While sport has great potential to be a context for moral education and development (e.g., Gibbons, Ebbeck & Weiss, 1995), participation in sport can also undermine athletes' moral judgment and behavior (e.g., Bredemeier & Shields, 1984). As mentors and educators, coaches can contribute to and make a difference in athlete moral development (e.g., Bolter & Weiss, 2012), especially at the collegiate level—an especially powerful time of growth in young adults' lives (Colby, 2008).

Unfortunately, big-time intercollegiate athletics has been criticized for its "for-profit" business model, which puts pressure on coaches to place winning ahead of the holistic development of their athletes. While some coaches succumb to these pressures, engaging in unethical actions, others negotiate them and thrive as moral leaders. As central agents in the moral education of their athletes, coaches' own level of moral development and understanding of professionalism is important to consider.

The purpose of the present study was to understand the ethical professional identity development of NCAA Division I collegiate head coaches who have made sustained commitments to moral values in their personal and professional lives. In-depth interviews based on moral exemplar (Colby & Damon, 1992) and moral identity development theories (Kegan, 1982, 1998) were conducted with 12 coaches nominated as "moral exemplars" by their peer coaches and athletic directors. Interviews elicited themes of moral exemplarity and professionalism including having an internalized moral compass; a deep responsibility, care, and respect for others; and a high standard of excellence; teaching; engaging in ongoing personal and professional growth; and being able to reconcile conflict in their personal and professional lives. Analyzing interviews using Kegan's (1982, 1998) framework of ethical identity development, 11

of 12 moral exemplar coaches scored above the average adult stage of ethical identity

development, demonstrating strong unity of personal, moral, and professional values.

Illuminating the mechanisms by which moral exemplar collegiate coaches develop and

sustain an ethical professional identity can inform and improve coach education for current and

future members of the profession.

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CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

To participate in sport is to participate in an inherently moral endeavor (Power &

Sheehan, in press; Shields & Bredemeier, 1995). Sport is a competitive activity, and competition

is based on underlying moral precepts such as fairness, honesty, and justice. Without rules and a

level playing field, contests would have little meaning. Hardman, Jones, and Jones (2010) call

sport a "moral laboratory" in which athletes and coaches "develop and test the moral dimensions

of their evolving characters" (p. 345). Even sport behavior is couched in moral terms—playing

fair, cheating, and being a "good sport." While sport has great potential to be a context for moral

education and development from the youth to the collegiate level, participation in sport can also

undermine athletes' moral judgment and behavior (see, e.g., Bredemeier, 1985; Bredemeier &

Shields, 1984, 1986 a & b; Kavussanu & Ntoumanis, 2003; Lumpkin, Stoll, & Beller, 2003).

Specifically at the intercollegiate level, images and scandalous stories abound related to

commercialization, greed, corruption, abuse, and violence in "big-time" college athletics—

behaviors by athletes, coaches, and administrators that undermine the integrity of sport. Some

question the place of big-time athletics within the university as the National Collegiate Athletic

Association's (NCAA) claims of "amateurism" and concern for the health and well-being of the

"student-athlete" grow more and more comical in the contemporary "for-profit" business model

of college sport. Some argue the commercialization of collegiate sport at the highest level (i.e.,

NCAA Division I) seems to have overtaken the traditional mission of institutions of higher

education primarily as places of learning.

Various legal and reform efforts have been undertaken and are currently in play to return

collegiate athletics back to a context in which positive moral education and development is

primary and commercial interests are less prominent. Two main organizations have led this

charge. The first, the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, was formed in 1989 after a

decade of highly visible scandals in college athletics and has attempted to reform college athletics

and realign it with academic values and the educational mission of colleges and universities. The

commission is proud of the fact that the NCAA adopted several of its recommendations, such as

requiring higher academic standards for athletes and giving college presidents leadership and

control over athletic conferences and NCAA decisions (Knight Commission, 2012). The second,

the Drake Group, was founded in 1999 and has a similar mission: "to defend academic integrity

in higher education from the corrosive aspects of commercialized college sports" (Drake Group,

2014, para. 2). This group has been lobbying Congress to support the College Athlete Protection

(CAP) Act, which takes steps to combat the negative effects of the commercialization of college

sport. Some of these negative effects include the lowering of admissions standards for and

ignoring the academic achievement of athletes; engaging in an "arms race" of building state-of-

the art, exclusive athletic facilities; providing excessive compensation to men's football and

basketball head coaches; not doing enough to prevent or attend to athletic injuries; and financially

and academically exploiting athletes (Drake Group, 2014). Despite actions by both the Drake

Group and the Knight Commission, many of these issues have worsened. Lopiano and Gurney

(2014) voice the concern shared by many of the "abject failure of the NCAA to retain a nexus

with the educational missions of these Division I programs and a clear line of demarcation

between collegiate sports and professional employment" (para. 10). In addition to the issues

noted, given current legal challenges facing the NCAA and the autonomy handed to the "Big 5"

NCAA Division I conferences, more problems have developed, and questions remain about the

integrity and future of college sports.

　　　　While individuals and organizations like the Knight Commission and the Drake Group

are attempting to reform college sport from the top down—primarily through the NCAA—to

return it to a context in which positive moral education and development can occur, another

alternative is to focus on the ground level—on the coaches who, as teachers and role models,

have enormous influence on their athletes. College coaches, especially at the highest NCAA Division I level, face pressures to win, bring in top recruits, and produce revenue, and these demands can come at the expense of the experience, development, health, and well-being of student-athletes. Nearly 25 years ago Lindholm (1979) wrote, "The coach indeed faces conditions other academicians can avoid. In few other professions are one's skills and performance evaluated in so public and simplistic a fashion. It is a common though unfortunate tendency for one to look merely at a coach's won-lost record to judge his success. . . . The pressures and demands on many coaches have caused them to subvert these [educational] values and betray the virtues attributed to sports to achieve the bottom line—winning" (p. 735), and this is even more true today. Some intercollegiate coaches succumb to these pressures, leading to unethical decisions and actions, but there are others who are able to negotiate them and even thrive as moral leaders in the eyes of their athletes and peers. In the current environment of collegiate sport, it is important to find the latter—the "moral exemplars" of contemporary collegiate coaching—and examine what enables them to be grounded morally despite the immense pressures of intercollegiate athletics. The purpose of this study was to understand their groundedness—their ethical professional identity—in order to provide a powerful model for others and initiate change and reform from the bottom up. First, to provide greater context, it is necessary to explore sport, especially college sport, as a ripe context for moral development and coaches' roles in that development.

The adage "sport builds character" suggests the promise of sport as means to teach athletes moral values and lessons, which hopefully carry over from sport to "real life" and help them to be well-balanced, productive members of society. Many scholars believe participation in sport *can* help the moral development of athletes, but despite the popularly held functionalist belief that participating in sport *inherently* leads to positive outcomes and development for athletes, these effects are not automatic (see, e.g., Gibbons, Ebbeck & Weiss, 1995; Shields &

Bredemeier, 1995; Weiss, Smith, & Stuntz, 2008). In fact, a growing body of research suggests

otherwise.

Studies over the last several decades reveal that a sport context (vs. an "everyday"

context) is linked to lower levels of athlete moral reasoning (Bredemeier, 1985; Bredemeier &

Shields, 1984, 1986b), that athletes engage in lower levels of moral reasoning than non-athletes

(Bredemeier & Shields, 1986a), and that factors of sport participation such as level of competition

(Bredemeier, 1985; Mouratidou, Chatzopoulos, & Karamavrou, 2007), frequency of sport

participation (Priest, Krause, & Beach, 1999), and moral atmosphere (Boixados, Cruz,

Torregrosa, & Valiente, 2004; Stephens, 2000, 2001; Stephens, & Bredemeier, 1996), can lead to

unethical or antisocial behavior such as rule violation and aggression. Evidence such as this

demonstrates the importance of counteracting these trends. Making sport a positive experience

through ethical mentoring and deliberate efforts at character and moral education in sport

contexts can improve the moral functioning of participants (Shields & Bredemeier, 2008).

Coaches are those mentors and educators in sport, and coaches play a central role in

whether sport has a positive or negative influence on athletes. Owing to the amount of time

coaches spend with their athletes, their position of authority, and their credibility as a source of

information, coaches can contribute to athlete moral and character development (see, e.g., Bolter

& Weiss, 2012; Horn, 2008; Kavussanu, 2008; Weiss, Smith, & Stuntz, 2008), and coaching built

on moral values such care for others, love, respect, and responsibility does make a difference in

the moral development of athletes (Stoll, 2011). Although some think morality develops during

childhood and is relatively stable by adulthood, research reveals that adults continue to develop

morally across their lifespan (Kegan 1994; Kegan & Lahey, 2009). Specifically, college students

have great potential for growth in moral understanding, moral goals and values, moral identity,

and moral discourse and practice (Colby, 2008b). Thus, college coaches can and do play an

important part in their athletes' moral development at an especially powerful time in young adults' lives.

If college coaches are central to the moral education and development of their athletes, their own morality and level of moral development is a central part of the equation. Individuals cannot model and teach higher levels of moral functioning than that of which they themselves are capable (Lahey, Souvaine, Kegan, Goodman, & Felix, 2011). This should be of increasing concern in college athletics considering the abundant examples of coaches who demonstrate less-than-ethical behavior. Now infamous coaches like Jerry Sandusky, former assistant football coach at Penn State convicted for serial child molestation, and Mike Rice, former head men's basketball coach at Rutgers fired for the verbal and physical abuse of his players, let alone the number of coaches who engage in recruiting violations or academic fraud, make it clear that sports' main moral educators—coaches in whom athletes and parents place their trust—are not always the best moral role models. Smith and Reynolds argue that instances of blatant wrongdoing by coaches should concern everyone as possible "symptoms of organizational dysfunction" (1990, p. 22). The current model of big-time intercollegiate sport has become dysfunctional, and the pressures of the contemporary commercialized culture of Division I athletics may encourage many coaches to embrace Vince Lombardi's "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing"[1] philosophy, and feel it superfluous to teach anything beyond the physical and mental skills it takes to win.

Coaches deal with a classic catch-22—if they are not successful (defined as winning in today's culture), they lose their jobs, but if they perceive the only way to compete in such a high-stakes environment is to push or break NCAA rules and even the law, they can get caught and also lose their jobs. In this atmosphere, at the very least, coaches may move away from a mission of the holistic development of student athletes and become overly pragmatic and rule-driven,

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[1] While the origin of this quote is a subject of debate, few dispute that Lombardi made the words famous (Overman, 1999).

which, at best, means operating at the floor—the minimum standards—of ethical behavior, not as the inspired ethical role models and leaders they should be. Part of this rule-based coaching mentality could stem from the fact that while coaches are often assumed to practice and teach good moral conduct and sportsmanship, unlike professionals in many other fields, coaches (1) do not have to go through education in ethics and (2) do not have a universal professional code of ethics. First, the coach education and development that does exist is primarily focused on technical skills and training (McNamee, 2008). Sabock and Sabock (2005) note that "despite the fact that some of the greatest problems in the history of sport have been and will continue to be caused by rule violations, the topic of ethics is regularly given slight attention or completely ignored in many textbooks, classrooms, coaching workshops, and clinics" (p. 1). Second, because coaches in the United States do not have a universal ethical code or standards, they vastly differ in their interpretations of where to draw the line between "clever strategy" and unethical conduct (Sabock & Sabock, 2005). Essentially, coaches do not have a shared understanding of the accepted standards of conduct for their profession, making it one of the only "helping" professions without a mandatory certification process, a universal code of conduct, and a peer-review system.

What the traditional "professions"[2] all have in common are codes of ethics set up through their governing bodies that establish general rules to "guide behavior, to establish standards of practice, and to give society some guarantee that professionals will demonstrate respect for community expectations" (Haney, Long, & Howell-Jones, 1998, p. 241). McNamee (2011) adds that codes of ethics offer clarity in the expectations of the professional, criteria to evaluate members of the profession (or organization), a framework for resolving conflict, and a way to exclude those who violate aspects of the code. Codes of ethics are highly valuable, if not imperative, for setting a standard for moral behavior in professional life.

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[2] These include medicine, divinity, and the law.

In response to increasing concern over lapses in coach moral conduct, many independent sports communities and associations have established codes of ethics (Tuncel, 2010), and at the college level, rising numbers of rules violations have put pressure on administrators to promote and regulate ethical behavior. Unfortunately, the NCAA, as the main governing body of collegiate sport, provides coaches little in the way of ethical guidelines. Its reference to ethical conduct is a bylaw buried in the 434-page 2014-2015 NCAA Division I Manual: "Individuals . . . shall act with honesty and sportsmanship at all times so that intercollegiate athletics as a whole, their institutions and they, as individuals, shall represent the honor and dignity of fair play and the generally recognized high standards associated with wholesome competitive sports" (NCAA, 2014, p. 43). The rest of the bylaw is a lengthy catalogue of what constitutes unethical conduct— sports wagering, fraudulent academic credit, providing banned substances, etc.—and reads more like a list of policies and procedures than an actual code of ethics. Research shows effective codes of ethics should be based on a few overriding principles and avoid being too specific; they should provide a foundation for ethical decision-making in a variety of situations instead of limiting interpretation (Jordan, Greenwell, Geist, Pastore, & Mahony, 2004). While the inadequacy of the NCAA's general code of ethics has led individual intercollegiate conferences and specific sports to form their own codes (see, e.g. the 2014 Big-12 Conference Handbook and the Division I Men's Basketball Ethics Coalition), increasing rules violations and unethical conduct suggest the codes have not yet been incorporated into the culture of college sports.

For coaches, having a sense of "professionalism"[3]—an ethical professional identity[4]— could go a long way in moving the coaching culture away from a reliance on rules and moral

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[3] While definitions of "professionalism" vary by context, the literature referred to here uses "professionalism" in its common meaning to describe the duties, aspirations, and qualities of personal conscience that mark a professional person. The necessary qualities of personal conscience for a professional include the four moral capacities of sensitivity, reasoning, motivation, and implementation that give rise to moral behavior (see, especially, Bebeau, 2008; and Hamilton, 2008).

minimalism—meeting obligations to avoid punishment rather than acting with true character and integrity. Professionalism, like moral functioning (moral sensitivity, moral reasoning, moral motivation, and moral behavior), is not inborn, so it is imperative that the principles and capacities and the ideals of the coaching profession are explicitly taught, understood, and developed in coaches. This study begins the process of understanding the ideals of the profession through moral exemplar collegiate coaches.

This work is essential if the ultimate goal of social science research in sport is to help athletes experience optimal growth and development, ideal performance, and enjoyment. Coaches are the individuals in the best position to make those goals possible, particularly at the collegiate level because coaches spend hours a day with their athletes, teaching, coaching, and mentoring them at an especially impressionable age of growth and development. Coaches embody the culture and standards of their programs and teach those standards of conduct through their living example, so having ethical, professional coaches working with college athletes is unquestionably important. The purpose of this study was to explore how, despite the numerous pressures of college athletics at the highest level, some coaches are able to coach, teach, and exemplify lives of incredible integrity and moral leadership. The intent of this study was to gain a better understanding of the ethical professional identity development of collegiate coaches who have made sustained commitments to upholding moral values in their personal and professional lives. This research on coach moral exemplars provides a hopeful view at a time when front-page headlines on the latest coaching scandals paint a bleak picture of intercollegiate coaches and sport in general.

This study also fills glaring gaps in the literature on morality in coaching. As of this writing, there is nominal research on morality in coaching in general, less on the moral

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[4] The terms "professionalism" and "ethical professional identity" are used as synonyms in this study, which is consistent with the literature (see, e.g., Hamilton, 2008; Sullivan, Colby, Wegner, Bond, & Shulman, 2007).

development of coaches, and none on the moral identity development and ethical professionalism of college coaches. By identifying exemplars of virtue and professionalism in college athletics and sharing their stories and insights, this study covers uncharted territory, opens up new directions for further research, and provides instructive and inspirational role models for seasoned coaches who are perhaps disillusioned with the state of their profession, for young coaches just beginning their careers and looking for guidance, and for athletes who may be considering coaching as a future career. In a broader sense, this research offers a much-needed positive approach to college coaching and fills the gaps in the literature in coaches' morality, specifically coach moral identity and how coaches navigate as ethical professionals in the world of big-time college sport.

CHAPTER 2—LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to better understand ethical professional identity development and moral
exemplarity in coaches, a review of the relevant literature in moral development, especially as it
relates to theories and research on (1) moral identity/moral motivation and the link to moral
behavior, (2) moral development and morality in a sport context in general and in coaching in
particular, and (3) moral exemplars will be summarized in this chapter. The literature review will
establish theoretical and practical foundations for the current study as well as demonstrate the
necessity of filling gaps in the literature on moral development, moral identity, and ethical
professional identity in coaching.

Moral Development

What is morality? Aristotle and the ancient Greek moral philosophers believed the virtues
were necessary to "living the good life," or what they termed *eudaimonia*. *Eudaimonia*, most
often translated as happiness, is not happiness as we understand it today. The modern conception
of happiness is most often identified with a feeling—one of pleasant satisfaction—and is
frequently seen as based in self-interest. In ancient moral philosophy however, this concept of
happiness is not a feeling but rather a way of functioning—living well and doing well (Parry,
2009). *Eudaimonia* is seen as the true goal of life and reaching it means striving for human
excellence in the four cardinal virtues of courage, temperance (moderation and self-control),
practical intelligence (excellence in reasoning what is "good" in living one's life), and justice
(Annas, 1992).[5] For Aristotle and the ancient Greeks, virtue and actively exercising virtue is

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[5] While not in the scope of this paper, it is important to note that for the ancient philosophers, virtue was
not necessarily tied to morality as we understand it today. Virtue, roughly defined as human excellence,
could be excellence in anything—strength, health, beauty—which can neither be couched as moral nor
immoral, so moral virtues were distinguished from general virtues. Beginning with Aristotle, moral virtue
was seen to require voluntariness, or the freedom of choice to act as one sees fit, whereas general virtue,

identical to *eudaimonia*—happiness and living the good life (Parry, 2009). Though "living the

good life" is not a phrase used in modern moral theory, the general idea is the same—those who

consistently demonstrate virtue are seen as moral, ethical,[6] and living lives committed to moral

values—doing good and being good. The modern moral development literature outlined here

aims to explain the development of individuals as moral beings who live the good life.

The modern theoretical framework of moral development that informed this study was a

structural developmental approach. Central to this approach are three main arguments: First,

moral development is understood from a constructivist epistemology, meaning that both the

individual and the environment construct meaning—the environment or situation provides an

experience and the individual provides the interpretation of the experience (Shields &

Bredemeier, 1995). Second, structural development follows the premise that individuals' moral

reasoning and moral actions come from an underlying cognitive moral structure about what is

right and wrong. Third, this structure is developmental in nature—that is, an individual's morality

matures over the lifespan as the individual ages and experiences social interactions. Structural

developmental theorists agree that one's understanding of morality develops in stages or phases

from an ego and self-interest orientation to a more social, other-oriented focus, and finally to an

orientation based on universal ethical principles and ideals. The most influential structural

developmental theorists include Piaget, Kohlberg, Haan, and Rest and the neo-Kohlbergians.[7]

Jean Piaget. Piaget could be considered the father of the structural developmental

approach to morality. He proposed a two-stage model of moral development after systematically

studying the acquisition of learning in children. Piaget (1965/1997) observed children playing

games and interviewed them about moral situations and their understandings of the rules,

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such as health, is involuntary (Annas, 1992). For the purpose of this discussion, "virtue" will imply moral
virtue, which by the time of the Stoics became the dominant understanding of the term (Annas, 1992).
[6] Though these two terms are distinguished in strict moral philosophy, they are generally used
interchangeably in the moral development literature and will be used as synonyms here as well.
[7] Some of the basic content of the literature review is adapted from Hamilton (2011).

cheating, lying, and justice and discovered that children develop both cognitively and morally

from a heteronomous stage, in which a child bases his or her judgment on rigid beliefs and

obedience to authority figures, to an autonomous stage, in which a child makes judgments based

on cooperation with peers and gaining mutual benefit.

      Lawrence Kohlberg. While structural-development theory might have originated with

Piaget, arguably the most profound impact on the field is Kohlberg's cognitive developmental

theory of morality and his assertion that what makes an action a moral one is the reasoning and

motivation behind it. Kohlberg (1981, 1984) shared Piaget's understanding of morality as

developmental and as progressing through stages, but his work moved away from

"micromorality," or morality inherent in everyday social interactions and relationships to a focus

on the more formal structures of society (laws, institutions, and general practices), or

"macromorality," based on the moral ideals of fairness and justice (Rest, Narváez, Bebeau, &

Thoma, 1999a).

      Kohlberg (1984) hypothesized six cognitive stages of moral reasoning (moral structures)

that govern moral action. He grouped these stages into three levels of moral development. The

first two stages, which constitute an obedience and avoidance of punishment approach (Stage 1)

and a self-interest "I'll scratch your back, you scratch mine" approach (Stage 2) to moral

dilemmas, fall under the "pre-conventional" level of moral reasoning. Someone reasoning at the

pre-conventional level is focused on self-interest and has not yet developed an understanding of

social norms and his or her role in society. The second two stages demonstrate a movement from

self-interest to an awareness of social roles and norms; self-interest becomes subordinate to the

interests of relationships (Stage 3) and society itself (Stage 4). These comprise the "conventional"

level of moral development and designate a maintaining order, social approach to moral

problems. Kohlberg (1984) suggests that most adults operate at the conventional level and base

their decisions on being "good," fulfilling expectations, and upholding the law. The third level of

moral reasoning is the "post-conventional" level. An individual reasoning at one of the final two

stages can distinguish between moral and legal perspectives, upholding moral principles over

laws and conventions (Stage 5) and reasons according to universal ethical principles and

obligations (Stage 6) (Lapsley, 2006). Kohlberg's stages of moral development are outlined in

Table 1.

Table 1

Kohlberg's (1984) Stages of Cognitive Moral Development

Level	Stage	Orientation	Nature of Moral Reasoning
1: Pre-Conventional	1	Obedience and Punishment	Do what you are told; avoid punishment
	2	Self-interest	Egoism—"what's in it for me?"; and simple exchange—"let's make a deal"
2: Conventional	3	Interpersonal accord and conformity	Following social norms and expectations, being "good" is having concern for others
	4	Authority, morality of law, maintaining social order	Members of society are obligated to the follow the law
3: Post-Conventional	5	Social contract, consensus-building	Respect for others' rights, recognition of moral and legal perspectives, obligation to the welfare of others
	6	Universal ethical principles	Rational, organized cooperation based on the universal principles of justice, equality, and respect for others

Note. Adapted from descriptions of stages from "An overview of the psychology of morality," by
J. R. Rest (with Muriel Bebeau and Joseph Volker), 1986, in J. R. Rest, ed., *Moral development:
Advances in research and theory*, pp. 1-27, New York: Praeger.

Kohlberg developed the Moral Judgment Interview (MJI) to test an individual's

development of moral reasoning as both sociomoral reflection and justice reasoning competency,

or the point of view from which an individual arrives at a moral judgment (Colby et al., 1987).

Following Piaget's lead of conducting interviews and presenting subjects with moral problems, the MJI is administered through semi-structured clinical interviews on hypothetical dilemmas, the most famous of which is the Heinz dilemma, which requires the subject to decide between saving a life (believing Heinz should steal a drug for his terminally ill wife) or upholding the law (not steal the drug). The interview also identifies what social norms the subject uses as justifications for his or her choice as well as why he or she values that norm (Lapsley, 2006). Kohlberg believed that an individual's underlying moral structure and way of reasoning crosses all contexts and areas of life, whether in one's work, with one's family, or in a broader community.

One major critique of Kohlberg's work comes from Carol Gilligan, a feminist, ethicist, and psychologist. Gilligan (1982) developed a separate theory of moral development because she disagreed with Kohlberg's analysis that morality and moral decisions are based on the concept of justice. Gilligan (1982) claimed that women were unfairly represented in Kohlberg's model because they tend to reason based on concepts of responsibility and care (only stage three of Kohlberg's six stages). Gilligan's feminist theory of moral development includes three stages of judgment: (1) focus on self (individual needs and survival), (2) focus on self-sacrifice as goodness (belief in social responsibility/conventional morality), and (3) focus on morality of nonviolence (principled morality, focus on care and connectedness with self and others). Gilligan's criticism is problematic, however, because research generally does not support a pattern of difference in the moral development of males and females (Colby, Kohlberg, Gibbs, & Lieberman, 1983; Duquin, 1984; Walker, 1989). Additionally, later theorists such as Haan, Rest, and others discussed below see morality as much more of a social process, which would necessarily expand morality beyond fairness and justice to include care.

The other major critique of Kohlberg's stage theory of moral development is that it does not actually predict moral behavior—because of Kohlberg's over-focus on moral cognition, he neglects moral action (Bredemeier & Shields, 1995) and his theory is "incomplete" in the area of

moral motivation (Bergman, 2002). In fact, while the research shows there is a consistent pattern

of statistically significant evidence for moral judgment predicting moral behavior (Blasi, 1980;

Thoma & Rest, 1986), the strength of the relationship is only moderate (explaining only around

10% of the variance) (Blasi, 1980). The lack of a strong correlation between moral cognition and

moral action suggests that there are other psychological processes acting along with moral

judgment to produce moral behavior. Some of these issues are addressed by Haan and Rest and

further explored by Blasi and Kegan in their theories on moral identity.

Norma Haan. Norma Haan offered an important departure from Kohlberg's theory in

her conceptualization of morality. She disagreed with Kohlberg's single focus on a cognitive

understanding of morality and his assertion of a universal morality. Instead, Haan (1985) saw

morality as a "social, emotional dialectic of practical reasoning among people. Its distinctive

feature—and its ground—is the attempt people make to equalize their relationship during disputes

and in their conclusions" (pp. 996-97). Thus, while she did see morality as coming from an

underlying moral structure, moral structures are not as strict and hierarchical as simply cognitive

structures. Haan (1983) argued for an interactional, social model perspective in which morality is

constructed during the processes of social living. Haan was the first researcher to give importance

to context in moral reasoning, suggesting that an individual can reason at different moral levels

depending on the situation. Shields and Bredemeier (1984) later used this context-specific

morality in developing their theory of "game reasoning" (a lower level of moral reasoning) in a

sport-specific context (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995) (see more below).

From this interactional, social model perspective, Haan (1983) outlines three concepts of

moral development: (1) moral balance (the individual's level of basic agreement about their rights

and responsibilities), (2) moral dialogue (direct or indirect, verbal or nonverbal negotiation when

moral imbalance occurs), and (3) moral levels. Haan's moral levels are contained within three

phases reflecting moral maturity that, despite some departures from Kohlberg, still follow the

basic structural approach of morality evolving from an ego orientation to an ethical principles

based orientation. Haan's first phase (a self-interest orientation), is the assimilation phase, or

finding moral balance in preference to one's own needs. The second phase (a social, other-

oriented focus), is the accommodation phase, or finding moral balance in preference to others'

needs, and the third phase (a focus on universal ethical principles and ideals), is the equilibration

phase, or finding moral balance in equal concern of all. Haan's phases of moral maturity are

outlined in Table 2.

Table 2

Haan's (1977) Phases of Moral Maturity

Phase	Level	Orientation	Nature of Moral Maturity
1: Assimilation (moral balance in preference to one's own needs)	1	Power balancing	Concern only with own personal welfare; little regard for others; those with power take advantage of those without power
	2	Egocentric balancing	Concern for own welfare but understanding that others may share the same interests; moral balance is seen as an equal exchange of favors
2: Accommodation (moral balance in preference to others' needs)	3	Harmony balancing	Perception of self as an integral part of society; assumption that others will always act in good faith
	4	Common-interest balancing	Recognition of moral responsibility of all; rules and regulations should govern moral decisions to promote the common interest of all
3: Equilibration (moral balance in equal concern of all)	5	Multi-interest balancing	Equal importance given to the needs and interests of all; search for a situationally specific moral balance

Note. Adapted from descriptions of phases from "Game reasoning and interactional morality," by B. J. Bredemeier and D. L. Shields, 1986, *Journal of Genetic Psychology, 147*(2), p. 257-275.

Working from these phases, Haan developed an assessment designed to test individuals'

comprehension and practice of morality in everyday contexts that has been helpful for exploring

moral development in sport (Weiss & Bredemeier, 1990), but it has received criticism due to its

impracticality: Haan's assessment uses a moral-dilemma interview format similar to Kohlberg's (1984) Moral Judgment Interview, but she did not develop a standardized way of scoring her assessment, so it has been underutilized and underdeveloped (Bredemeier & Shields, 1998).

James Rest and the neo-Kohlbergians. James Rest (1979, 1986), as a colleague and research associate of Kohlberg's, was heavily influenced by Kohlberg's six-stage theory of moral judgment, but he came to believe that moral functioning consists of more than moral judgment. While maintaining some important pieces of Kohlberg's theory, there are significant differences in Rest's conceptions of moral development.

Rest broadened Kohlberg's work on moral reasoning to develop a more integrated model of moral development that addresses moral sensitivity, moral motivation, and moral character as additional processes that lead to moral action. Similar to Haan's views of morality as a more social process, Rest (1986) believed that morality "is rooted in the social condition and the human psyche. . . . because people live in groups, and what one person does can affect another" (p. 1). He saw the function of morality as providing guidelines for social organization and providing the greatest mutual benefits to individuals living in groups. Rest (1986) refers to morality as a social value "having to do with how humans cooperate and coordinate their activities in the service of furthering human welfare, and how they adjudicate conflicts among individual interests" (p. 3).

To address the other processes involved in moral development (beyond judgment), Rest (1979, 1986) developed the Four-Component Model of psychological processes that bring about moral behavior (see Table 3). The Four Component Model assumes that cognition and affect are at work in *all* areas of moral functioning leading to moral action (Bebeau & Lewis, 2003). Thus, both cognitive *and* affective processes contribute not just to moral judgment, but also to moral sensitivity, moral motivation, and moral character. For Rest and his colleagues, all four of the components of morality must be activated in order for moral behavior to occur.

Table 3

The Four Component Model of Determinants of Moral Action

Component	Description
1) Moral Sensitivity	Interpreting a situation as a moral one, identifying conflict, having awareness of how our actions affect other people; understanding real-world cause-consequence chains of events
2) Moral Judgment	Judging what action is morally right/justifiable in a given situation; deliberating regarding considerations relevant to different courses of action; integrating shared moral norms and individual moral principles[a]
3) Moral Motivation	Prioritizing moral values over other values so that a decision is made to intend to do what is morally right; deficiencies occur when an individual is not sufficiently motivated to put moral values over competing values such as self-interest or organizational loyalty[b]
4) Moral Character	Having the courage, persistence, ego strength, toughness, etc. to implement the desired action to behave morally; an individual may be high in sensitivity, judgment, and motivation but can be deficient in moral character if he or she is easily distracted, cannot follow through under pressure, or is weak-willed

Note. Adapted from *Moral development in the professions* by J. Rest and D. Narváez, 1994, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
[a] This is the component advanced by Kohlberg's work and that is assessed in the DIT.
[b] This component is the focus of Blasi and Kegan's work as well as the present study. Moral motivation, also called moral identity, is seen as bridging the gap between moral thought and moral action.

Expanding morality and moral development from a single cognitive-developmental process (moral judgment), the first component, moral sensitivity (interpreting a situation as moral) relates to the degree an individual recognizes a situation as moral and weighs the consequences of various available actions and how they would affect self and others (Rest, 1986). The second component, moral judgment, has to do with deciding which course of action is the most morally justifiable. The third component, moral motivation and commitment, involves prioritizing moral values over other values, such as family, career, pleasure, institutional or personal loyalties, etc. and deciding whether or not to fulfill the ideal moral action (Rest, 1986,

1994). The level to which an individual places primacy on moral values over other values is related to how they see morality as tied to their identity and desire for self-consistency (Blasi, 1984). The final component, moral character and competence, relates to how well an individual can implement and follow through on the moral action that was deemed ideal. Moral character depends on having the strength, persistence, convictions, courage, and problem solving and interpersonal skills, among other characteristics to engage in the chosen moral behavior (Bebeau & Monson, 2008; Rest, 1986).

Rest (1986) notes that these processes are not linear—moral sensitivity does not lead directly to moral judgment which then leads to moral motivation, etc. In fact, he stresses they interact in complex ways and can operate in varying and simultaneous order. These processes are not always conscious (especially in moral exemplars, which will be explicated upon in a subsequent section), and that a failure to act morally could denote deficiencies in any one of the processes.

Rest (1979) saw the need for an assessment that could be used more broadly and conveniently than Kohlberg's MJI, so he developed the Defining Issues Test (DIT). Over the next 25 years, Rest and his colleagues at the University of Minnesota developed what they called a neo-Kohlbergian approach as they continued to refine the DIT (Rest & Narváez, 1994; Rest, Narváez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 1999b). The DIT is made up of standardized hypothetical moral dilemmas to assess quantitatively individuals' moral development and where they fall within three schemas of moral reasoning, which roughly line up with Kohlberg's six stages: the personal interest schema, the maintaining norms schema, and the postconventional schema. For each moral dilemma, the subject rates and ranks 12 options in terms of their importance in making a moral decision about the case. The way the subject answers implies the preferred schema that guides the subject's decision making, and the ratings and rankings are used to calculate the subject's score. The "P-score" is the most used index of the DIT, and it is the weighted sum of ranks for the

postconventional items converted to a percent (Rest et al., 1999a). The DIT has been used in several thousand studies (Rest, 1979, 1986; Rest & Narváez, 1994; Rest et al., 1999b), including sport studies (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986 a & b; Henkel & Earls, 1985), and demonstrates high validity and internal reliability as well as gender and cross-cultural reliability (Rest, 1979, 1986; Rest & Narváez, 1994; Rest et al., 1999b).

While the neo-Kohlbergians agree with Kohlberg that moral maturity is developmental (the most important factors influencing gains in moral maturity being education and age; see, for example, Rest & Deemer, 1986) and that development moves from conventional to postconventional moral thinking, they purposefully describe what the DIT is measuring in three schemas, rather than Kohlberg's six stages, to signal the significant changes the neo-Kohlbergian/Minnesota approach makes to Kohlberg's stages (Rest et al., 1999a). According to the Minnesota approach, the personal interest schema combines elements of Kohlberg's second and third stages, and the maintaining norms schema is derived from Kohlberg's fourth stage and centers around the role of social norms in organizing and maintaining order in society (Rest et al., 1999a). The postconventional schema makes significant changes to Kohlberg's fifth and sixth stages because the Minnesota approach does not accept a focus on a particular understanding of justice or any other specific moral theory. Rest and his colleagues (1999a) state, "the defining characteristic of postconventional thinking is that rights and duties are based on sharable ideals for organizing cooperation in society, and are open to debate and tests of logical consistency, experience of the community, and coherence with accepted practice" (p. 41). The four criteria proposed by the neo-Kohlbergian approach to reconstruct the postconventional schema are:

1) The primacy of moral criteria in the formation of and understanding of laws and social norms;

2) The appeal to an ideal, or that a system must convey an idealized view of how a community should be organized;

3) The sharability of ideals with a larger community, thus making them justifiable, open, and subject to challenge and critique; and

4) The ability of the system to be fully reciprocal, or that the system developed to address the entire community and is then uniformly adopted (Rest et al., 1999a).

In summary, what the DIT (the measure of the P-score, or postconventional thinking) does is provide an estimate of the extent to which an individual distinguishes moral arguments grounded in some kind of coherent moral theory (irrespective of the individual's preferred moral theory) from moral arguments grounded in maintaining norms or personal interest. The work of Rest and his colleagues had an incalculable impact on the field of moral psychology by broadening the concept of moral development from Kohlberg's view of moral reasoning as the factor governing moral action to a view of morality as a social process and that other factors—moral sensitivity, motivation, and character—in addition to judgment lead to moral action.

The theories of Piaget, Kohlberg, Haan, and Rest built the foundation for the now widely accepted notion of morality as a developmental process moving from an egocentric understanding of society and social relations (least mature) to an other-oriented understanding and finally to an understanding of society and human interaction based on universal ethical principles (most mature). Rest and the neo-Kohlbergians worked to explain the processes contributing to morality and the moral components necessary for moral action. Through this study, collegiate coaches who most embody these theories—those who are in the later stages of moral maturity and who demonstrate high moral sensitivity, complex moral reasoning, a developed motivation to be moral, and a strong moral character are examined. These individuals have the potential to teach us more about moral development as a whole, and more specifically about the development of their moral identity.

Moral Motivation and Moral Identity

While Rest's Four Component Model laid a foundation on which to study other

psychological processes necessary for moral behavior, including moral sensitivity, moral

motivation, and moral character, it took other moral development theorists to begin to unpack

Rest's third component (and least understood process)—moral motivation—as an individual

difference factor in moral functioning that can help explain the gap between moral thought and

moral action.

It was Augusto Blasi (1980, 1983, 1984) who first began looking into Rest's third

component and the thought/action gap in an effort to answer a question posed by Rest (1986):

"What motivates the selection of moral values over other values?" (p. 14), or, more simply: Why

be moral? Blasi placed himself solidly in the Kohlbergian tradition by focusing on morality

through cognitive-developmental processes, but his assessment of individuals' motivations for

moral action is distinct. Lapsley (1996) succinctly captured the difference between Blasi's and

Kohlberg's theories of morality: "For Kohlberg, moral motivation to act comes from one's

fidelity to the prescriptive nature of moral principles. . . . Hence not to act is to betray a principle.

For Blasi, in contrast, moral motivation to act is a consequence of one's moral identity, and not to

act is to betray the self" (p. 86).

To explain his conviction (like Rest's) that there are more psychological processes at

work in moral behavior than just moral judgment, Blasi developed the Self Model (1983, 1984,

1994), which focuses on the transition from moral thought to moral action and on the consistency

between moral judgment and moral behavior. Blasi suggests that one's moral identity can help

explain the movement (or lack of movement) of individuals from moral cognition to moral action.

Blasi (1983, 1984) outlines three components of moral functioning related to moral

identity: first, the *moral self* refers to the centrality of moral principles to one's sense of self. He

considers one as having a moral identity when moral categories are essential to one's

understanding of self and having a moral personality when meeting moral commitments is a

cornerstone of self (Lapsley & Narváez, 2004). Blasi's second component addresses how morally

engaged an individual is, or the level of *responsibility* one feels in acting morally (1983). The

level of onus one feels to act morally demonstrates an ownership and accountability for moral

behavior (Bergman, 2004) that can bridge the gap between knowing the right thing to do and

actually doing it (Bebeau & Lewis, 2003; Lapsley & Narváez, 2004). The third component of the

Self Model is integrity, or what Blasi (1983) termed *self-consistency*—the level of congruency

between an individual's judgment and action.

Blasi (1984) suggests that the stronger or more developed one's sense of the self-as-

moral, the more likely one is to act consistently with his or her moral judgments. In other words,

the more morally developed or morally mature one is, the greater that individual's integration of

morality and self. The moral motivation to act is a consequence of one's moral identity because if

an individual has an integrated morality and self, "not to act according to one's judgment should

be perceived as a substantial inconsistency, as a fracture within the very core of the self" (Blasi,

1983, p. 201). Blasi (1983, 1984) notes that individuals can vary greatly in the level of their

integration of morality and self. The variation occurs both in how deeply moral notions penetrate

individuals' conceptions of self and in the kinds of moral considerations they judge as composing

the self (Bebeau & Lewis, 2003). A study by Walker and his colleagues found that "morality had

differing degrees of centrality in people's identities: for some, moral considerations and issues

were pervasive in their experience because morality was rooted in the heart of their being; for

others, moral issues seemed remote, and moral values and standards were not basic to their self-

concept" (Walker, Pitts, Hennig, & Matsuba, 1995, p. 398). A partial integration of morality and

self (when the unity of morality and self is not consistent) accounts for why most people know

what is morally right but do not always act in accordance with those beliefs because their moral

values do not override other values (Bergman, 2002). For example, in the case of college coaches,

doing the right thing, honoring the game, or acting with integrity may not override valuation of winning or external recognition.

These individual variations in moral identity maturity build on Kohlberg and Rest's holistic understanding of moral functioning as developmental in nature. As such, how the moral self is defined changes with age and experience and proceeds along a continuum from a more static, self-interest or ego-centered self to a more fluid and other-directed self (Blasi, 1984; Kegan, 1982). At earlier stages of identity development, there is little unity between moral values and personal values, and at later levels of identity formation, there is full integration of personal and moral values and congruency between an individual's judgment and action (Bebeau & Monson, 2012; Blasi, 1984). Blasi's descriptions of individuals with fully unified senses of morality and self are evident/evidenced in the research and descriptions of moral exemplars (see section on moral exemplars below). Expanding on Blasi's understanding of moral identity as a key aspect of moral motivation that develops across a lifespan is another significant contributor to the field—Robert Kegan.

Ethical Professional Identity Formation

Robert Kegan's (1982, 1998) theory of identity formation parallels the moral development theories of Blasi (1983, 1984), Rest (1986, 1994), and Kohlberg (1984). Kegan (1982, 1998) proposed a developmental view of ethical identity as a capacity that can expand over one's lifetime, especially through social experience, toward more complex ways of defining the self and one's relationship to others. Kegan's theory of identity development, though grounded in Blasi's (1983, 1984) seminal theories on moral identity and moral motivation, broadens Blasi's cognitive-developmental approach to include psychological and social processes in addition to cognitive ones (Monson, Roehrich, & Bebeau, 2008).

Kegan (1998) suggests five stages of identity development that he calls "orders of consciousness." These stages outline the increasing complexity of how individuals make meaning

of their selves, lives, and experiences through dealing with life's challenges. These experiences—

often social experiences—move one's identity from a grounding in family, friends, and

coworkers to one defined in self (Kegan, 1982). Kegan (1998) theorizes that not only do people's

conceptions of self transition from an external definition to an internal definition, but the self also

transitions from an egocentric to an other-oriented focus—a view shared by the other structural

developmental theorists. In the context of ethical *professional* identity, or "professionalism,"

Kegan sees those who have reached a stage of self-definition (to whom he refers as the

"psychologically self-employed") as better suited than "dependent" individuals in navigating and

excelling in ethically demanding occupations, of which collegiate coaching is one.

Kegan's stages of moral identity fall roughly into age ranges but can vary significantly

within age groups (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). His five stages include (1) the Childhood Mind, in

which the world is full of magic and mystery and changes from moment to moment (infants and

very young children); (2) the Instrumental Mind, which is characterized by an external

understanding of self, a focus on self-interest, and an inability to hold together two different

perspectives simultaneously (primarily children and adolescents; adults can also get "stuck" in

this stage); (3) the Socialized Mind, which is characterized by drawing meaning from social

connectedness and often lacking clear boundaries between one's own values and those of

significant others, religion, etc. (late adolescents and most adults) (Bebeau & Lewis, 2003); (4)

the Self-Authoring Mind, which is characterized by self-reflection, openness to and respect for

diversity in thoughts and values and clear understanding of and adherence to one's own values

(only around one third of adults reach this stage and usually not until their 30s) (Kegan, 1998;

Kegan & Lahey, 2009); and (5) the Self-Transforming Mind, which is characterized by an

understanding of the limits of one's own inner values, a unique authenticity, and the recognition

of the interdependence of all people and systems (very rare, less than 1% of adults studied

reached this stage) (Kegan & Lahey, 2009).[8] Kegan suggests, similar to Blasi, that the more

advanced an individual is in the development of his or her moral identity, the greater the

individual's agentic capacity to move from moral thought to moral action. Kegan's stages of

moral identity applicable to the current study are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4

Kegan's (1998) Stages of Ethical Identity Formation

Stage	Nature of ethical identity
2: The Instrumental Mind	External definitions of self, an egocentric view, focus on attaining credentials and technical skills rather than acquiring values, focus on goals over purpose, focus on self-interest based on rewards and avoiding punishment, inability to hold together two perspectives simultaneously.
3: The Socialized Mind	Interpersonal or social connectedness, drawing meaning from group belonging, may lack clear boundaries between one's own values and those of family, friends, school, religion, etc.
4: The Self-Authoring Mind	Self-reflection, ability to hold opposing ideas and respect diversity of thought and ideology, identification of life purpose or key life values, clear boundaries between one's own values and influences from close others or authorities, ability to adhere to one's own inner values and sense-making.
5: The Self-Transforming Mind	Recognition of the limits of self-defined values and commitments, ability to transform self to be more fully present and open to others, resulting in more authentic, effective relationships, recognition of the interdependence of all people and systems.

Note. Kegan's first stage relates to infants and young children, so it is not applicable to the current study. Descriptions of Stages 2 to 4 are adapted from "Manual for Assessing and Promoting Identity Formation," by M. J. Bebeau and P. Lewis, 2003, Center for the Study of Ethical Development, University of Minnesota. Description of Stage 5 is adapted from *Immunity to change: How to overcome it and unlock the potential in yourself and your organization*, by R. Kegan and L. L. Lahey, 2009, Boston: Harvard Business Press.

    Kegan and his colleagues developed the Subject-Object Interview (SOI) in 1988 to assess

the maturity and sophistication of an individual's ethical identity. The SOI is a 90-minute

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[8] These general age ranges were determined from two large meta-analyses of studies using the Subject-Object Interview (SOI) or the Washington University Sentence Completion Test (SCT), two instruments testing Kegan's stages. The vast majority of adult respondents (58%) had not yet reached Stage 4 (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). The authors note that both studies were skewed toward middle-class, college-educated professionals, so the actual percentage of adults reaching stage 4 or 5 is probably even lower.

interview that looks at the way the mind "distinguishes the thoughts and feelings we have (i.e., can look at, can take *as object*) from the thoughts and feelings that 'have us' (i.e., we are run by them, are *subject* to them)" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p. 22). Another way to understand the subject-object phenomena is looking at "what a person can and cannot . . . take psychological responsibility for" (Lahey et al., 2011, p. 10). Taking psychological responsibility for something would be seeing it as object (a more sophisticated understanding of self), and being unable to take responsibility for it would be to be subject to it (a less complex understanding of self). For example, someone describing her anger as caused by the actions of another would be *subject* to the anger, whereas a person attributing her anger to her own perception of and individual reaction to a situation would be able to take it as *object*. Aligning with a later stage or having a more complex mindset means that a person would be able to look at or take more as object (external to self) and would thus be subject to less. Thousands of people of all ages from around the world have taken the SOI, and the assessment has high inter-rater reliability (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). The SOI guides interviewees in reflecting on significant issues that draw out information on the individual's conceptions of self. The SOI has been successfully adapted from a face-to-face interview format to a short-essay question format that also elicits material on individuals' ethical identity but more directly in the context of one's profession (Bebeau & Lewis, 2003; Bebeau & Monson, 2012; Monson et al., 2008; Monson & Hamilton, 2011; Hamilton, 2011). In the present study, similar but adapted questions to the short-essay format were used as interview questions. The SOI as well as the adaptation report high validity and reliability (Hamilton, 2011; Kegan, 1998; Lahey et al., 2011; Monson et al., 2008).

While Kegan's stages outline the increasing complexity of how individuals make general meaning of the world around them, each person also develops an increasingly complex understanding of what it means to be a professional (Bebeau & Monson, 2008). This understanding may be qualitatively different from that of the general public (Bebeau & Monson,

2008). To address the development of this specific type of moral identity—ethical professional identity, or professionalism—Bebeau and Lewis (2003) adapted Kegan's five stages for the professions. They termed Kegan's second stage the Independent Operator, third stage the Team-Oriented Idealist, and his fourth stage the Self-Defining Professional. Kegan's fifth stage was termed the Moral Exemplar (Rule & Bebeau, 2005). The way individuals in the main stages of ethical professional identity formation understand professionalism are described in Table 5.

Table 5

Descriptions of Typical Stage-Related Understandings of Professionalism

Stage	How typical individual would understand professionalism
2: The Independent Operator	Professionalism is meeting fixed, concrete, black-and-white role expectations, rather than a broader understanding of what it means to be a professional. Motivation for meeting standards is wholly individual and based on a desire to be correct and effective. Professionalism is largely external to self.
3: The Team-Oriented Idealist	Professionalism is meeting the expectations of more knowledgeable (and professional) others. These professionals are idealistic and internally self-reflective. They understand and identify with (or worry that they are not yet fully identified with) their chosen profession. Their identity is grounded in others, particularly external authorities, and thus they can have difficulty seeing boundaries between self and other.
4: The Self-Defining Professional	Professionalism is freely committing oneself to being a member of the profession (rather than being wholly identified with one's professional role) and constructing a self-system comprised of personal values integrated with the values of the profession. These values provide principles for living. These professionals have created a vision of the "good" professional that is grounded in reflective practice. Because they are not solely identified with their profession, they can "think outside the box" and critically assess aspects of the professions, yet remain strongly committed. As such, they can become change agents for the profession.
5: The Moral Exemplar	Professionalism is recognizing the limits of self-defined and professionally defined values and commitments and seeing these systems as only some of many possible ways of being in the world. Because they have no need to defend a particular identity, these professionals have the ability to transform themselves to be more fully present and open to others, resulting in more authentic, effective relationships. They recognize the interdependence of all people and systems and the universal, deeply humanistic longings and sensitivities shared by all. They are authentic persons who may emerge as leaders within the profession.

Note. Descriptions of Stages 2 to 4 are adapted from "Guided by theory, grounded in evidence: A way forward for professional ethics education" by M.J. Bebeau and V.E. Monson (2008), in L.P. Nucci & D. Narvaez (Eds), *Handbook of moral and character education* (pp. 557-582). New York: Routledge. Stage 5 is adapted from J.T. Rule and M.J. Bebeau's (2005) *Dentists who care: Inspiring stories of professional commitment*. Chicago, IL: Quintessence Publishing.

Kegan's moral identity development theory and SOI assessment and Bebeau and Lewis's (2003) adaptations for the professions have been applied successfully (with validity and reliability) to examine ethical professional identity in business (Eigel, 1998; Snook et al., 2007, cited in Monson & Hamilton, 2011b), law (Hamilton & Monson, 2012; Monson & Hamilton, 2011 a & b), the military (Bartone, Snook, Forsythe, Lewis, & Bullis, 2007), dentistry (Monson & Bebeau, 2006; Roehrich & Bebeau, 2005), and with collegiate swim coaches (Hamilton, 2011). All of these professions occur in high-stakes environments in which "winning" and "losing" and external results often define success. Kegan's theoretical framework is thus appropriate, and one could argue necessary, to examine high-stakes collegiate sport coaches who work in big-time, for-profit athletic departments where winning and losing not only hold societal value but often mean keeping or losing one's job. A summary of studies using variations on Kegan's identity assessment in different professions are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6

Summary of Kegan Identity Assessment Studies

Study	Stage 2: Instrumental Mind	Stage 2/3 Transition	Stage 3: Socialized Mind	Stage 3/4 Transition	Stage 4: Self-Authoring Mind	Stage 4/5 Transition
Snook et al., 2007, Harvard MBA students, *n*=26	9 (35%)		7 (27%)		9 (35%)	
Bartone et al., 2007, prof. military cadets (freshmen), *n*=38	8 (21%)	24 (63%)	6 (16%)	0	0	0
Bartone et al., 2007, prof. military cadets (seniors), *n*=38	2 (6%)	10 (31%)	14 (44%)	6 (19%)	0	0

Monson & Bebeau, 2006, dental students, *n*=94	12 (13%)	48 (51%)	18 (19%)	12 (13%)	4 (4%)	0
Roehrich & Bebeau, 2005, dental students, *n*=46	6 (13%)	32 (70%)	4 (7%)	4 (7%)	0	0
Eigel, 1998, CEOs, n=21	0	0	0	0	17 (81%)	4 (19%)
Eigel, 1998, Middle managers, n=21	0	2 (10%)	7 (33%)	0	10 (48%)	1 (5%)
Hamilton & Monson, 2011, first-year law students, n=88	14 (16%)	22 (25%)	29 (33%)	22 (25%)	1 (.01%)	0
Monson & Hamilton, 2011, early career lawyers, n=38	0	5 (14%)	18 (50%)	9 (25%)	4 (11%)	0
Hamilton & Monson, 2012, exemplary lawyers, n=12	0	0	0	4 (34%)	6 (50%)	2 (16%)
Hamilton, 2011, DI and DIII college swim coaches, n=26	0	5 (19%)	6 (23%)	11 (42%)	4 (15%)	0

Note. Adapted from "Ethical professionalism (trans)formation: Themes from interviews about professionalism with exemplary lawyers" by N.W. Hamilton & V.E. Monson, 2012, *Santa Clara Law Review, 52*(3), pp. 921-970.

Kegan's and Bebeau and Lewis's theories on the formation of professionalism explain the concept as increasingly centered on an internal core identity over the course of one's professional life. As this "centering" occurs, one's professional identity is merged with and broadened into one's overall moral identity—they become one and the same. Moral identity development, understood by Kegan and Blasi as filling the gap between moral thought and moral action, is the impetus behind the moral motivation to act—Rest's third component. The developmental construct of moral identity, or the level of integration between personal and moral values, can explain an individual's movement or lack of movement from moral thought to moral

action. This understanding of identity development (moral and professional) is relevant if the

ethical standards of the coaching profession (moral thought) and effectiveness of coaches (moral

action) are to be elevated. One way in which moral identity has been studied is through the

identification of "moral exemplars"—individuals who make a sustained commitment in thought

and action to moral ideals and principles.

Moral Exemplarity

If Blasi sees moral identity as an answer to the question "Why be moral?" scholars

examining moral exemplarity have shown that individuals who are highly committed to a moral

life tend to answer the question "'What should I do?' by considering 'Who am I?'" (Weaver,

2006, p. 344).[9] Anne Colby and William Damon's early work inspired much of the later research

in moral exemplarity and laid the groundwork for the current study. Colby and Damon and their

successors base their work in the fundamental theories of the psychological processes behind

morality and moral behavior promoted by Kohlberg (1984), Rest (1986, 1994), Blasi, (1980,

1983, 1984), and Kegan (1998, Kegan & Lahey, 2009) summarized in previous sections and

follow the tradition of understanding morality as a developmental process. Colby and Damon

support the premise that highly moral people have the ability to adapt and learn from their

experiences and be receptive to moral change throughout life. Colby and Damon (1993) propose

that one way moral development, and specifically moral identity development, occurs is through

the transformation and elevation of goals: "personal goals are transformed into moral goals and

moral goals become more and more central to the individual's sense of self. In this process, the

moral goals eventually become less distinguishable from self-interest and thus ever more

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[9] Some theorists argue that there are two major types of moral exemplars: those who demonstrate outstanding bravery or heroism in relatively brief moral crises or confrontations; and those who demonstrate more routine and less conspicuous "moral processes" that continue over extended periods of time (Cooper & Wright, 1992). This study looks at the latter type of moral exemplar, on which the majority of exemplar research is based. A full discussion of the "heroic" type of moral exemplar is beyond the scope of this literature review.

powerfully motivating" (p. 173). They also align with Rest's view of morality as focused on the social condition—morality is reciprocal in nature and individuals engage actively with their communities and both transform and are transformed by their social world. Moral identity scholars such as Colby and Damon stress the importance of Rest's third component—moral motivation—and a developed sense of the unity of morality and self (moral identity)—as necessary components of moral behavior and as characteristic of moral exemplars.

What utility lies in the study of moral exemplars? Damon (1984) argues, "A person's level of moral judgment does not determine the person's views on morality's place in one's life. To know how an individual deals with this latter issue, we must know about not only the person's moral beliefs but also the person's understanding of self in relation to these moral beliefs" (p. 110). Because morality is a developmental process, to understand those perceptions of self-as-moral, qualitative studies must be used to access individuals' lived experience and their development of a moral identity (Damon & Colby, 2013). Damon and Colby (2013) believe that a complete view of moral identity development is unattainable without studying those who exemplify the highest commitment to a moral life—the individuals they call "moral exemplars." They note that the study of intelligence would not be complete without studying those with the highest intelligence (geniuses); likewise the study of morality is not complete without studying moral "geniuses."

The two moral exemplar studies that most informed and influenced the conception and design of this study include Colby and Damon's (1992) groundbreaking expert-nominated moral exemplars across many professions and Rule and Bebeau's (2005) study of 10 dentists deemed moral exemplars by their professional peers. Colby and Damon (1992) were the first researchers to bring the study of moral exemplars to the forefront as a legitimate, qualitative assessment of moral identity.

In their seminal work, *Some Do Care: Contemporary Lives of Moral Commitment*, Colby and Damon (1992) sought to find individuals who demonstrated the highest levels of development in all of the components of morality—individuals with an outstanding capacity for moral action. They wanted to understand how individuals who consistently act in moral ways acquire their "gift" of deep morality—their steadfast ability to make the jump from moral thought to moral action—in other words, their moral identity. They developed criteria to identify exceptional moral leaders who went beyond moral reflection to moral action, or people they called "moral exemplars." Their definition of a moral exemplar, which is also used by Rule and Bebeau (2005), is a person who demonstrates the characteristics of (1) a sustained commitment to moral ideals or principles, including respect for humanity or sustained evidence of moral virtue; (2) a drive to act in accord with one's moral ideals and show consistency between motivations and actions; (3) a willingness to put moral values ahead of self-interest; (4) a tendency to inspire and move others toward moral action; and (5) a sense of humility and lack of concern for one's own ego. In essence, moral exemplars are considered model citizens whose actions are highly valued by their peers and community and who have made significant and positive impacts on the populations they serve.

In order to find individuals who embodied these characteristics, Colby and Damon (1992) used a group of experts in moral philosophy, theology, history, social science, and other fields both to determine the characteristics of a moral exemplar and to nominate individuals as moral exemplars for the project. The 23 exemplars chosen from the nominations were diverse in race, ethnicity, politics, socioeconomic status, religion, level of education, and profession. The group included civil rights activists, religious leaders, business people, and teachers, to name a few. Rule and Bebeau (2005) used the same criteria for moral exemplarity as Colby and Damon (1992) but with a much more specific subset of individuals—exemplar dentists. They also used a slightly different method to find their exemplars. The dentist exemplars were nominated by their

professional peers through requests for nominations in a national dentistry publication and at an

annual national meeting as well as through telephone requests, rather than through a panel of

experts. The nomination process produced 10 exemplar dentists. The current study also used a

peer nomination process to recruit exemplars.

Both Colby and Damon (1992) and Rule and Bebeau (2005) used in-depth semi-

structured interviews that aimed to explore exemplars' values, the understandings and meanings

they attach to life events, and the development of their moral identity. Both also used a

supplemental, quantitative assessment to enhance and validate their qualitative findings. Colby

and Damon (1992) employed Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Interview, and Rule and Bebeau

(2005), while not formally using Kegan's Subject-Object Interview for professional identity

assessment, did use Kegan's stages of identity formation to provide a point of reference in

interpreting exemplars' stories.

Both studies show surprisingly similar results, the most striking of which is the extent of

unity of self and morality found in the exemplars. The most consistent patterns and themes that

emerged across Colby and Damon's and Rule and Bebeau's exemplars include:

1)   The powerful experience the exemplars had in gaining insights and further clarity in

their values and in the things that influenced their identities through the reflection and

self-examination inherent in interview process itself.

2)   A disregard for risks and a disavowal of courage. Many exemplars avoid negativity,

doubt, fear, and material consequences through their religious or personal faith in the

fundamental goodness of life and the single-minded, deep immersion in their work,

which is grounded in their moral values. They did not see their actions as courageous,

self-sacrificing, or above the call of duty but simply as something they had to do

through a feeling of moral necessity. As such, the exemplars had an ability to

maintain their humility amid praise, adulation, and external acclaim. This harmony

between personal and professional ideals is what defines moral identity.

3) A certainty of response about matters of principle. This certainty came from a unity

of morality and self through the steadfast commitment to a greater purpose to the

extent that moral actions were "habit" and committed with spontaneity and without

reflection. Exemplars had a high ability to reconcile internal conflicts and

demonstrated an identity that provided them with "an internal compass for

negotiating and resolving tensions among … multiple, shared expectations" (Rule &

Bebeau, 2005, p. 159).

4) A persistent faith and positivity even in the worst circumstances. Almost all of the

exemplars demonstrated a strong, lasting, and general "positivity" toward life, which

included optimism, hopefulness, love, and joy, not just of life itself but especially of

their work. Barriers and problems to their goals and progress were simply set aside or

seen as challenges to overcome instead of deterrents or causes for discouragement.

Exemplars had a profound ability to make the best of bad situations, and they

consistently attributed part of their sustained commitment and pervasive hopefulness

to support from and solidarity with others close to them or a strong sense of

community in those with whom they work as well as gaining sustenance and joy

from working with people.

5) A capacity to learn from and be led and supported by the very "followers" whom

they inspire. At critical points in their development, moral exemplars often relied on

collaboration and communication with and support from significant others who were

most often the ones looking to the exemplar for inspiration and guidance. These

critical points were often periods of goal transformation and the formation and
implementation of new strategies to reach their moral commitments.

6) A dynamic interplay between continuity and change in their personal life histories.
Their commitment to a greater purpose is itself a catalyst for change and growth. As
moral exemplars simultaneously maintain a true devotion to their fundamental moral
purpose (continuity) and remain open enough to transform their goals and discover
new strategies to bolster their commitments (change), they continue to develop their
moral identity. As with any psychological growth, social influence played an
important role in the development of the exemplars moral identity (see especially,
Kegan's [1982, 1998] and Rest's [1986] theories on moral development as a social
process). See also number (4) above.

Rule and Bebeau (2005) also found two other patterns in their dentist moral exemplars.
First, they found exemplars could step back and criticize their profession (respectfully) without
losing their deep commitment to their identity as professionals. Second, they noted a strong
emphasis on academic achievement throughout the lives of the exemplar dentists and a
recognition of the importance of competence in their fields as well as in problem solving and
interpersonal communication. One dentist exemplar explained, "First excel, then help others" (p.
159). These were not among Colby and Damon's (1992) findings likely because their moral
exemplars came from a wide range of backgrounds and professions, not all of which require
higher or graduate education.

In addition to the two major works by Colby and Damon (1992) and Rest and Bebeau
(2005), similar studies using a moral exemplar approach focus on other exemplar populations,
including public administrators (Cooper & Wright, 1992); journalists and geneticists;
philanthropists, Carnegie hero award winners, and Holocaust rescuers (Monroe, 2002); Canadian
awardees for exceptional bravery and caring (Walker & Frimer, 2007); computer professionals

(Huff & Barnard, 2009); lawyers (Hamilton & Monson, 2012); and young-adult and mid- to late-adult care exemplars (Dunlop, Walker, & Matsuba, 2012). All share the same main theme—moral exemplars, no matter their field or background, show strong integration of their conceptions of self and moral concerns—a unity of personal goals and moral goals.

Other research on moral exemplarity shows similar, consistent findings on the characteristics of moral exemplars. Walker and several colleagues (1995) sought to better understand moral excellence by learning about "everyday" morality and conceptions of moral exemplarity by laypeople. Their interviews with a representative sample of 80 adults generated an extensive list of the perceived characteristics of moral exemplars, the top 10 of which include being: compassionate/caring, consistent, honest, self-sacrificing, open-minded, thoughtful/rational, socially active, just, courageous, and virtuous. Walker and Pitts (1998) used a free-listing procedure among 300 college-age and older adults to generate attributes of a moral exemplar and came up with a similar typology of attributes for the highly moral person: having integrity and being principled, idealistic, dependable, loyal, caring, trustworthy, fair, and confident. Overall, "care-based" moral exemplars (in contrast to "heroic" exemplars) tend to be active in prosocial causes within their communities (see, e.g., Dunlop, Walker, & Matsuba, 2012; Matsuba & Walker, 2004 & 2005; Walker & Frimer, 2007; and Walker & Hennig, 2004).

Even with the comparable patterns and emergent themes across moral exemplar research, there is still much left to be done. Absent from this research is an in-depth examination of moral exemplars within an institution that is highly visible, culturally relevant, societally valued, and inherently moral—the profession of coaching within big-time athletic departments situated inside institutions of higher education. This study fills that gap.

Having reviewed relevant moral variables outside of sport that help lay the foundation of the current study, existing research pertaining to moral variables in the context of sport will be

addressed in the next section. By summarizing the application of moral variables in sport, the goal is to further illuminate gaps in the research that are filled by the current study.

Morality in Sport

Research on moral development and moral variables outside of a sport context is abundant, and while less plentiful, there does exist a substantial body of work on moral variables within sport, which has recently gained increasing recognition and research interest. This could, in part, be due to media attention to incidents of moral failings, unethical behavior, and even illegal actions of athletes, coaches, administrators, and other sport stakeholders, all of which are in stark contrast to the traditional belief that sport builds character and teaches life lessons that reach far beyond the playing field. Using a variety of theoretical frameworks, the moral variables studied the most thoroughly have focused almost exclusively on athletes. The most common variables include: moral reasoning (e.g., Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986a, 1986b; Priest, Krause, & Beach, 1999), pro-/anti-social behavior (e.g., Kavussanu, 2006; Kavussanu & Boardley, 2009), sportsmanship (e.g., Shields, Bredemeier, LaVoi & Power, 2005; Shields, LaVoi, Bredemeier, & Power, 2007), and fair play (Boixados, Cruz, Torregrosa, & Valiente, 2004; Hassandra, Goudas, Hatzigeorgiadis, & Theodorakis, 2007). Moral identity in athletes has been studied, but to a far lesser extent and only in the context of other moral variables (Ebbeck & Gibbons, 2003; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006).

This focus on athletes is not problematic in and of itself, but in comparison, the moral variables and the moral development of coaches has been virtually ignored, and studies on moral identity development in coaches are nonexistent. As the individuals with arguably the most important, visible, and powerful role in sport, and having perhaps the greatest influence on the moral development of their athletes, especially at the collegiate level (see, e.g., Stephens & Bredemeier, 1996), this omission in the literature is glaring. The following sections will address (1) the foundations of the research on morality in sport that is grounded in the cognitive-

developmental theoretical traditions of Kohlberg, Haan, Rest, and Blasi used in the present study, and (2) the existing literature on moral variables pertaining to coaches.

Foundations of Research on Morality in Sport

The research on morality in sport began to gain significant traction and interest in the 1980s. Weiss, Smith, and Stuntz (2008) propose that this interest may be attributed to the increased focus of the media on immoral behavior in sport, the growing numbers of girls and boys participating in organized sport, the disappearance of community-based recreation for youth, and perceptions that society as a whole is increasingly devoid of morality and ethics. Additionally, the advancement of moral development theory in the 1980s by Kohlberg, Haan, Rest, and Blasi, opened the door to studying morality as it relates to sport. Most notably stepping into that space was the pioneering work of Bredemeier and Shields (1984, 1986a, 1986b; Bredemeier, 1985). The two colleagues drew on the traditions and theories of moral development, specifically Rest's Four Component Model (1986, 1998; Rest & Narváez, 1994) and Haan's (1983, 1985) model of moral functioning (see, especially, Shields & Bredemeier, 1995). Their theories also align with Blasi (1983, 1984) and Kegan's (Monson, Roehrich, & Bebeau, 2008) cognitive-development approach, which proposes that moral functioning includes not just cognitive but also psychological and social processes.

It is important to note that in their application of moral development theory to a sport context, Shields and Bredemeier and those who followed them felt it necessary to distinguish moral concepts in sport from moral concepts in the broader literature. Slight differences in terminology and a lack of consensus in how to refer to morality and what it means in a sport context has unfortunately led to inconsistency and a lack of clarity in research both within a sport context and in the broader context of literature on moral development. Rather than the more universal terms of *morality* and *ethics* used in the theories rooted in moral psychology, the central vocabulary specific to sport identified by Shields and Bredemeier (1995) included the terms

character, *sportsmanship*, and *fair play*. They define character as "the possession of those

personal qualities or virtues that facilitate the consistent display of moral action" (Shields &

Bredemeier, 1995, p. 193) and suggest that compassion, fairness, sportsmanship, and integrity are

values inherent in character. Sportsmanship is defined as "an intense striving to succeed tempered

by a commitment to a 'play spirit,' such that ethical standards will take precedence over strategic

gain when the two conflict" and involves "maintaining allegiance to one's moral vision in the

face of attractive competing values" (p. 195). And fair play requires "that all competitors

understand and abide by not only the formal rules of play but also the spirit of cooperation needed

to insure a fair contest" (p. 22). Character and sportsmanship, as consistency of action and

choosing moral values over other values, especially invoke the more common and less sport-

specific concept that is the focus of this study—moral identity.

Another difference in terminology and the understanding of concepts central to morality

is the distinction Shields and Bredemeier (1995) make between what they consider purely moral

sport behaviors (those motivated by moral reasons) and sport behaviors that fall into a quasi-

moral category of action—actions that are simple, straightforward, and have become automatic or

habitual because of repetition. They use the terms *prosocial* behaviors (conduct that benefits

others, such as honesty, cooperation, altruism, responsibility, fairness, respect, etc.) and *antisocial*

behaviors (conduct that harms others, including egotism, dishonesty, physical and verbal

aggression, intimidation, etc.) rather than *moral* and *immoral* to describe positive and negative

actions regardless of motive (Shields and Bredemeier, 1995). Acknowledging the variations in

terminology between the literature in moral psychology in general and literature specific to

morality in sport, an effort will be made to be consistent in usage with the literature in each area

rather than lose unique meanings by merging or subsuming one set of terms under the other.

Despite these differences in the bodies of literature, the theoretical foundations are the

same, and Shields, Bredemeier, and other sport researchers followed the cognitive-developmental

tradition in focusing their research on social-contextual and psychological factors as primary

influences of moral functioning, which consists of three of Rest's four components—moral

judgment/reasoning, moral motivation/identity, and moral character/behavior.

Researchers examining the components of moral functioning have largely concluded that

sport participation may be related to negative moral outcomes (Bredemeier, 1985; Bredemeier &

Shields, 1984, 1986 a & b; Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, & Cooper, 1986; Kavussanu & Roberts,

2001; Kliever, 1990; Sage et al., 2006). For example, college basketball players' levels of moral

reasoning were linked to their tendencies toward aggression, with athletes with lower levels of

moral reasoning ability (more egocentric, instrumental reasoning) demonstrating higher

aggression scores than athletes' higher stages of moral reasoning (Bredemeier & Shields, 1984).[10]

Basketball players also reasoned at lower levels than non-athletes and athletes in lower-contact

sports (Bredemeier and Shields, 1986a; Bredemeier et al., 1986). Sage and colleagues (2006)

found that adult male soccer players who considered moral traits less important to their self-

concept (had less developed moral identities) were more likely to engage in antisocial behavior,

and Kavussanu and Roberts (2001) also found that low levels of moral functioning were indicated

when athletes judged inappropriate behaviors as appropriate (moral reasoning), reported the

intention to engage (moral motivation), and greater frequency of engagement in these actions

(moral behavior).

From their findings that individuals reason at a lower level of development in sport than

in non-sport contexts, Bredemeier and Shields (1986a) concluded, and later others confirmed

(e.g., Long, Pantaléon, Bruant, & d'Arripe-Longueville, 2006), that a realignment of cognition

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[10] Bredemeier and Shields use the terms "lower" and "higher" when referring to levels or stages of moral reasoning. Some researchers argue that these terms can be seen as judgmental, suggesting individuals at "lower" stages are somehow "lesser," and recent literature proposes using the terms "earlier" and "later" to denote levels or stages of moral reasoning to more clearly imply that these levels are simply developmental stages that every person goes through as they move toward a later-stage moral competency (N.W. Hamilton, personal communication, January 14, 2015). The terms "earlier" and "later" will be used in the current study.

and affect occurs when entering a sport environment. Bredemeier and Shields named this phenomenon "game reasoning" (1986a, 1986b, 1995). This moral realignment, or bracketed morality, during participation in athletic competition seems to legitimize an egocentric or self-interest orientation to achieve the goal of competition (winning). A main reason for this moral realignment could be the disparity between the highly artificial nature of the sport context and that of everyday life. Some of the specific ways sports differ are in (1) space and time (both specifically delineated); (2) rules (carefully structured, inflexible, and externally regulated); and (3) goals (winning as a zero-sum, artificial goal) (Long et al., 2006).

The implications of game reasoning are significant insofar as this temporary suspension of "real life" morality for those participating in the unique context of sport can negatively impact each of Rest's four processes leading to moral action—a lowered sensitivity to aggression or asocial behavior; less mature reasoning and judgment about aggression in sport (perhaps seeing it as a social norm or taking on an-eye-for-an-eye mentality); choosing values such as winning at all costs, which would encourage asocial and aggressive behavior over moral values such as sportsmanship; and lower self-regulation in response to external stimuli, such as an opponent's perceived aggression (Weiss & Bredemeier, 1990).

In similar work on the differences between sport and everyday moral reasoning, Kliever (1990) looks specifically at the context of intercollegiate athletics. He comes to a similar, if not more extreme conclusion on lower levels of moral reasoning in sport, maintaining that the structure and common practices of intercollegiate athletics inhibit the natural passage of student-athletes through the stages of moral development. Kliever's overall conclusion is that those in intercollegiate athletics generally operate at the lowest levels of moral reasoning, which limits the potential moral development of student-athletes.

While Kliever's (1990) and Bredemeier and Shield's extensive work brings much-needed knowledge to sport morality research on athletes, notably absent in the early work on moral

variables are any studies on coach moral functioning. Bredemeier and Shields (1986b) do mention that while athletes fall into patterns of game reasoning, it is the responsibility of coaches and officials to operate in "real life" morality, however this is simply a projection by the authors and to date no research has been done on coach game reasoning or coaches operating at different moral levels in and out of their jobs. This study will begin to fill that gap by gaining a better understanding of coaches who are moral exemplars and are thus assumed not to suspend typical moral obligation and instead show consistency in moral reasoning across contexts.

While it is unclear if coaches engage in game reasoning, it is highly probable that coaches can influence athlete game reasoning and athlete moral development in general and that coaches with a stronger unity of moral and professional identities—i.e., moral exemplars—are more likely to embrace a philosophy where the holistic development of athletes is central, including athletes' moral development. There is a great deal of literature that outlines the ways in which a coach's behavior (such as decision-making style or quality and frequency of feedback) and goal orientation (definition of success) influences the creation of a motivational climate that facilitates or hinders athlete performance and/or psychological outcomes. However, most research on coach influence is concentrated on athletes' motivational outcomes (enjoyment and self-perception, for example), rather than moral outcomes.

Although research on the moral influence of coaches is still in its infancy, three relatively recent studies directly address this type of coach influence on athletes. In a promising study on the moral influence of coaches, Peláez (2010) uses interviews with seven elite Canadian coaches who were also former athletes to explore, first, the coach as moral influence; second, coaches' understanding of morality; and third, the coaches' own moral influences when they were athletes. Peláez (2010) ultimately concluded that (1) coaches' morality does indeed influence athletes, primarily through the coach's position as a role model and as an agent contributing to the creation and support of a moral atmosphere, (2) the influence may be positive or negative, and (3) athletes

tend to mirror the attitudes, behaviors, and characteristics of their coaches. A second recent study showed that coach ethical leadership is positively related to student-athletes' college satisfaction and perceptions of an inclusive team climate, while abusive coaching behavior is positively related to team members' willingness to cheat (Yukhymenko-Lescroart, Brown, & Paskus, 2014). In the third study, Bolter and Weiss (2012) focused on coaches' influence on sportsmanship as a measure of character or moral development. In developing the Sportsmanship Coaching Behaviors Scale (SCBS), Bolter and Weiss (2012) discovered six primary ways by which coaches can influence the sportsmanship of their athletes: (a) directly instructing athletes, (b) modeling desirable or undesirable actions, (c) encouraging or reinforcing good sportsmanship, (d) exerting pressure on athletes to display good or poor sportsmanship, (e) creating a higher mastery or performance climate, and (f) engaging athletes in discussing and resolving moral dilemmas.

These three studies show agreement on important aspects of coach moral influence, especially through the impact coaches can have on their athletes through modeling positive/prosocial or negative/antisocial behaviors and the type of climate (moral or motivational) the coach creates. Though not primarily devoted to coach moral influence, a fourth study on the relationship between athlete exposure to higher level moral thinking and athlete moral decision making ability also concludes that in the collegiate years specifically, coaches are the most influential figures on athlete moral development (Winters, 2011). The literature supporting these coaching influences on athlete morality, specifically coach modeling of moral behavior, the social approval and pressure offered by coaches, and the coach-created motivational and moral climate, is briefly summarized here.

Modeling. Research has shown that coaches' modeling of prosocial and antisocial behavior as well as coaches' own immoral attitudes and are linked to athletes' engagement in asocial or unsportsmanlike behavior (e.g., Guivernau & Duda, 2002; Shields, Bredemeier, Gardner, & Bostrom, 1995; Shields et al., 2005). Coaches may also directly teach athletes about

moral and ethical behavior (see Horn, 2008; Smoll & Smith, 2002; Winters, 2011), even teaching them to engage in unethical behavior such as cheating and cutting corners (Josephson Institute, 2007).

Social approval and pressure. The degree to which athletes perceive that their coach sanctions prosocial and antisocial sporting behaviors affects their own attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Guivernau & Duda, 2002; Stuart & Ebbeck, 1995). Research has found that coaches who permit or even pressure athletes to engage in immoral or antisocial behaviors such as cheating and aggression are associated with higher instances of these behaviors (Guivernau & Duda, 2002; Josephson Institute, 2007; Long et al. 2006; Stephens, 2001).

Coach-created motivational and moral climate/atmosphere. Coaches can influence athletes' sportsmanship and moral development through shaping the motivational and moral climate. Coaches who create an ego- or performance-based motivational climate focused on external criteria to evaluate success are associated with players who approve of unsportsmanlike attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Shields et al., 1995; Shields et al., 2005), but the opposite is also found to be true—coach-created mastery climates focused on individual improvement and self-referenced goals are related to good sportsmanship (e.g., Gano-Overway, Guivernau, Magyar, Waldron, & Ewing, 2005; Miller, Roberts, & Ommundsen, 2005; Shields et al., 2005).

Research shows that coaches can influence the moral atmosphere of a team. According to Shields and Bredemeier (1995), central components of the moral atmosphere are the collective norms and conventions of the team, including athletes' beliefs about asocial and aggressive behavior. Work by Stephens (2000, 2001) and colleagues (Stephens & Bredemeier, 1996; Stephens, Bredemeier, & Shields, 1997) with youth athletes demonstrated that team norms accepting asocial and aggressive behavior (such as willingness to injure an opponent, lie to an official, or break a rule), the coach's goal orientation (specifically ego orientation) (e.g. Shields et

al., 2005), and the coach's request for aggression, such as purposefully injuring an opponent, all predicted players' self-reported aggressive tendencies (Stephens, 2000, 2001; Stephens & Bredemeier, 1996). Kavussanu, Roberts, and Ntoumanis (2002) had similar results with college basketball players, finding that moral functioning declined when the coach condoned and team norms supported aggressive and asocial behavior: athletes judged asocial actions as more legitimate, planned to engage in them, and acted in asocial ways more frequently. Teams with strong prosocial norms, however, have a moral atmosphere that promotes moral development and moral behavior (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989; Shields & Bredemeier, 2005).

While research has shown that moral atmosphere created by the coach does influence moral reasoning and behavior of athletes, no known research has focused on the coach's role in creating such a moral climate. One dissertation that adds to this literature is Valentini's (2014), case study of the moral climate of a collegiate tennis team and the role of the coach in creating and sustaining this climate.

All of the literature summarized thus far still focuses on the coach as an agent of influence, not on the morality of the coach him- or herself. As demonstrated in the literature, coaches have the enormous potential to influence athletes and have the responsibility as professionals to act in moral ways. With this heavy charge, there is great value in understanding coaches' own morality and moral development as an antecedent to athlete moral outcomes. This missing piece of studying moral variables pertaining to coaches, especially the moral identity of coaches, is key to understanding *how* coaches can create a mastery motivational climate and moral atmosphere in order to positively influence athlete moral development rather than allow or even encourage athletes to engage in game reasoning or lower levels of moral functioning. Given the paucity of research on coaches' morality in general and moral identity more specifically, the next section will outline the research that does exist and how the current study will significantly add to this literature.

Moral Variables in Coaching

Until very recently, the research available on the morality of coaches was nearly exclusively unpublished doctoral dissertations. These studies include inquiries into the ethically questionable practices of male varsity coaches (Harvey, 1962, cited in Goeb, 1997); the morality, leadership, and excellence of four of the most successful and most highly respected NCAA Division I men's basketball coaches (Gerdes, 1994); the similarities and differences between the sportsmanship attitudes/moral reasoning of interscholastic coaches (Gillentine, 1995); the similarities and differences between the cognitive moral reasoning ability of NCAA Division II athletes and their coaches (Goeb, 1997); the relationship between coach moral reasoning and leadership style (Webb, 2008), the coach as a moral influence on athletes (Peláez, 2010), and a Masters' thesis on the ethical professional identity development of collegiate swimming coaches (Hamilton, 2011). Published research on coach morality includes Duquin's (1984) study on the moral rationales of athletes, non-athletes, and coaches, and Bergmann-Drewe's (2000) interviews of nine collegiate coaches in Canada on the ethical issues and dilemmas they face and how they resolved those dilemmas, and Rudd and Mondello's (2006) exploration of coaches' definitions of character. These studies are briefly summarized here.

Beginning with the earliest study, Harvey (1962, cited in Goeb, 1997) surveyed former varsity baseball, football, basketball, and track male athletes about their coaches' ethically questionable actions. Using a retrospective method, Harvey found that 20% of athletes reported their coaches as having engaged in less-than-moral actions such as berating officials, permitting the use of profanity, and practicing illegal recruiting. Harvey concluded that factors such as the age of the coach, type of institution at which the coach received his education, size of school, and pressure under which the coach worked all influenced the extent to which coaches practiced ethically questionable behavior (cited in Goeb, 1997).

Though a true comparison cannot be made decades later and addressing different moral variables, Gillentine's (1995) results comparing sportsmanship attitudes/moral reasoning of interscholastic coaches contradict Harvey's results insofar as personal factors influence moral variables. Gillentine found no differences in sportsmanship attitudes or moral reasoning of interscholastic coaches for gender, level of competition, years of coaching experience, level of education, type of sport, or gender of athletes.

Like Gillentine (1995), neither Webb (2008) nor Goeb (1997) had significant results in their studies. Webb (2008) found no significant connections between coach moral reasoning ability and leadership style (transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire), and Goeb (1997) did not find significant differences in the cognitive moral reasoning ability of NCAA Division II athletes and coaches. The findings that athlete cognitive moral reasoning scores closely resembled the scores of their coaches could imply that coaches have a strong effect on athletes' moral reasoning, suggesting the need for further research to understanding more fully coaches' own moral reasoning.

Related to moral reasoning, Duquin (1984) and Bergmann-Drewe (2000) both address coaches' decision making on ethical dilemmas and the rationales behind their decisions. While Duquin administered sport-specific moral dilemma surveys and Bergmann-Drewe solicited coaches' own ethical dilemmas, both found that coaches make difficult moral decisions based on what is in the best interest of the athlete, or, as Duquin describes, from an ethic of care. Rudd and Mondello (2006) concluded in interviews of Division I coaches that one explanation for ethical problems in sport could be that in their understandings of "character," coaches often overemphasize social values (e.g., being hardworking) over moral values (e.g., demonstrating honesty or fairness).

Of the studies above, the two most relevant to the present study are my own recent research on collegiate swim coaches' conceptions of professionalism and their level of

development as ethical professionals (Hamilton, 2011) and Gerdes's (1994) naturalistic inquiry into the morality, leadership, and excellence of highly successful collegiate basketball coaches. My study was the first to address the morality of coaches from the perspective of coaches as ethical professionals and having a more or less developed sense of a professional identity as understood through Kegan's (1998) theory of ethical identity development. My main findings showed most coaches aligning with a relationship-oriented professionalism and some transitioning into a self-authoring professionalism. The current study will employ a Kegan-based interview similar to the essay assessment used in the 2011 study.

While my research included coaches with a wide range of experience, moral maturity, and winning records, Gerdes (1994) examined the morality, leadership, and excellence of four of the most successful and most highly respected NCAA Division I men's basketball coaches of the time, including John Wooden, Denny Crum, Dean Smith, and Roy Williams. While not framed by Gerdes as a study on moral exemplars, and never citing other moral exemplar studies, Gerdes's methods and results are surprisingly similar to those of Colby and Damon (1992), who are considered the original researchers on moral exemplars (discussed above). Gerdes used peer nominations to sample the most successful basketball coaches by winning percentage who also "represented the very best of what a coach should be at the collegiate level" (p. 62). Through in-depth interviews and observation of his four participants, Gerdes reported the following characteristics shared by the coaches: (1) a holistic view of success (success is defined as more than just winning), (2) a view of themselves as servants to the higher purpose of education, (3) a view of others as valued individuals and worthy of their service, (4) a character grounded in decency and conviction to principles, (5) a good model of teaching, leading, and virtuous living, and (6) an understanding of tradition and the on-going positive influences within their programs (Gerdes, 1994). Now 20 years old, Gerdes's work underscores the importance of a more comprehensive and expansive examination of the lives and moral commitment of coaches who

are the gold standards of the profession and who share the conviction to ethical principles and virtuous living.

Inspiring hope for the future of research on and the teaching of ethics in coaching are two recent edited volumes challenging the predominant view that sport coaching is primarily technical and performance-based in nature (Hardman & Jones, 2011a; Simon, 2013). Contributors to both volumes address key ethical issues in sports coaching, such as coaching youth sport, males coaching females, performance enhancement, and coaching dangerous sports as well as offering insight into the virtues, character, and conduct of the sport coach. Most relevant to the present study, in their own chapter, Hardman and Jones (2011b) argue that coaching involves being "the right sort of person," setting a good example, and having "ethically admirable ideals" (p. 7). It is their responsibility to initiate their athlete into the virtues and intrinsic values of sport.

These recent efforts are a promising start for bringing the importance of morality in coaching into view for coaches, administrators, and the broader public. However, the momentum needs to continue. It is clear from the body of literature reviewed here that more research is yet to be done on coaching, morality, and professionalism, as coaches are the individuals conferred with the responsibility of modeling, teaching, and supporting student-athletes in their moral development. They have the power to reverse the trends toward moral apathy and unethical conduct in college sport.

Significance of the Study/Point of Departure

The significance of this study and its potential impact on existing literature and for coaching praxis is multifaceted and vast given the current dynamic and contested landscape of big-time college sports. College athletics is on a potentially slippery moral slope of commercialization, excess, corruption, and abuse due in large part to the movement away from the educational student-athlete centered development model in favor of the for-profit business model that is driving collegiate athletics departments and shaping higher education in general. As

argued herein, the purpose of sport, especially in an educational context like a university setting, should be to advance holistic development, including moral development, of athletes. Sport teams can be a place where moral development occurs as athletes struggle with the inherently moral issues that arise in and through competition (e.g., Gibbons, Ebbeck & Weiss [1995]). Within sport teams, the head coach is the most visible, powerful individual and most likely to influence athlete moral development due to the amount of time he or she spends with athletes over the course of the athlete's college sport career. Coach influence is important at the college level because adults continue to develop morally throughout their lifespan (Kegan 1998; Kegan & Lahey, 2009), and college students, especially, have great potential for growth in moral understanding, moral goals and values, moral identity, and moral discourse and practice (Colby, 2008b). Head coaches, through their coaching philosophy (which is in part influenced by their understanding of professionalism and moral identity) not only create a climate that indirectly influences athlete motivation, psychosocial outcomes, and development (e.g., Shields & Bredemeier, 1995, 2005), but coaches also likely directly influence athlete development through teaching, interpersonal interactions, and modeling (e.g., Peláez, 2010). By understanding moral exemplar coach professionalism and identity development, this study addresses a gap in the literature on the factors that lead coaches to promote the holistic development of the athlete through their philosophies and behavior.

Given the influence and responsibilities bestowed upon them, head coaches have a duty to operate, at the very minimum, according to the letter, if not the spirit, of the rules and expectations of the game, of their institution, and of the NCAA. Many head coaches abide by and uphold the moral integrity of sport, while others do not. Gaining insight into coaches who are great moral role models, leaders, and teachers and who explicitly place moral values and the moral development of their athletes ahead of—or at least equal to—winning is imperative. However, due to the scarcity of data on coach professionalism and coach moral identity,

understanding of these potentially important influences on athlete development is either incomplete or non-existent. This study fills these gaps in the research as well as theoretical and methodological gaps in the literature..

This research is significant not only in its highly relevant topic but also in its theoretical framework, methodology, and unique sample. This project bridges two considerable areas of scholarly inquiry—moral psychology in the structural cognitive-developmental tradition and the psychology of coaching. More specifically, this study enhances the literature in the emergent fields of professional identity formation and moral exemplar research. First, it broadens the research in ethical professional identity formation by offering further insight into moral exemplars' understandings of professionalism. Second, this study brings depth and breadth to the field of moral exemplar research by examining a population that to date has not previously been studied—collegiate coaches. Moral exemplar collegiate coaches are a unique population because at the highest level of college sport—NCAA Division I—they work in a remarkably competitive, highly visible, high-stakes environment where a constant negotiation of multiple and competing tensions exists. Third, it adds to the psychology of coaching and coaching science literatures, as coach moral identity and development have not been previously examined, with the exception of Hamilton's initial study in 2011.

This study fills methodological gaps and adds to existing research by employing Colby and Damon's moral exemplar methodology and Kegan's ethical professional identity assessments as methods to determine stages of identity development. This study also answers the calls of scholars such as Colby, Damon, Rule, and Bebeau to provide additional and unique qualitative perspectives on moral development through the use of semi-structured interviews. As Colby and Damon (1992) argue, qualitative studies must be used to access individuals' lived experience and their development of a moral identity. Studying the moral identity and moral motivations of exemplar coaches (i.e., "moral geniuses") rather than extrapolating about ideal coach morality

from a subset of more average ethically developed coaches not only has the possibility of providing a more complete view of moral identity development (Damon & Colby, 2013). Exemplars also have the potential to elevate the coaching profession and inspire other coaches to reflect on and develop their own morality and coaching philosophy in order to become better coaches and serve holistic athlete development. Colby and Damon (1992) note the potential power of exemplar studies: "Most people are drawn more to concrete lives than to abstract ideals. When a particularly visible life represents an appreciated (though perhaps elusive) moral value, people may be influenced in a number of ways. Sometimes the extraordinary life influences by enlightening, making moral issues clear where they were previously unnoticed. . . . Other times the extraordinary life influences through example, . . . [and] such examples may help others live up to ideals that they hold but have found difficult to put into action" (p. 153). Possibly providing an outcome with the most potential for future action, studying moral exemplars may "illuminat[e] the ways that thoughtful and creative individuals analyze and evaluate their culture's dominant narratives and question the assumptions of narratives that reinforce injustice" (Colby & Damon, 1992, p. 12). To date, no researchers have examined moral exemplarity in sport in general, nor collegiate coaches in particular, and this study fills this glaring gap.

Filling these gaps and enhancing the literature in multiple areas can greatly enrich coach education, which rarely has an explicit focus on moral development of coaches or how to achieve it (Sabock & Sabock, 2005). This work has the potential to advance understanding of coaching praxis by deepening the literature on moral variables in sport, specifically the moral and professional identity development of coaches. The results of this work can, in turn, be explicitly taught to coaches and have potential to improve coach effectiveness and help coaches simultaneously pursue competitive success while holistically developing athletes. It can also encourage coaches to adopt a shared understanding of the optimal standards of conduct for their profession, which, at present, does not have a universal code of ethics. Because professionalism,

like moral functioning, is not inborn, it is imperative that the principles and capacities and the ideals of the coaching profession are explicitly taught, understood, and developed in coaches. This study begins the process of grasping the ideals of the profession through moral exemplar collegiate coaches. Understanding what professionalism means for coaches who are considered by their peers to be exemplary moral leaders can help guide future coaches by teaching and fostering in new coaches the qualities of a professional. Additionally, gaining cognitive insight into how and why this specific group of individuals are able to maintain their integrity and moral values in the context of big-time college athletics as well as elucidating the factors that led to their identity development can also be beneficial for coach education by teaching and cultivating these processes in new coaches and encouraging reflection by existing coaches.

In this study, the insights of exemplar coaches within the culture of big-time collegiate athletics can be part of the solution to ensuring that college sport is a context in which holistic athlete development and moral education occurs. The words of coaches who have made sustained commitments to moral values in their personal and professional lives can offer a counter to the discouraging popular press stories of unethical college coaches by highlighting the mechanisms behind the professionalism and moral identity development of coaches who "get it right"— coaches of character and integrity who practice sportsmanship, fairness, and compassion and act on their moral convictions regardless of obstacles, pressures, or distractions.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to gain understanding of the ethical professional identity development of moral exemplar collegiate coaches. The insights gathered from coach moral exemplars were intended to provide a model of ethical professionalism for individuals currently engaged in as well as for those who desire to enter the coaching profession. To address this purpose, the following research questions guided this study:

1. How do moral exemplar collegiate coaches understand the meaning of professionalism?

2. How does the ethical professional identity of exemplar collegiate coaches form?

3. How do moral exemplar coaches maintain their personal integrity (ethical professional identity) in the face of trials, temptations, and pressure to compromise it in their "high-stakes" profession?

4. How does the ethical professional identity development of moral exemplar collegiate coaches align with or diverge from Kegan's stages of moral identity formation?

CHAPTER 3—METHODOLOGY

The primary purpose of this study was to understand more fully the moral and

professional identity development of moral exemplar collegiate coaches. Because research on

moral exemplars is not widespread, this study borrowed from the structure of the seminal

exemplar studies, most notably Colby and Damon's (1992) *Some Do Care: Contemporary Lives*

of Moral Commitment, and Rule and Bebeau's (2005) *Dentists Who Care: Inspiring Stories of*

Professional Commitment. This study also drew from previous work on ethical professional

identity formation based on Robert Kegan's research. This chapter will address the rationale for

the research design, the sampling methods and participants, data collection methods and

procedures, data analysis and reliability, and research issues, including trustworthiness, the role of

the researcher, and ethical considerations.

Rationale for the Research Design

This study employed a constructivist epistemological perspective and a qualitative

methods research design. The qualitative, constructivist epistemological approach is appropriate

for a study of moral exemplars because it is used to inductively examine the complexity of the

subjective meanings individuals attach to their experience (Creswell, 2009). As such, I aimed to

understand and interpret how moral exemplar coaches engage in the world, especially in the

process of social interaction. As "a means for exploring and understanding the meaning

individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" through emerging questions,

inductive analysis, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data, a

qualitative research design allows for the primary area of inquiry—the formation of coaches'

moral identity and the preservation of their personal integrity in a highly competitive environment

as well as the coaches' stages of professional ethical identity development—to be examined in

depth (Creswell, 2009, p. 4). Rubin and Rubin (2012) argue that "rather than stripping away

context, [and] reducing people's experience to numbers," qualitative research in the form of in-depth interviewing "approaches a problem in its natural setting, explores related and contradictory themes and concepts, and points out the missing and the subtle as well as the explicit and obvious" (p. xv).

In the current research design, strengths of the qualitative method outlined by Hughes (2006) include having the ability to lend understanding to complex, dynamic processes (such as moral exemplarity and moral identity); providing an opportunity to see subtleties and complexities that might be missed in the generalized understanding of situations and concepts offered by quantitative studies; having design flexibility and variety; and giving meaning to numbers (here, the stages of ethical professional identity formation) through descriptive, in-depth information (the exemplar narratives gathered through in-depth interviews).

More specifically, this study employed an approach that has gradually developed into what Damon and Colby (2013) describe as a "moral exemplar methodology." This methodology is consistent with and is grounded in a constructivist epistemological perspective in which individuals construct their own meanings through their experiences, social and contextual factors, and psychological development. This perspective follows the traditions of Kohlberg, Haan, Rest, Blasi, and Kegan, which concern individuals and how they make meaning of themselves and the world around them. The researcher aimed to understand and interpret how individuals engage in the world, especially in the process of social interaction (Creswell, 2009). In the constructivist view there is more than one meaning or truth, and the researcher acknowledges that her own background, values, beliefs, and biases shape the interpretation of participant's views and constructions of meaning (Creswell, 2009). The methodology of the moral exemplar approach, with a need to conserve the exemplars' personal insights, understandings, and descriptions, gathers and interprets data with a focus on detail and depth. It is used to gain a more complete, unique, and global understanding of the individual (an ideographic approach) rather than finding

more general laws that apply to everyone (a nomothetic approach) (Standen, 2007).

In their early work, Colby and Damon (1992) referred to their methodology of individual case studies as "assisted autobiography" and later as simply a "moral exemplar methodology" (Damon & Colby, 2013) while Rule and Bebeau (2005) called their approach to exemplar interviews "ethnographic conversations." In order to get at the depth and uniqueness of the individual, ethnographic and case study approaches are common. Moral exemplar studies using an ideographic approach or slight variations on this approach include Colby and Damon (1992) on a variety of moral leaders; Cooper and Wright (1992) on exemplary public administrators; Rule and Bebeau (2005) on dentists; Matsuba and Walker (2005) on young adults; Rugeley and Van Wart (2006) on "everyday" exemplars; Walker and Frimer (2007) on awardees for exceptional bravery or caring; Huff and Barnard (2009) on computing professionals; and Hamilton and Monson (2012) on lawyers. Using this "moral exemplar" methodology, I will work together with my exemplar subjects as co-investigators to interpret their stories and beliefs as they relate to moral identity development and commitment.

Damon and Colby (2013) make a compelling argument for the moral exemplar methodology. They contend that exemplars should be included in scientific research in order to gain a complete view of the range of human operation and existence. They use the example of research on intelligence: no one would claim to have a complete understanding of human intelligence without looking at and thoroughly studying individuals at the highest level of intellectual ability—geniuses—because they may process information in qualitatively different ways than those of average intelligence. Likewise, a complete view of moral development is unattainable without studying moral exemplars—and studying coaches is no exception. Damon and Colby (2013) also make the convincing claim that "an exemplar approach is necessary for providing an *accurate, non-distorted* account of any psychological phenomenon under investigation" (p. 2, emphasis in original).

Damon and Colby (2013) note that the vast majority of research on morality relies on samples from the general population and considers these samples as representative of all people, which distorts reality. I suggest that this may be an issue with the well-known research of Bredemeier and Shields (1986a, 1986b, 1994) on what they term bracketed morality and game reasoning—their studies look at general populations of athletes, which may indeed show lower levels of moral reasoning in a sport context, however, the athletes who do reason at higher levels are still lumped together into studies supporting the theory that athletes are "less moral" than non-athletes. Damon and Colby (2013) lament that "research paradigms that fail to examine and account for people like this [moral exemplars] are extrapolating from the limitations of ordinary people to the nature of morality itself" (p. 7).

According to Colby and Damon (2013), moral development researchers have not been able to grasp the "complex reality of moral behavior in its full human sense" because limits in methodology and theory have essentially discounted the "beliefs, choices, and ideals that have moved highly developed people to moral action throughout recorded history" (p. 7). Consequently, the authors call for a greater understanding of human morality through the use of the moral exemplar methodology, which addresses the sampling biases of traditional studies that provide an incomplete, malformed view of morality. This study adds to a greater understanding of human morality by using a moral exemplar methodology with collegiate coaches.

Sampling Methods and Participants

The population for this study (n=12) consisted of male (n=8) and female (n=4) NCAA Division I collegiate head coaches from Automatic Qualifying (AQ) Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) schools. All coaches were Caucasian.[11] The average age of the coaches was 49 years with

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[11] The gender distribution in the sample is slightly surprising not because there were fewer women than men but the opposite—women made up one-third of the current sample but women make up less than 20% of all college head coaches (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012). The racial distribution of the sample is not

a range of 39 to 63 years, and the average years of collegiate head coaching experience was 18

years with a range of 5 to 31 years. The coaches represented the following sports: softball (3),

tennis (2), ice hockey (2), football (2), soccer (1), diving (1), and volleyball (1). Football and

potentially ice hockey are the only two revenue-producing sports. The conferences in which the

coaches worked included seven (7) coaches from the Big 10, two (2) from the Big 12, two (2)

from the SEC, and one (1) from the Big East. Seven of the coaches headed women's teams, three

coached men's teams, and one coached both men and women. For the nine of the 12 coaches

whose head coaching career win-loss records were publicly available, their average record was

.683 with a range of .620 to .833.

Participants for this study were chosen through nonrandom, purposive, extreme case

sampling. Purposive sampling is described as using a criterion or purpose to intentionally select

specific individuals who provide information-rich cases that will address the research question

(Kemper, Stringfield, & Teddlie, 2003), and extreme case sampling involves obtaining

individuals who provide unusual, deviant, or enlightened case of the phenomenon of interest

(Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Clark, 2011). In this study, moral exemplars are enlightened cases of

moral development.

The general population for this study included male or female intercollegiate head

coaches of men's or women's NCAA Division I, Bowl Championship Series (BCS) varsity

athletic programs in one of the six "automatic qualifying" (AQ) or "power" conferences[12] in the

United States. Including both male and female coaches who coach both men's and women's

teams and coaches from a variety of sports allows for a broad, diverse pool of subjects who have

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surprising because the vast majority of head coaches at the Division I level are white (82.6% of men's
coaches and 84.5% of women's coaches) (Lapchick, Agusta, Kinkopf, & McPhee, 2013).

[12] BCS schools are those Division I institutions whose football programs are the most competitive and meet
specific NCAA criteria for game attendance and scholarships (NCAA, 2007), and Automatic Qualifying
conferences are those whose conference champion football team receives an automatic berth in one of the
Bowl Championship Series bowl games. The 2013-14 season was the last college football season of the
Bowl Championship Series. It has been replaced by a four-team playoff called the College Football Playoff.

the potential to offer different perspectives on moral and professional identity. Based on moral identity theory (Blasi, 1983, 1984; Kegan, 1982, 1998), the level of integration of moral values into one's sense of self and congruency between one's moral judgment and actions should not depend on demographic variables such as gender or sport variables such as revenue vs non-revenue sports. Additionally, moral exemplars in past studies have varied in profession (e.g., Colby & Damon) and/or in areas of expertise within a single profession (e.g., Hamilton & Monson, 2012; Rule & Bebeau, 2005). As the first study to examine ethical identity development in coaches in big-time college sport, the scope and sample of this study was intended to be broad.

The sample was limited to coaches in the "high-stakes" environment of NCAA Division I AQ BCS schools because, traditionally, Division I is seen as the most competitive division of the NCAA, as it is comprised mostly of large land-grant state universities that offer athletic scholarships. With scholarship money involved, Division I institutions are generally seen to place a higher value on winning than Division III (Mahoney, Fink, & Pastore, 1999), and the public and media attention given to Division I athletics makes it a high-stakes, more competitive arena than Division II. In fact, it is highly recognized that coaches within these big-time athletics programs must win to retain their jobs, another aspect that makes employment "high stakes." Additionally, limiting the sample to BCS schools in the AQ conferences within Division I serves to further narrow the pool of coaches to the major collegiate athletic powers that generally have top-end facilities, the largest athletic budgets, and the most athletic scholarships. As the highest level of competition in collegiate sport, Division I AQ BCS schools highlight the potential for challenges to the development and maintenance of professional ethical identity and the increased potential for coach moral conflict due to an environment where a primary focus on winning may come into conflict with athlete development. Better understanding this unique and specific population provides insight into the ability of coaches to balance these seemingly incompatible objectives.

While any method of selecting moral exemplars has philosophical and practical limitations, a hybrid method of exemplar identification was used in this study. Colby and Damon (1992) used a panel of ethics experts to identify a list of criteria by which to select exemplars. The criticism of this approach is that it can lead to an overly narrow conception of moral exemplarity (Walker & Pitts, 1998). Other studies have used peers or "lay" people to nominate exemplars, with the sole exemplar criteria being individuals who demonstrate "extraordinary moral commitment" (Matsuba & Walker, 2005). The limitation to Matsuba and Walker's approach is the opposite of that in Colby and Damon's work—engaging in "extraordinary moral commitment" could mean different things to different people, from performing a single heroic moral act to demonstrating day-to-day moral practices and social interactions over extended periods of time. To address the criticisms of both of these sampling methods, in this study peer nominators were supplied with theoretically based characteristics that define an exemplar coach. This approach is similar to the one adopted by Rule and Bebeau (2005) in nominating exemplar dentists.

The operational definition of a moral exemplar collegiate coach was developed with consideration of criteria used in previous moral exemplar literature (Colby & Damon, 1992; Rule & Bebeau, 2005) and was vetted with two scholars knowledgeable in coaching and ethics with the specific design of making the criteria apply more directly to athletic coaches and be worded for easy interpretation by a lay population. After incorporating expert feedback, the definition of a moral exemplar collegiate coach for this study is a coach who fits most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- Has high ethical standards and conducts him/herself with professionalism;
- Consistently receives high ratings/evaluations from his or her athletes for being a caring and concerned coach/is perceived by his or her athletes as being a caring and concerned coach;

- Follows institutional and organizational rules and policies;

- Honors the game by demonstrating sportsmanship and showing respect for the rules, opponents, officials, athletes, and self;

- Demonstrates a willingness to put the well-being of his or her athletes ahead of self-interest and/or winning;

- Teaches and inspires good character and sportsmanship in his or her athletes and others.

Selection of the moral exemplar coaches was done through a robust dual peer nomination process, a process designed to reduce the limitations of previous exemplar studies and ensure a credible sample. This peer-nomination procedure is consistent with exemplar identification used in previous research (Dunlop et al., 2012; Matsuba & Walker, 2005; Rule & Bebeau, 2005) but is more robust due to its dual nature—nominations came from two sources—athletic directors and peer coaches. To solicit nominations, the researcher contacted via email all athletic directors (ADs) (n = 77) and head coaches (n = 1332) of Division I AQ BCS institutions to ask for nominations of exemplars (see Appendix B for AD and coach nomination emails). Athletic directors were selected as nominators because they are privy to athlete evaluations of coaches and know which coaches consistently receive the highest ratings and positive feedback by their athletes as being caring and concerned for their welfare. Athlete reports of coaches get at the moral actions, caring, and sensitivities of the coaches, which is information that would be missing from a monistic peer nomination approach. ADs also have a sense of how the coaches interact with their colleagues and if they follow rules and guidelines. The second source of exemplar nominations was peer coaches. Peer coaches view other coaches' actions on the field, respect for the game, treatment of opponents and athletes, and adherence to rules. Asking two groups for their nominations and finding individuals at the intersection of two perspectives better ensured that the sample was comprised of true moral exemplar coaches. Athletic directors were asked if they have any coaches on their staff and peer coaches were asked if they know of any other head

coaches who meet the criteria above. For coaches, however, the item relating to receiving high ratings was replaced with "Is perceived by his or her athletes as being a caring and concerned coach."

In total, 77 athletic directors and 1,332 head coaches were contacted via email. Follow-up emails were also sent, and a total of 17 ADs and 252 coaches sent in nominations for a 22.4% and 18.9% response rate, respectively. Two hundred and eighty-nine (289) different coaches received nominations. The researcher then contacted via email and phone (see Appendix A for coach nominee email) the 15 coaches who received the most nominations by their peers as fitting the criteria of outstanding moral exemplarity (see above) for an interview. To be included in the top 15, the exemplar had to have at least one nomination from a coaching colleague at the nominee's institution, at least one nomination from a coaching peer in the nominee's sport and athletic conference, and he or she had to be either nominated by or have their nomination supported by the athletic director at their institution. Triangulating nominations in this way increased the validity or credibility of the selection of coaches as exemplars meeting the delineated criteria. Twelve of fifteen (80%) of the coaches who met the selection/nomination criteria accepted the request for an interview. Three of the 15 (20%) did not respond. The number of exemplar interviewees in this study is consistent in sample size to existing exemplar research that included 10 to 12 participants (Cooper & Wright, 1992; Hamilton & Monson, 2012; Rule & Bebeau, 2005).

Data Collection and Procedures

The primary data source for this study on the moral identity and ethical professional development of moral exemplar NCAA Division I head coaches was semi-structured in-depth interviews based on Robert Kegan's (1998) theory of identity development and previous moral exemplar studies by Colby and Damon (1992) and Rule and Bebeau (2005). This method is consistent with a constructivist methodological perspective. Interview data was enhanced with

two additional data collection methods: (1) coach background and demographic information and (2) field notes. Using a variety of data collection methods can provide context and improve data quality and credibility (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2000).

Background Information

Demographic and background information was obtained from official coach bios on their institutions' websites. Prior to interviews, the researcher also searched for and read any recent news items related to each coach and his or her team. This information allowed the researcher to go into interviews better informed and more able to put the participant at ease by knowing about and being able to refer to his or her previous experience, sport, university, etc. Demographic and background information was also used in interpreting data (see results and discussion).

Field Notes

Some researchers propose that often the most important insights come when an interview is over (Thorpe, 2008). Field notes, described as mental notes, written jotted or scratch notes, or reflections and highlights that can be used for later development (Thorpe, 2008), can be an important form of data collection to supplement a face-to-face interview. The researcher took field notes immediately after each interview on her thoughts, reactions, and observations on each coach, interview, and situation. Notes included contextual, methodological, and personal reflections.

Interviews

Exemplar stories were obtained through face-to-face, semi-structured, in-depth interviews treating exemplars as co-investigators. This type of interviewing is consistent with Colby and Damon's (1992) and Rest and Bebeau's (2005) moral exemplar methodology. In contrast to more controlled moral development studies, such as those using highly structured interviews or tests like the MJI or DIT to determine moral development from where individuals fall on a scale of moral reasoning or other variable, using in-depth interviews allows for the researcher and the

participant to reflect on the real-life interactions among the multiplicity of variables that contribute to moral decision-making, the formation of a moral and professional identity, and moral behavior. Colby and Damon (1992) justify the use of semi-structured rather than open-ended interviews in their argument that the "direct questioning [of a face-to-face interview] becomes especially powerful when the same questions and probes can be directed toward a number of people. This provides a standard of comparison that can validate the investigator's interpretations" (Colby & Damon, 1992, p. 17). A semi-structured, interview-guide approach outlines in advance the specific topics and issues to be covered, however the interviewer may decide the sequence and wording of the questions during the course of the interview (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Strengths of this type of interview include the conversational and situational nature of the interview, increasing the comprehensiveness of the data by using an outline, making data collection somewhat systematic for each participant, and allowing the interviewer to anticipate and fill in gaps in participant responses with appropriate follow-up questions (Cohen et al., 2007). Weaknesses of the interview-guide approach include inadvertent omission of topics and the flexibility in sequencing and wording of questions resulting in participant responses that are different enough to reduce their comparability (Cohen et al., 2007). To address these weaknesses, the researcher ensured she was very familiar with the specific questions prior to each interview, and during the interviews the researcher referred to the interview guide and marked off each question as it was answered.

The majority of the interview guide was adapted from a short-answer essay measure of ethical professional identity used with other populations (Bebeau & Lewis, 2004; Bebeau & Monson, 2012; Monson et al., 2008; Monson & Hamilton, 2011 a & b) that was also tested on collegiate swim coaches (Hamilton, 2011). These questions were chosen over the more traditional exemplar interview guide used by Colby and Damon (1992) and Rule and Bebeau (2005) because they would produce material similar to the traditional exemplar interview questions while also

providing information about coaches' understanding of professionalism. For this study, the Kegan-style interview questions were the most fitting measure of moral identity because they incorporate the concept of professional identity development. As noted in the literature review, the questions were designed to elicit understanding of the psychosocial structures of moral identity formation associated with collegiate coaches' understanding of professionalism. The questions ask specifically about a coach's expectations of him/herself, others' expectations of him/her, feelings about failing to live up to his/her own and others' expectations, and conflicts he/she experiences between self and others.

For this study, four questions were added to the original short-essay version of the measure. These questions are consistent with those asked in research specific to moral exemplars (Colby & Damon, 1992; Rule & Bebeau, 2005) and include questions regarding how the coach has developed morally over time, significant experiences that have shaped the coach as a person, and how the coach sees him/herself in relation to others and how the coach perceives others see him or her. This face-to-face version of the interview guide was piloted with a retired Division III coach highly regarded as a moral leader by his peers[13] and was also reviewed by two experts versed in moral development research. The version of the coach exemplar interview guide based on the pilot and expert feedback used in this study can be found in Appendix B.

Every attempt was made to conduct interviews face-to-face at the location of the exemplar coach. In all but one interview, the researcher was able to travel to the exemplar coach's university and interviews were conducted in the coach's office.[14] Scheduling conflicts required one interview to be conducted via Skype. Skype is a popular Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)

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[13] The coach, Steve Wilkinson, is the winningest coach in the history of men's collegiate tennis and was inducted into the U.S. Professional Tennis Association's Hall of Fame in 2013. He has dedicated his life to teaching lasting life lessons through the sport of tennis. His coaching philosophy is outlined in his book *Let Love Serve: A Memoir Celebrating Tennis and Life* (2014).

[14] The researcher thanks Drs. Van and Mildred "Mike" Mueller and the Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport for the Edith Mueller Fellowship for Graduate Education, which allowed for travel funds to visit coaches.

technology that can be used as a qualitative research tool to conduct video interviews. Skype interviews emulate face-to-face interviews by allowing for verbal as well as non-verbal communication between interviewer and interviewee, avoiding long silences (which are more likely in telephone interviews), and creating a similar experience to being in the same room (King & Horrocks, 2010). Interview questions and a general description of the research were sent to coaches in advance in order to increase their comfort during the interview. Providing questions in advance can help interviewees feel informed and less threatened by a lack of knowledge (Cohen et al., 2007).

Interviews were scheduled for 60 minutes. While other exemplar studies have used two-hour interviews (Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi, & Damon, 2001; Hamilton & Monson, 2012; Rule & Bebeau, 2005), due to time pressures on Division I collegiate coaches, interviews were designed to gather material with ample depth and breadth yet interfere with coaches' jobs as little as possible. Eleven of the 12 interviews were between 40 and 110 minutes. Unfortunately, one coach had to deal with an unanticipated conflict and the interview was cut short to 20 minutes. The limited time was noted during interpretation of results (see subsequent section).

Consent was obtained from all participants prior to the interview (see Appendix C for consent form), and Institutional Review Board approval was obtained prior to proceeding (see Appendix D). Participants were asked if they could be identified by name or if they preferred to remain anonymous or use a pseudonym, and all agreed their names could be used in this document and subsequent publications. With the participants' permission, all interviews were audio recorded. After completion, interview audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. Coaches were then sent a copy of the transcript and were permitted to make changes and provide more clarity where needed.

Data Analysis and Reliability

Analysis of interviews pertaining to moral identity and ethical professional development was conducted in three ways: (1) using inductive cross-case analysis to identify themes related to coaches' identity development and understandings of professionalism and moral exemplarity; (2) by deductively coding data to compare themes from this coach moral exemplar data to themes in previous studies on ethical professional identity formation and moral exemplars; and (3) by deductively applying Kegan's (1998) ethical identity development stage theory to interview content (themes) and structure (developmental patterns).

Research Question 1

To answer Research Question 1 "How do moral exemplar collegiate coaches understand the meaning of professionalism?" interview guide questions 1, 4, and 5 were primarily analyzed, however because interviews were conversational in nature, content from other questions was also considered where appropriate. Cross-case analysis to identify themes related to coaches' understandings of professionalism was used. The cross-case data analysis consisted of inductive analysis and structural coding to identify salient themes related to coaches' understanding of professionalism. Structural coding is content-based or conceptual coding relating to a specific research question used to frame the interview (Saldaña, 2009). Cross-case coding involves mobilizing knowledge from individual case studies, comparing and contrasting cases, and in doing so, producing new knowledge; it is used both to increase generalizability and to deepen understanding and explanation of processes and outcomes (Khan & VanWynsberghe, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994). It is noted that generalizability often is not seen as appropriate for qualitative studies, however, looking at multiple samples "can help us answer the reasonable question, 'Do these findings make sense beyond this specific case?'" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 173). In generating themes about professionalism from the data, the researcher read all interview transcripts to get a general sense of participants' understandings and noted phrases or

sentences that suggested themes. Over several readings and re-codings of each transcript, 50

themes were generated from the 12 interviews. These initial themes were consolidated into eight

broader main themes. For example, two of the initial themes, "getting athletes to reach their

potential" and "being a role model" were consolidated under the broader theme of "coaching as

teaching." The researcher consulted with the two other expert coders to compare themes and pull

out representative quotations from interviews reflecting those themes. Content from these

interview guide questions was also deductively coded by comparing the themes generated in this

data to themes of professionalism from previous research on ethical professional identity

development (e.g., Hamilton, 2011; Hamilton & Monson, 2012; Monson & Bebeau, 2006).

Research Question 2

To answer Research Question 2 "How does the ethical professional identity of exemplar

collegiate coaches form?" the primary content from interview guide questions 2 and 3 were

analyzed. The same method from Research Question 1—inductive cross-case analysis—was also

used to identify themes related to the formation of and influences on coaches' understandings of

professionalism. Multiple readings of interviews generated seven themes on influences on the

development of coaches' conceptions of professionalism. The researcher compared and reviewed

themes with the two other expert coders to improve reliability. Again similar to Research

Question 1, content from these interview guide questions was also deductively coded by

comparing the themes generated in this data to themes of the formation of understandings of

professionalism from previous research on ethical professional identity development (e.g.,

Hamilton, 2011; Hamilton & Monson, 2012; Monson & Bebeau, 2006).

Research Question 3

To answer Research Question 3 "How do moral exemplar coaches maintain their

personal integrity (ethical professional identity) in the face of trials, temptations, and pressure to

compromise it in their 'high-stakes' profession?" content from all interview guide questions was

analyzed, however questions 8-12 generated the most significant themes. The interviews were analyzed using the same inductive cross-case technique as Research Questions 1 and 2. In addition, deductive coding by comparing themes from exemplar coach data to themes in previous exemplar studies (Colby & Damon, 1992; Rule & Bebeau, 2005; Gardner et al., 2001; Hamilton & Monson, 2012; Dunlop et al., 2012; Huff & Barnard, 2009; Walton, 1992) was employed. Inductive and deductive exemplar themes were also discussed with the two expert coders to further corroborate the researcher's findings and improve reliability.

Research Question 4

To answer Research Question 4 "How does the ethical professional identity development of moral exemplar coaches align with, or diverge from, Kegan's stages of moral identity formation?" the method of analyzing Kegan's moral identity formation instrument—the Subject-Object Interview—was used as a rubric (Lahey et al., 2011). To deductively code[15] the interviews for Kegan moral identity development stage and employ triangulation, the help of two primary coders/scorers was enlisted. All three coders were familiar with Kegan's theory and general moral identity development literature and had prior experience with this specific research project and method of obtaining ethical professional identity development material. The primary researcher completed training in Kegan-stage scoring from certified Subject-Object Interview scorers (see literature review for more on the SOI) and had used this method of assessment in previous research (Hamilton, 2011). The interview questions used in this study have been employed in previous research as eliciting similar developmental data to the SOI, which allows them to be scored in the same manner (Bebeau & Lewis, 2003; Bebeau & Monson, 2012; Monson & Hamilton, 2011 a & b; Hamilton, 2011). However, to further enhance the reliability of the interview itself and the data it generated, the researcher also employed two supplementary scorers

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[15] Coding interviews according to Kegan's moral identity development theory is called "scoring," because it involves assigning a numeric "score" to the data (the stage or transition stage of ethical identity formation from Kegan's theory) (see literature review and Appendix E for more on Kegan's stages).

who were trained and certified specifically as SOI scorers. They did not have prior experience with this specific interview format or an extensive background in sport, however they were retained to assess the interviews for subject-object material that is usable as per the official SOI standard. Both supplementary coders were confident that the interviews contained adequate content and structure for scoring. Therefore, a total of five coders were utilized to achieve the goal of accurate scoring and triangulation.

Each scorer independently read the interview transcripts and noted excerpts that demonstrated specific stage structure and/or content. Each also determined an overall stage or transition stage score, or the developmental stage at which the exemplar coach *primarily* understood, or made meaning of, his or her professional and life experience (all of the coaches displayed a range of stages but generally tended toward a specific stage or transition). In initial scoring, two transition stages were used between each full stage in order to capture more completely the nuances in coaches' meaning making. For example, data could be scored as Stage 3, transition Stages 3/4 or 4/3, or Stage 4. A Stage 3/4 score would represent a coach who demonstrates some Stage 4 development but is primarily operating at Stage 3, and a Stage 4/3 score would represent a coach who demonstrates mostly Stage 4 understanding but still some Stage 3. Scoring the original SOI uses four transition stages between full stages (e.g., 3(4) 3/4, 4/3, and 4(3)) (Lahey et al., 2011), but all coders agreed that two transition stages were appropriate for the data generated for this variation of the SOI. For purposes of this study, transition stages were further consolidated in results to a single transition stage (3/4 and 4/3 would be combined into simply a 3/4 transition). Previous research has also used this level of specificity in transition stages (Bartone et al., 2007; Eigel, 1998; Hamilton, 2011; Monson & Bebeau, 2006; Monson & Hamilton, 2011 a & b; Monson & Hamilton, 2012).

After independently scoring the interviews, the primary researcher met in person separately with each of the two expert coders to discuss results and come to a consensus. This

technique of check-coding was used to determine reliability and validity of the interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Each interview transcript was addressed page by page with each coder sharing his or her highlighted phrases and reasons for scores. The researcher took notes on the other scorers' comments, scores for individual excerpts, and overall stage scores for each interview. Overall stage scores were used to determine interrater agreement and reliability. The two supplementary SOI scorers reached consensus with each other and provided the researcher with written justifications for their conclusions.

The two expert coders and the primary researcher independently arrived at the same overall stage scores for six of the 12 interviews, for a preliminary interrater agreement level of 50%. Previous studies using Kegan-based assessments acknowledge a half-stage variability as acceptable interrater agreement (Lahey et al., 1988, Monson & Hamilton, 2011a). Scores for five of the remaining six participants fell within one-half of a stage, and one score fell within one stage. These results suggest an overall interrater agreement of 92%. Ideally, overall consistency in coding should be at a minimum of 80% for good interrater reliability (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Under these criteria, this study shows very strong interrater agreement among the primary coders. Adding in the supplementary certified SOI coders, the interrater agreement using half-stage variability fell to 50%, however 11 of the 12 interviews were scored within one stage. The remaining interview was within one and one-half of a stage. Possible reasons for the discrepancies between the certified SOI scorers and the three primary scorers are addressed further in the discussion section.

Research Issues

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Marshall & Rossman, 2006) outline the importance of establishing trustworthiness of the data and research findings of qualitative research. For them, trustworthiness involves four constructs: (a) credibility (internal validity), (b) transferability

(external validity/generalizability), (c) dependability (reliability), and (d) confirmability

(objectivity).

   Credibility. Establishing credibility, or internal validity, is ensuring that research

measures what it is intended to measure (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). To promote credibility, the

researcher used four methods suggested by Shenton (2004):

   1. Adopting a well-established research method. This criteria was met by implementing

research methods used successfully in previous studies using the Kegan framework (Bebeau &

Lewis, 2004; Hamilton, 2011; Hamilton & Monson, 2011, 2012; Monson et al., 2008; Monson &

Hamilton, 2011) as well as research on moral exemplars (e.g., Colby & Damon, 1992; Hamilton

& Monson, 2012; Rule & Bebeau, 2005).

   2. Gaining familiarity with the culture of the participating organization(s). The researcher

has increased the validity of the findings by spending prolonged time in the field. As a collegiate

coach herself and former Division I athlete, the researcher has an in-depth understanding of the

intercollegiate athletic environment and can be viewed as an "insider." This insider status is a

significant asset in social science research, improving the researcher's credibility with

participants by having a tacit understanding of the coaching culture (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Being an insider also aids in discussing potentially sensitive topics and increases the likelihood of

the candidness and truth of interviewees' responses (Seidman, 1998). The researcher has also

studied morality in coaching in previous research and throughout her graduate career. Having had

extensive experience with coaches and knowledge of coaching in a college athletics setting

increases the accuracy and validity of findings (Creswell, 2009).

   3. Triangulating data. The researcher employed various triangulation strategies. These

included triangulating (1) data sources (background/demographic information, field notes, and

interviews); (2) nominations of exemplars (university colleagues, conference colleagues, and

athletic directors); and (3) informants (including a sample with multiple informants in order to verify individual viewpoints and experiences against others (Marshall & Rossman, 2006)).

4. Engaging in reflective commentary. The researcher's use of field notes included initial impressions of each interview session, thoughts on emerging patterns and connections to previous researcher and theories, which are all considered helpful in interpreting later results (Shenton, 2004).

5. Member checks. Member checking is determining the accuracy of data by obtaining respondent validation (Cohen et al., 2007). Member checking was used by having the transcriptions of the interviews sent to coaches for review. For interview transcriptions, coaches were instructed that they could make any additions, deletions, and/or clarifications to their responses, and only material they had approved would appear in any future report or publication. Only one coach made any significant modification ("significant" meaning beyond grammatical changes), and this was to request that two stories in which former athletes could be personally identified be removed from the interview. This request was granted and the change was not substantial enough to alter interpretation of results. This type of member checking allows participants to make sure that their words match what they actually intended.

6. Examining previous research findings. Shenton (2004) argues that "the ability of the researcher to relate his or her findings to an existing body of knowledge is a key criterion for evaluating works of qualitative inquiry" (p. 69). The findings of this study are related to findings in previous, similar studies (see Discussion section).

Transferability. Transferability, or external validity, is the extent to which one can generalize findings to a broader population (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Generalizability is traditionally seen as a weakness in qualitative studies. This may be true when compared to studies using, for example, random sampling, large sample sizes, control groups, etc. However in this type of qualitative research the purpose is not necessarily to generalize findings outside of those

under study. Miles and Huberman (1994) and Yin (2003) suggests that qualitative study results

can be generalized not statistically to broader *populations* but analytically to broader *theory* if

similar findings can be observed in other cases. Colby and Damon (1992) also suggest that

gathering information-rich data from individuals allows researchers to provide rich description,

point to discernable commonalities, link commonalities within a framework, and suggest some

developmental principles. Similar findings to this study can be observed in additional cases (see

Discussion), and transferability can be applied to a broader population of ideas.

Dependability. Dependability is commonly concerned with replicability, or whether the

same findings could be generated if the study was repeated. From a qualitative/interpretive

perspective, the assumption that any results can be replicated in a changing world is false

(Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The researcher acknowledges changing conditions and understands

that interviews document an individual's thoughts and feelings at a specific point in time and

cannot be assumed to be static. By (a) reporting in detail the study design and implementation, (b)

reporting in detail the methods of data gathering, and (c) reflectively evaluating methods, the

context of the current study is taken into account (Shenton, 2004).

Confirmability. Miles and Huberman (1994) define confirmability as "relative neutrality

and reasonable freedom from unacknowledged researcher biases" (p. 278). Reflecting on possible

biases throughout the research process and confirming data analysis with independent coders

were two ways the researcher addressed neutrality and attempted to reduce the effect of

researcher biases.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher's role in this study was to ask questions that enhanced the understanding

of moral identity and ethical professional development in a group of moral exemplar collegiate

coaches by listening to, learning from, and searching for meaning in participant responses to in-

depth interviews in an impartial way. The role of the researcher necessitates the identification of

personal values, assumptions, and biases at the outset of the study. In qualitative studies, especially those using in-depth interviewing, the researcher is an active sense-maker and interpreter of the content and context of the research (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012). Interpretations depend on "the researcher's own standpoint and place in the community as well as his or her own self-understandings, reflection, sincerity, authenticity, honesty, and integrity" (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012, p. 100). This self-understanding of and reflection on the researcher's own intellectual and ethical development is important in order for her to be able to "hear" accurately what participants are saying, not just in content, but in deeper meaning, especially in the context of interpreting others' meaning-making (Lahey et al., 2011; Johnson & Rowlands, 2012).

As the primary researcher, I am a former Division I collegiate swimmer and am currently starting my tenth year as a coach of a men's and women's Division III swimming program. I have been engaged in the study and research of ethics and coaching during my graduate career and completed a master's thesis on the subject. I also teach undergraduate courses in sport ethics and sport psychology at a four-year liberal arts college. I believe that these experiences enhanced my sensitivity to and allowed me to better understand the nuances of participants' comments. Nevertheless, I realize that my experiences and personal bias may have influenced my interpretation of the data, and I made every effort to maintain "empathic neutrality" (Patton, 2002, p. 49) and ensure objectivity (including being an active listener and using neutral wording in interview comments and questions and seeking intercoder agreement to confirm data analysis).

Ethical Considerations

IRB consent was obtained and all guidelines of responsible conduct of research were followed (see Appendix D for IRB consent).

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Limitations

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The limitations of the present research include challenges with the sampling method, the nature of interview data collection, and measurement of a complex psychological construct such

as ethical professionalism. The first main limitation falls in the nomination process of moral

exemplar coaches. Coaches and athletic directors were asked to nominate other coaches that best

embodied the criteria of a moral exemplar coach. However, some exemplary coaches may not

have been selected because nominators are more likely to select colleagues (1) who they know

well (which would disadvantage coaches who were relatively new to an institution or conference

and were not well-known by their fellow coaches) and/or (2) who are highly visible and get

recognition for their success on the field (a disadvantage to coaches who might be exemplary in

their morals but have not had the external successes of winning). There are, no doubt, many

"exemplar" coaches who were not nominated or did not receive sufficient nominations to be

included in the study. Despite these limitations, selecting the 12 coaches with the most

nominations assures that the coaches who did participate in the study were perceived as moral

exemplars by many of their peers even if others were left out. Another limitation in sampling

method is not having a comparison group. This is something that can be addressed in further

research, but the purpose of the current study is to gain further understanding of coach

exemplars—a population of which we know little—and not to compare exemplar coaches directly

to other coach populations.

The second main limitation of the study relates to the nature of in-depth interviewing.

While the researcher strove to make each interviewee feel comfortable and to make each

interview as conversational as possible, the interviews ranged in tone from participants being very

open, talkative, and willing to share personal thoughts and feelings to more closed and guarded.

This was especially true in the interview that was cut short, and the researcher did not feel there

was enough time to build adequate rapport while also trying to get to as many questions as

possible. The researcher noted that several of the higher profile coaches were more formal and

careful in their responses, but due to the nature of the interview questions and necessity of

personal reflection, most of the more guarded coaches opened up over the course of the interview.

While the researcher did not feel that any interviewees' words could be judged as untruthful because of hesitation in answering questions, a limitation for this study is the possibility that a few coaches may have relied on what Seidman (1998) terms their "public voice"—one in which the participant is always aware of his or her audience—rather than a more candid "inner voice (p. 81). The researcher also acknowledges that each person and their views are dynamic and changing, and only the participant's perspective at the time of the interview is represented.

The third main limitation of the present study is the difficulty of measuring Rest's third component—moral identity—in general, and ethical professional identity in particular. These concepts are complex and multifaceted, and the researcher acknowledges that, like previous studies using Kegan's method of analyzing interviews for content and structure, scoring Kegan stages of identity development is descriptive and interpretive (Monson & Hamilton, 2011), and the quality of the scorers' interpretations were limited to the quality of responses. While content could reliably be coded for Kegan stages, some responses were thin, which could affect the strength of scoring in some cases. One way to address this issue is to collect data through other methods, such as also conducting the Kegan and Lahey's standard Subject-Object Interview (Lahey et al, 1988). This would provide further validity to the findings of the present study, however coaches' time constraints were prohibitive in this case.

Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology used in the present study to understanding more fully the moral and professional identity development of moral exemplar collegiate coaches. The chapter addressed the rationale for the research design; the sampling methods and participants; data collection methods and procedures; data analysis and reliability; research issues, including trustworthiness, the role of the researcher, and ethical considerations; and limitations. The following chapter will present the results of research data collected using the above methods.

CHAPTER 4—RESULTS

This study explored the moral and ethical professional identity development of moral exemplar collegiate coaches. This chapter presents the findings from in-depth interviews with moral exemplar coach participants. The findings are presented as descriptions and key themes of (1) coaches' understandings of professionalism (RQ 1) and the development of this understanding (RQ 2) and (2) coach moral exemplarity (RQ 3), as well as (3) evidence of coaches' stages of ethical professional identity development (RQ 4).

Research Question 1

In order to answer the first research question, "How do moral exemplar collegiate coaches understand the meaning of professionalism?" interview transcripts were coded for conceptual content and themes most relevant to participants' understanding of professionalism. While interview question 1 ("What does being a member of the coaching profession mean to you? How did you come to this understanding?") provided the majority of the content on exemplar coaches' understanding of the meaning of professionalism, coaches also revealed their understanding of professionalism in answers to other interview questions. Thus, the researcher coded responses from across all interview questions and pulled data related to professionalism from other questions in determination of themes. It is important to note that individuals' definitions of professionalism can vary depending on their level of ethical identity development (Hamilton, 2011). For example, in Hamilton's (2011) study of college swimming coaches, coaches falling into earlier Kegan stages of identity development (Stage 2, Stage 2/3 transition) tended to define professionalism in terms more focused on technical and external aspects, while those falling into later Kegan stages (Stage 3 and 4) were inclined to define professionalism in terms acting from a moral core. All the coaches in the present study scored as Stage 3 (a

socialized understanding of professionalism) or higher (see results of Research Question 4), but many of the coaches, regardless of their scored stage, suggested professionalism can span a range of values and behaviors (e.g., from what a coach wears to living with integrity). In answering Research Question 1, the researcher's focus was more on gaining a sense of the frequency of themes raised across all coaches rather than attempting to generate a single definition of professionalism for all exemplar coaches or a definition of professionalism for each individual coach. The researcher acknowledges themes that arose for one, or only a few coaches, are still important to the way those individuals understood professionalism, however determining frequency of themes across a greater number of coaches provides insight into consistency and coherency of the possible mechanisms and processes of identity development across this particular sample.

Main themes and most common sub-themes (articulated by a minimum of five coaches) are listed in order of frequency with the number in parentheses denoting the number of participants who expressed this theme. Because the concept of professionalism is complex and multifaceted, there is unavoidable conceptual overlap in some themes. The eight higher-order themes relating to moral exemplar coaches' understanding of professionalism are listed below.

Table 7

Themes and Sub-Themes Relating to Exemplar Coaches' Understandings of Professionalism

Main Theme	Sub-Theme
Internalized moral compass[1] and moral values (12)	Doing the "right" thing (12)
	Sticking to values/beliefs despite social pressures (11)
	Authenticity, sincerity, integrity (10)
	Certainty in matters of principle (10)
	Internal discomfort when falling short of expectations (9)
	Strong faith (8)
	Having to "live with" self (6)

Coaching as teaching (12)	Teaching athletes life values (12)
	Developing athletes as people (12)
	Being a role model/mentor/leader (12)
	Sport as vehicle for teaching life lessons (12)
	Sport is beyond winning and losing (11)
	Impacting others (10)
	Seeing long-term success of athletes beyond sport (10)
	Importance of working with critical age group (18-22 yrs old) (7)
Responsibility toward others (12)	Having best interest of athletes at heart (10)
	"Giving back" (9)
	Improving reputation of sport & coaching (8)
	Upholding mission of the school (education) (7)
Care and respect for others (12)	Focus on team (10)
	Honesty/developing trust (8)
	Listening (7)
	Athletes/team like family (7)
	Non-judgment/perspective taking (7)
	Maintaining coach-athlete boundaries (6)
	Compassion, unconditional love of athletes (5)

Ongoing personal and professional growth (12)
  a. Through self-reflection and learning from mistakes (12)
  b. Through learning from others (12)
	Learning from mentors (parents, coaches teachers) (12)
	Acknowledgment of imperfection (11)
	Learning from athletes (6)
	Transcending personal challenges, loss (6)

High internalized standard of excellence for self (12)	Competitiveness, will to succeed (12) Doing your best (10) Technical competence (9) Holding self to high standard (8) Accountability (8) Not cutting corners (7)
Internal reconciliation of conflict/paradoxes/polarities in personal and professional life (11)	Problem-solving (10) Winning vs. athlete character development (10) Work/life balance (8) Problem with for-profit vs. athlete-centered model of college sport (7) Recruiting (6)
Coaching as a "calling"/Passion for one's work (9)	

[1] This term is borrowed from a study on moral exemplar lawyers (Hamilton & Monson, 2012).

The following sub-sections offer examples from interviews of each of the ten main themes that define elements of professionalism. Because this research presents the participants in a favorable light as moral exemplars, the IRB approved the use of participants' actual names if they granted permission. All coaches provided consent and agreed their names could be used.

Internalized Moral Compass and Moral Values

All 12 coaches referred in some way to having strong moral values and a moral compass. One way in which they demonstrated this moral compass was in comments regarding sticking to their values despite the intense pressures of their job. For example, Brad Frost, the women's ice hockey coach at the University of Minnesota has seen tremendous success, winning two NCAA national championship titles in three years, but he also feels tremendous pressure. He explained,

> there's so much pressure from the outside and even from people within the university that
> . . . you should be competing for championships every year, and while I agree with that,
> to us, if we go through the whole year and we win it all and our players don't grow as
> people, then we're not doing our job, and so that's the focus for us.

Another example of having a moral compass was illustrated by Frost's colleague, Don Lucia, University of Minnesota men's ice hockey coach, whose teams also hold two national titles. Lucia commented about not cutting corners in his coaching despite the temptations to do so:

> I think if you start to compromise your values and what you stand for then you shouldn't
> be doing it, and that's how I've always felt. If I had to try to cut corners or do things that
> I didn't think were ethical or anything like that then I wouldn't want to do this anymore.
> It's not that important because my values and everything else are more important than
> that.

Kevin Hambly, women's volleyball coach at the University of Illinois, who has taken his teams to the NCAA Sweet 16 four times in his five years at Illinois, talked about what being moral as a

coach and a person means to him. His comments perfectly illustrate what having a strong, highly

developed moral identity means:

> It's just about meeting lots of people and seeing there's lots of ways to be moral, lots of
>
> ways to be a good person, and all of it to me comes back to who do you really want to be
>
> and are you staying inside of that. To me, immoral is getting outside of who you are at
>
> the core.

Additionally, this moral core was demonstrated in coaches' comments concerning doing

the "right thing" and acting ethically for reasons such as being "able to sleep at night" or being

able to "look at myself in the mirror." These comments suggest that to act unethically would be

not to act in accord with one's identity. This unity of morality and self aligns with Blasi's (1984)

traditional definition of having a strong moral identity.

Coaching as Teaching

A very consistent theme across interviews was that coaches are teachers. Coaches were

very compelling in their conviction that they do not simply coach the technical aspects of sport.

Far more important, they assured, was that they impart important lessons about life to their

athletes. The theme of coaches as teachers was explained by Carol Hutchins, veteran and Hall of

Fame University of Michigan softball coach, in this way:

> When people say, what do you do, do you teach? Yes, I'm a teacher. That's all. . . .
>
> Coaching and teaching are very similar. We get to have a captive audience, a more
>
> motivated audience, and do it in a context of a game, sport.

She continued and explained she saw as the role of the coach as a leader and teacher of life

lessons, especially those of toughness and perseverance:

> Our duty is to provide guidance and leadership and direction to young people. We teach
>
> them life values through our sport, and the life values, the things you learn in life . . . life
>
> is not fair. That's the first thing you learn. Life isn't fair, so get over it. . . . And you learn

that life is hard, and you have adversity, and adversity just means you have to work

harder, and the biggest quality I think you have to learn is that when you fall down, get

up. . . . I just think we teach life lessons, and ultimately we are professionals [beyond the

sport]. . . . How hard is it to hit the ball? It's not about hitting the ball. Has nothing to do

with hitting the ball. Has a little bit to do with hitting the ball, but we're teaching, we're

directing and guiding youth and teaching them good values and making sure that they

adhere to them because that's what [they] have to do in society.

Coach Jerry Kill, University of Minnesota football coach, offered,

We spend a whole lot of time coaching life skills, and football is a great game to do that

with because it takes so many and there are so many different cultures involved and so

many different backgrounds, I think it is a great education and we really treat it as a

classroom. But, I don't look at myself as a coach, I look at myself as a teacher.

Responsibility Toward Others

All of the coaches also commented on aspects of their responsibility toward others.

Coaches felt a duty and responsibility to help their athletes, their sport, and their communities.

One common theme was always having the best interests of their athletes at heart. Lucia

explained,

I've coached to try to make it a positive experience for the kids so they can look back,

and maybe they're not going to agree with everything I've done as a coach, but I hope

they look back and say, "you know what, he had my best interests at heart."

Adam Soldati, the men's and women's diving coach at Purdue University, has coached six

NCAA champions and two Olympic medalists, as well as won three national coach of the year

awards. Even with all of his material successes as a coach, he explained his job as being

fundamentally about his relationships with others, his responsibility toward his athletes, and his

ability to influence others in a powerful way:

What it means to be a coach is, number one, to first realize that we work with people. We're in the business of people. We're not in the business of winning and losing or trying to. At least I'm not in the business of trying to accumulate results and rewards and so forth. But we're in the business of people and we have the ability to really impact people's lives.

Veteran coach Mack Brown, formerly of University of Texas football and winner of what many consider the pinnacle of college sport achievement—a football national championship, explained his feeling of responsibility for his athletes, other coaches, and the sport itself:

I'm coaching because I want this message to get out, not for me, you understand this, but people say, "What do you want your legacy to be?" And I don't care, I just want the sport to be better, the kids to be treated better, and I want—the older guys were really good to me in the sport, and I'm becoming one of the older guys. I want to give back, I want to give back to the kids, and I want to give back to the young coaches, and I want to make sure that all the coaches that were so good to me, that I could be good to some young coaches, too, and at some point they'll keep this thing rolling, and that's very important.

In discussing his understanding of what it means to be a professional, Coach Hambly also articulated a responsibility for his sport, which he said started out as "somewhat of a joke" with coaches partying and drinking with players, but has evolved with the hard work of several coaches before him. Now as president-elect of the volleyball coaches association, Hambly stated,

I feel responsibility to embrace the profession of the sport and try to take it to the next level. . . . and over time it's really developed. . . . so I feel a responsibility to represent our sport in a professional manner and try to help keep it moving in that direction.

Care and Respect for Others

Similar to the previous theme, coaches felt that having love, compassion, and respect for others (and, overlapping with the theme above, teaching those values to their athletes) was a part

of being a professional as a coach. Many put great focus on the concept of "team" and that coaching (and participating in sport) is about others. Jenny Mainz, women's tennis coach at the University of Alabama, explained,

> . . . learning to work as a team, learning that there's nothing selfish about it. One person certainly contributes to the group, but it's always about the team. . . . it's about being there for your teammates, helping them through tough times, cultivating the family environment, the team environment, the oneness.

Many other coaches also saw their athletes as part of an extended family, and similar to family, the athletes may not always appreciate the lessons their coaches teach them at the time, but they know their coaches care for their wellbeing in the long run. For example, Hutchins explained,

> The biggest reminder for me is when the former players come back, and they're mothers and doctors, and one of my alums has given more money to the Michigan Athletic Department than any other woman, any other former female athlete, because she's done really well, but you just get all these kids together and you realize they're part of your big extended family, and they all went through those life lessons, and even though at the time some of them didn't like their life lessons or they didn't like the adversities we put them in, they come back. They love their experience.

Hambly described another view of care and respect—a love for others as fellow humans:

> I've just kind of created my own set of morals and a lot of that is actually based on how I think people should be treated with respect and care and love. I truly love everybody in some way. I'm not in love with everybody. I want to just treat everyone with that kind of love and respect.

Ian Duvenhage, men's tennis coach at Vanderbilt University, shared Hambly's sense of love: "My role model as a coach is John Wooden, and John Wooden says, 'There's a lot of love in my coaching.' And so I think really that's what great coaching is."

Ongoing Personal and Professional Growth

There were two distinct ways coaches described their ongoing personal and/or professional growth: (1) through self-reflection and learning from their mistakes, and (2) in learning from others, including their parents, their own coaches, teachers, and even their own athletes.

The first sub-theme was especially powerful, as coaches often told stories of past mistakes, reflecting on what they learned and how it changed their coaching. For example, Mainz recounted a time when an umpire told her "one more word and you're out of here" during a particularly competitive tennis match against a big rival when both teams were acting improperly, yelling obscenities and throwing rackets. Mainz said when she was asked to settle down or leave, she thought, "that's not me, that's not my personality," and upon reflection realized that even though her team won, she didn't feel good about it. She said "We won but it doesn't feel like we won. This was not the way it was supposed to be. . . . I didn't feel like we had done it the right way . . . and there were just a lot of things that happened that [were] not in the best interest or the best spirit of college tennis." Mainz said she apologized to the opposing team's coach as well as their senior women's administrator and wanted to make sure both teams saw that "this is not what college tennis is about." This example demonstrates Mainz's strong personal and professional moral identity—she felt, in the words of Blasi (1983), "a fracture within the very core of the self" (p. 201) for not acting according to who she believed she was.

While most coaches reflected on what they learned from specific instances, Hambly provided an example of more premeditated self-reflection:

Every day I just ask myself, was I efficient and did I do my best today? There's a lot of self evaluation that goes into every single day. I sit down for about a half hour when I get home and my kids go to bed and I just kind of go in the back room and I think about everything that happened – all the interactions and all that.

Brown also noted the importance of self-evaluation and learning in one's work:

> Part of what I believe, too, is we all have to learn to self-evaluate and we all have to learn
>
> to take criticism, because we're going to have it the rest of our lives, and if we don't learn
>
> it, we're not going to make it, not in this business or most businesses.

Regarding the second sub-theme of personal and professional growth, all coaches talked about learning from significant others and mentors from their childhood through adulthood. In an especially insightful comment on learning from her own athletes, Janet Rayfield, head coach of the University of Illinois women's soccer team, stated,

> So I think the longer you coach, the better coach you are because the more pieces of
>
> athletes that you have drawn from that make you a better coach. Every athlete I've had
>
> has made me a better coach because they've taught me something about myself or
>
> they've taught me something about dealing with athletes. You become this mosaic that's
>
> of all the people that you've interacted with, and coaching, I think you really get to be
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> that mosaic. . . . As a coach I'm always perfecting that mosaic by bringing pieces in from
>
> other people that I've met along the way.

High Internalized Standard of Excellence for Self

All coaches also illustrated through their comments the high standards they set for themselves in their work and in their broader lives. Part of this standard of excellence relates to the earlier theme of being a role model for one's athletes. Other aspects of this standard of excellence include an intense competitiveness and desire to succeed and a strong need to always do one's best. Lucia explains his high expectations:

> I think, number one, you have to set a good example. I think that . . . you better expect
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> out of yourself what you're expecting out of your players, so I better conduct my life in
>
> the proper manner too with how I live my life and what I stand for and the ethics and
>
> everything and treating people the right way. I think if you don't do that, how can you

pass it on to your players? So I think that's the most important thing. We have to be a

good role model in everything we do.

Soldati internalized a high standard of excellence through his faith: "I would say my

expectations for myself [are] that every day, I come in here and I do the best I can to represent

God's character in what I do." And Frost articulated the more internalized aspect of the standards

he has for himself, which also shows his strong moral identity:

> It would just be devastating to think if I didn't do those things because that's not who I
> am, and so I think it would just be extremely disappointing, and you build up so much
> trust and credibility from people. The last thing you want to do is make a mistake. When
> I say "fail" or "make mistake" to me that's in my own values, in my own character, and
> in my own integrity.

Internal Reconciliation of Conflict/Paradoxes/Polarities in Personal and Professional Life

Eleven of the 12 coaches demonstrated an ability to understand and reconcile to some

extent the conflicts, paradoxes, or polarities they faced in their personal and/or professional lives.

This ability to be aware of, reflect on, and live with contradictions in one's life demonstrates a

more advanced stage of identity development (Lahey et al., 2011; Rule & Bebeau, 2005). Some

of the conflicts coaches faced were in making difficult decisions in general, in maintaining

work/life balance, in their discomfort with the status quo of college sport, and in the ethical

challenges of recruiting younger and younger athletes. Hutchins describes making difficult

decisions and then living with the consequences in this way:

> I think the best moment for me in my coaching career as a coach came when I realized I
> wasn't going to make a decision with "what if." What if. You have to make your decision
> and make it work and live with it, and sometimes it doesn't work, and you know what?
> Then maybe next time you won't make it again, but I'm not going to live with all the
> 100,000 fans in the Michigan stadium saying "should have done this, should have done

that." You've got to make your decisions and live with them as a coach, and you're the

only one that has to make the decision without knowing the outcome, before everybody

else is like, "why did they do that?" Because, we thought it would work.

When asked what sorts of conflicts he faces in his work, such as between his responsibility to

himself and to others, Soldati remarked:

I would say the conflict never ends. What I mean by that is that I have to battle every day

when I wake up . . . and not just in the big decisions that I make, but in the moment-by-

moment decisions that every word that comes out of my mouth, the things that I do, what

I choose to do, and what I choose not to do and the priorities of my life. . . . I guess I

begin to explain that those priorities don't necessarily correlate with time. . . . My work is

still going to take up the majority of my time, . . . but I need to live out my priorities, so I

have responsibilities to get home. I have responsibilities to serve my family and serve my

wife. . . . I've had to make hard decisions like that.

All of the other coaches also talked about the conflict and difficulty (and often

impossibility) of maintaining a work/life balance. All eight of the male coaches talked about the

conflict of spending long hours at practices and competitions and missing time with their wives

and children. Six of the eight mentioned not being able to do their jobs without their spouses

acting as the primary caretakers and structuring family life around the coach's career. Though he

still felt conflict, Glenn Moore, softball coach at Baylor University, spoke about how involved his

wife and children are in his coaching—his son and daughter attend practices and games, and his

wife runs his softball camps. He said, simply, "We live my profession, and so I'm blessed."

Others felt greater work-family conflict. Hambly commented,

The conflict with my family is always time, and that's a hard one to deal with because I

do commit a lot of time to the team and the girls, and you have to. I mean that's the

nature of it. . . . There's a constant state of guilt that I should be doing more coaching and

I should be doing more with the family, if that makes sense. There's always a conflict there as far as that battle. . . . I don't have an answer of how to deal with the conflict except for that there's just constant conflict.

Interestingly, while all four of the female coaches did discuss the challenges of maintaining a work/life balance, only one of the four specifically mentioned having a significant other and none mentioned having children. Two possible reasons for the absence of discussion regarding immediate family by the female coaches could be the nonexistence of a significant other in their lives due to the potential for family responsibilities to negatively affect career paths and development for female coaches or to a reluctance in mentioning a same-sex significant other due to the homophobic climate of sport (LaVoi & Dutove, 2012).

The challenges of recruiting while maintaining one's value of doing things that are in the best interest of the athletes was another common theme regarding living with paradoxes and conflicts in coaching. Many of the coaches commented on the trend in college sport to recruit younger and younger players—athletes who are not mature enough to know what they want in a college years down the line or mature enough for a coach to see if they would truly be a good fit. Coaches struggled with the need for this type of recruiting because other programs were doing it, however it was unsettling for them to feel they were putting the success (winning) of the program ahead of what was best for these young recruits. Rayfield explains,

I think the biggest area of conflict really probably comes in the recruiting world and continues to be more and more difficult as you recruit kids that are younger and younger. The early recruiting really is against what I think is best for them—to be making decisions as 15-year-old kids as to where they want to go to college. . . . We're asking them to make this decision way before they are really physically, athletically, academically, socially . . . ready to make that decision. . . . That's a conflicting thing for

me quite frequently now in terms of I don't want to pressure this kid to make a decision, but if you don't, then someone else is going to.

Coaching as a "Calling"/Passion for One's Work

Nine of the 12 coaches discussed their job as a "calling" or that they have great passion for their work. Many of the coaches felt like they would not be doing such a difficult, time consuming job if they did not love it. Rayfield stated simply, "Coaching was a conscious decision to make something that was a passion and a hobby a profession." And Pat Conlan of Georgetown University softball articulated,

> It's not a job, it's a passion, it's just in your blood. It is what it is. . . . I don't go off to work every day. I go off to school, I go off to the game, I do a lot of things, but I never go off to *work*. I've not worked a day in my life, not at least in this coaching profession like that.

Many coaches described coaching as an honor and privilege, including Moore, who described coaching in this way:

> I feel that it's kind of a calling. It's what I've done actually for a long time, and leading young people and mentoring. . . . It's a big responsibility, and I think coaching is a,—I personally think coaching is the biggest platform to changing society. I think we feel that at many times, but it's an honor and a great responsibility that I don't take lightly.

In summary, the 12 exemplar coaches explained or demonstrated in various, unique ways, these eight main themes in their interviews, which help define both the elements of having a strong ethical professional identity and what professionalism means to them as collegiate coaches at the highest level.

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Research Question 2

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Research Questions 2 "How does the ethical professional identity of exemplar collegiate coaches form?" is similar to the research questions posed by Colby and Damon (1992) in their

study of 23 moral exemplars across professions on the growth processes responsible for their

moral commitment and awareness. Themes were generated through both inductive and deductive

coding of interview transcripts.

During the interviews, two of the questions the researcher asked coach exemplars were

(1) how they came to their current understanding of professionalism, and (2) if and how their

perception of what it means to be a professional had changed over their coaching careers.

Influences on Understanding of Professionalism

Respondents usually cited several factors that had influenced their understanding of

professionalism, and some of these influences overlap. Table 8 shows the frequency counts of

sources of influence for coaches. Descriptions and examples of some of these themes follow.

Table 8

Frequency of Sources of Influence on Exemplar Coaches' Understanding of Professionalism

Source	Frequency
Mentors	10
Major coaching events/experiences	8
Religion/faith	8
Childhood/upbringing (parents, family)	7
Social learning (observing other coaches)	6
Major life events	5
Self-reflection	5

Having mentors was the most cited source of influence on coaches' perceptions of

professionalism (n=10). Mentors included their own coaches when they were athletes; head

coaches when they were assistant coaches; other peer coaches, especially early in their careers;

and teachers. For example, Mainz explained,

I had very positive experiences through middle school, high school, college with my

coaches. They were always mentors to me, always very positive, very encouraging. . . . I

wanted to try to emulate or give someone else . . . some of the positive experiences that I

was fortunate to have.

Lucia similarly observed,

I was fortunate that I had coaches that I felt cared about me as a person. I never felt that .

. . the coaches I had that it was a win-at-all-costs mentality and I've tried to carry that

with me as I've coached.

Experiencing major events as a coach and religion/faith were also frequently mentioned

as sources of influence (n=8). Major events included significant wins or losses (often in a

championship setting) that changed a coaches' perspective. For example, after losing a national

championship in the final, Hambly realized that "you wake up the next day and it's the same

thing," that the win or loss did not define the team, and what was really important was "how we

operated day to day and how we treated each other."

Religion or faith was mentioned by eight of the 12 coaches not just as an influence on the

formation of their professional identities but also as playing a role in how they coach. None of the

coaches sought to push their religious beliefs on their athletes, but they were open with their

athletes about the importance of their faith and how it was a core aspect of their own identities.

The prevalence of the theme of religion or faith as an important influence on coaches'

understandings of themselves as people and professionals was an unexpected, albeit significant,

finding. Although a religious/faith-based theme arose in earlier studies for both lawyers (Monson

& Hamilton, 2011b) and Colby and Damon's (1992) exemplars, the researcher speculated a priori

that perhaps the context of big-time college athletics would leave little room in coaches' lives for

religion/faith. While this predicted tension between the demands of the job and one's faith did

come up for a few coaches, the importance of religion in these coaches' lives was not diminished.

Following the theme of religion/faith as a major influence for some coaches (n=8), a

number of coaches credited their parents and upbringing for their understanding of

professionalism (n=7). Brown notes, "I just grew up with it," citing that he was raised in a family of coaches, from his grandfather to his father to his brother, and in following their footsteps, what he wanted to do was "be a good role model for kids and make sure their life was better when they left our program than it was when they came."

Other influences on coaches' understanding of professionalism included social learning and observing other coaches (n=6); major life events, such as the death of a loved one or dealing with a significant illness (n=5); and engaging in the practice of self-reflection (n=5).

Changing Perceptions of Professionalism

Concerning the second interview question related to the formation of exemplars' notions of professionalism—if and how coaches' perceptions of what it means to be a professional had changed over their coaching careers—all 12 coaches provided examples of ways in which their understanding of their role as a coach had matured and become more complex. However, only nine of the 12 coaches specifically expressed the view that moral and professional growth occurs across the lifespan. Hambly described it simply, "You never stop evolving as a person or as a professional, but I think I've come to this over the years," and Mainz commented, "No matter how professional you [are] . . . you can always work on it and improve. . . . I've got a long way to go."

The three coaches in the minority suggested that one's central moral values develop in childhood and remain stable and consistent throughout life, yet in other parts of their interviews, all three coaches related ways in which their values (considered reflections of their morals), especially regarding their profession, had changed. For example, one coach stated, "I don't think my morals have changed a lot. . . . The world's going to change around me, and there's things I need to be able to adjust to, but I'm not going to compromise my beliefs and who I am." But then he also remarked in another part of the interview that his values as a coach have changed, and he is less concerned about winning than he used to be:

I think early in my career I was more outcome oriented. . . . I had to gain every advantage in this wicked, dog-eat-dog world. . . . Then about six years ago . . . I think I realized how fast this was going by, and I looked back on some of the kids that I really had not developed a relationship with. . . . I realized I need to stop and smell the roses and be a little more of a factor in their lives and allow more relationship building.

This growth toward a conscious awareness of their own motivations and intentions and having a more nuanced way of understanding their role as a coach and interacting with others was one of the most common themes illustrating the formation of exemplar coaches' identity as ethical professionals.

The transition from a focus on winning to focus on the character development of their athletes came through in most of the interviews. Hambly talked about his evolving conception of coaching: "I was driven by winning and now I'm driven by developing great people and great leaders and trying to find ways to be better about that." Mainz provided one of the most powerful stories of how her thinking changed during her career. Shortly after she started coaching at Alabama, which at that point had a top-15 program, her team lost *all* of its best players to injuries and other problems, and for the next three years, Mainz's team went 0-33. She was called into the athletic director's office and told she would be fired if she didn't start winning. It was a wake-up call, but instead of redoubling her efforts to win, it made her change her perspective:

At that point I thought, I'm going to give this to God. . . . All I'm doing is talking to the team about winning, winning, winning, and that's like all that was on my mind and it's just destructive. That's not why we're in it. . . . I thought, well, in a year I may not have a job, so I'm going to stop talking about winning. I'm going to have fun. I'm going to go back to really working on like being a better coach and working with the girls and being more patient and listening more and giving them more and not worrying about these outside distractions that I can't control anyway.

Stories such as these demonstrate how coaches' perceptions of what it means to be a professional changed, matured and became more complex over their coaching careers.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 "How do moral exemplar collegiate coaches maintain their personal integrity (ethical professional identity) in the face of trials, temptations, and pressure to compromise it in their 'high-stakes' profession?" is also similar to the one posed by Colby and Damon (1992). This question is fundamental to the notion of exemplarity. In Colby and Damon's (1992) study, their exemplars were nominated for their extraordinary commitment to social causes such as poverty, religious freedom, and medical ethics, among others. The coaches in the present study were nominated because others know them for their extraordinary ability to demonstrate integrity and professionalism in the high-stakes, cutthroat environment of NCAA Division I college sport. Research Question 3 uncovers what makes a moral exemplar a moral exemplar—what do these coaches do that makes them stand out in the eyes of their peers and administrators from hundreds of other coaches? And what about them as people helps them maintain their integrity in challenging circumstances? Again, themes were generated through both inductive and deductive coding of interview transcripts, and the researcher compared themes with the two other primary coders to strengthen reliability.

The themes that emerged throughout the interviews relating to the characteristics of coach exemplars that embodied their commitment to their values and ideals are listed below. All of the themes here except gratitude and positivity overlap or share similarities with themes that arose on the topic of coaches' conceptions of professionalism noted above in Research Question 1. Themes related to coach exemplarity include:

1) Internalized moral compass

2) Commitment to personal and professional moral growth

3) Self-reflection and learning from mistakes and life experiences

4) Care and respect for others

5) Focus on goals and concerns greater than oneself

6) Ability to reconcile internal conflicts

7) Gratitude and positivity

This overlap in themes is not surprising. It illuminates that coaches' conceptions of professionalism and their ethical professional identity (moral exemplarity) are inextricably intertwined. If one's moral and/or professional identity is strong (one places moral values ahead of other values), this should be consistent across contexts, and how a coach conducts him- or herself as a professional would not be separate from who he or she is as a person.

Because of the overlap of themes across research questions, only the last exemplar theme of gratitude and positivity will be discussed in detail here. The third theme—self-reflection and learning from mistakes and life experiences—is similar to the two professionalism subthemes of ongoing personal and professional growth, and the fifth theme— focusing on goals greater than oneself—can be considered similar to the professionalism theme of having responsibility toward others. Figure 1 illustrates the overlap of themes across Research Question 1 and Research Question 3.
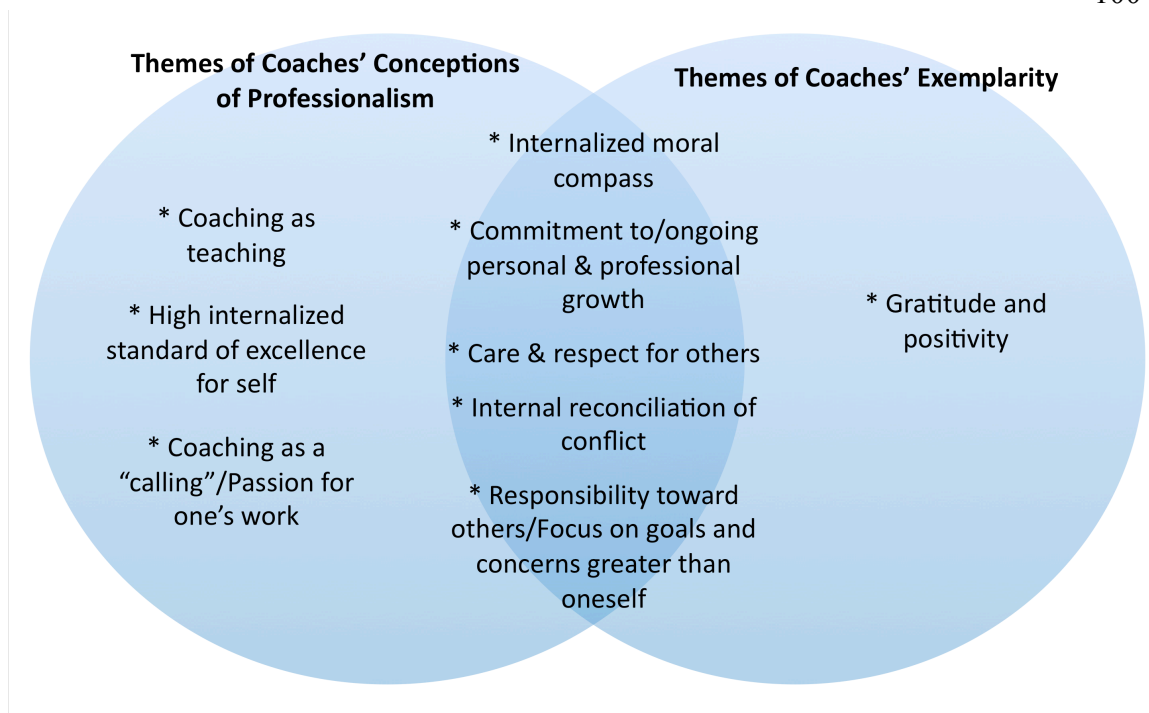
Themes of Coaches' Conceptions of Professionalism

Themes of Coaches' Exemplarity

* Internalized moral compass

* Coaching as teaching

* Commitment to/ongoing personal & professional growth

* High internalized standard of excellence for self

* Care & respect for others

* Gratitude and positivity

* Coaching as a "calling"/Passion for one's work

* Internal reconciliation of conflict

* Responsibility toward others/Focus on goals and concerns greater than oneself

Figure 1. Themes of coaches' conceptions of professionalism and coach exemplarity.

Gratitude and a general sense of positivity were reflected in many of the participants' interviews. Coaches felt gratitude for their job as a coach, gratitude toward others, and gratitude for experiences. Conlan expressed gratitude for the uniqueness of the coaching profession in the ability to make a difference in others' lives:

I know that the time that I spend within my program, of shaping young women's lives, is a privilege, that I get to have a direct impact on a small part of what they will become in the future, and that's because of me. . . . So I think it's a privilege, it's an honor, and something I've very proud of, because not everybody could do this job.

Frost similarly commented, "One of our values is being grateful, and I just have a huge sense of gratefulness for the fact that one, I get to work here, and two, that I get to hopefully impact the lives of young people along the way."

Along with gratitude, coaches' positivity was seen in their faith in human potential, especially the potential in their athletes, and in their attitudes and commitment to their profession

despite many of their criticisms over the for-profit business model of big-time college athletics.

Hutchins expressed the potential she sees in her athletes: "We get girls with potential who

become women with unlimited, no limits." Lucia explained the importance of positivity and his

commitment to coaching despite the difficulties of being in a highly visible profession:

> Sometimes one of your biggest challenges is for you to maintain a good positive image
>
> around your players. . . . So I mean that's something you have to guard against, and that's
>
> part of the challenge on a weekly and certainly a yearly basis is to stay positive and try to
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> always look at the big picture in everything we're trying to do, but it's hard sometimes.
>
> There's no question because you're getting dissected or there might be negative articles
>
> written in the papers or on talk radio or on a blog or recruiting, you know. . . .

Overall, the positivity of coaches was reflected more in nonverbal communication than in their

specific words. All coaches were excited to talk about and reflect on their jobs, and even when

they were criticizing aspects of their job or college sport in general (recruiting, administrative

focus on money and winning, media, pressure from parents, etc.), a palpable sense of hopefulness

and passion for what they do was evident.

Research Question 4

In analyzing Research Question 4 "How does the ethical professional identity

development of moral exemplar collegiate coaches align with or diverge from Kegan's stages of

moral identity formation?" all participants at some point demonstrated thinking across a range of

Kegan stages (content was coded that ranged from Stage 2/3 to Stage 5). However, individual

participants' answers to interview questions generally followed a pattern, and respondents *tended*

toward or *primarily* interpreted their professional and life experience in a way that aligned with

an overall developmental stage or transition stage, allowing for scorers to assign an overall Kegan

stage. This is consistent with previous research using this type of Kegan assessment (Hamilton &

Monson, 2012; Lahey et al., 1988; Monson et al., 2008; Monson & Hamilton, 2011).

As noted above, one interview was significantly shorter than the other interviews due to an unforeseen conflict for the coach. The primary researcher and expert coders discussed whether the interview provided enough structure and content to be included in analysis and decided it could be used for generating themes but there was not enough data to accurately assign an overall stage score. Thus, the following results are reported for 11 rather than all 12 of the exemplar coaches.

While the majority of middle-aged, college educated adults studied by Kegan and Lahey (2009) had not yet reached Stage 4, the predominant overall stages for the sample of exemplar coaches were Stage 4 (Self-Authoring Mind) (n=4) and Stage 4/5 Transition (movement from Self-Authoring to Self-Transforming Mind) (n=4), followed by Stage 3/4 Transition (movement from Socialized Mind to Self-Authoring Mind) (n=2). Only one coach scored at the average level of adults—Stage 3. Table 9 shows frequency counts and percentages of overall Kegan stage estimates for the sample as a whole (n=11).

Table 9

Kegan Stages of Identity Development for Moral Exemplar Collegiate Coaches

Stage	3 Socialized Mind	3/4 Transition	4 Self-Authoring Mind	4/5 Transition
Number	1	2	4	4
Percentage	9%	18%	36%	36%

Table 10 displays frequency counts and percentages of Kegan stage estimates by age. There was only one coach under 40 years old (39 years old), so this coach was combined with the 40-49 year-old age group. Predominant stages for coaches from 39-49 (n=6) were equal between Stage 4 (n=2) and Stage 4/5 Transition (n=2). The predominant stage for coaches in their 50s (n=4) was Stage 4/5 Transition (n=2). And the only coach over age 60 scored in the 4/5 Transition Stage.

Table 10

Kegan Stages by Coach Age

Age	N	3 Socialized Mind	3/4 Transition	4 Self-Authoring Mind	4/5 Transition
39-49	6	1 (16%)	1 (16%)	2 (33%)	2 (33%)
50-59	4	0	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)
60-63	1	0	0	0	1 (100%)

Note. Percentages in parentheses are within-group ratios

Table 11 displays frequency counts and percentages of Kegan stage estimates by years of collegiate head coaching (HC) experience. One of the coaches in the 5-9 years of experience category had several years of experience coaching the U.S. National team but had only been in college coaching for five years. The two coaches with 5-9 years of HC experience were split between Stage 4 and Stage 4/5 Transition; the predominant stage of coaches with 10-19 years of HC experience (n=5) was Stage 4/5 Transition (n=2); and the predominant stage of coaches with over 20 years of HC experience (n=4) was Stage 4 (n=2).

Table 11

Kegan Stages by Years of Collegiate Head Coaching (HC) Experience

Years of HC Experience	N	3 Socialized Mind	3/4 Transition	4 Self-Authoring Mind	4/5 Transition
5-9	2	0	0	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
10-19	5	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)
20+	4	0	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)

Note. Percentages in parentheses are within-group ratios.

Table 12 displays frequency counts and percentages of Kegan stage estimates of coaches by sport. There were no coaches of the same sport that received the same Kegan stage score.

Table 12

Kegan Stages by Sport

Sport	N	3 Socialized Mind	3/4 Transition	4 Self-Authoring Mind	4/5 Transition
Diving	1	0	0	1 (100%)	0
Ice Hockey	2	0	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0
Football	1	0	0	0	1 (100%)
Soccer	1	0	0	0	1 (100%)
Softball	3	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	0
Tennis	2	0	0	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
Volleyball	1	0	0	0	1 (100%)

Note. Percentages in parentheses are within-group ratios.

Table 13 displays frequency counts and percentages of Kegan stage estimates of coaches by sport type. The predominant stage for coaches of team sports (n=8) was Stage 4/5 Transition (n=3). The predominant stage for coaches of individual sports (n=3) was Stage 4 (n=2).

Table 13

Kegan Stages by Sport Type

Sport Type	N	3 Socialized Mind	3/4 Transition	4 Self-Authoring Mind	4/5 Transition
Team	8	1 (12.5%)	2 (25%)	2 (25%)	3 (37.5%)
Individual	3	0	0	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)

Note. Percentages in parentheses are within-group ratios.

Table 14 displays frequency counts and percentages of Kegan stage estimates by sex of coach. A greater percentage of female coaches (50%) than male coaches (28.5%) scored at the highest level of 4/5 Transition. The predominant stage for female coaches (n=4) was Stage 4/5 Transition (n=2). The predominant stage for male coaches (n=7) was Stage 4 (n=3).

Table 14

Kegan Stages by Sex of Coach

Sex	N	3 Socialized Mind	3/4 Transition	4 Self-Authoring Mind	4/5 Transition
Female	4	1 (25%)	0	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Male	7	0	2 (28.5%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (28.5%)

Note. Percentages in parentheses are within-group ratios.

Table 15 displays frequency counts and percentages of Kegan stage estimates of coaches by sex of team. The predominant stage for coaches of women's teams (n=7) was Stage 4/5 Transition (n=3). Coaches of men's teams (n=3) were spread equally across Stage 3/4 Transition, Stage 4, and Stage 4/5 Transition. One coach coached both men's and women's teams and was scored at Stage 4.

Table 15

Kegan Stages by Sex of Team

Sex of Team	N	3 Socialized Mind	3/4 Transition	4 Self-Authoring Mind	4/5 Transition
Women	7	1 (14.3%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (28.5%)	3 (42.9%)
Men	3	0	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)
Both	1	0	0	1 (100%)	0

Note. Percentages in parentheses are within-group ratios.

Using material from the exemplar interviews, the researcher was able to update and refine the coding guide she developed for scoring the ethical professional identity development of collegiate swim coaches (Hamilton, 2011) within Kegan's framework of identity formation. The coding guide is improved by using content from exemplar coaches and coaches spanning a variety of sports. See Appendix E for the updated coding guide.

Summary

This chapter presented the descriptions and key themes of professionalism, the development of professional identity, coach moral exemplarity, and evidence of coaches' stages of ethical professional identity development. Themes emerging from exemplar coaches' conceptions of professionalism as well as the individual factors that enable them to maintain their integrity in a high-pressured environment focused on external rewards were similar, with the most common themes being: having and internalized moral compass and moral values, being a teacher, having a responsibility toward others, showing care and respect for others, engaging in ongoing personal and professional growth, and having a high internalized standard of excellence. Mentors, major events in their coaching careers, their religion/faith, and their childhood and upbringing emerged as the factors most influential on exemplar coaches' understanding of what it means to be an ethical professional. The content and structure of coaches' responses demonstrated highly developed stages of ethical identity development, with two-thirds of coaches scoring in Kegan's Stage 4 (Self-Authored Mind) or transitioning from Stage 4 to Stage 5 (from a Self-Authoring to Self-Transforming Mind). Chapter 5 discusses these results in further detail.

CHAPTER 5—DISCUSSION

This study provides a deeper understanding of the moral and ethical professional identity of moral exemplar collegiate coaches. Specifically, this study addressed (a) how exemplar coaches define what it means to be a professional as a college coach, (b) how their ethical professional identity forms, (c) how they are able to maintain their personal integrity in the face of trials, temptations, and pressure to compromise it in their profession, and (d) how their development as ethical professionals aligns with Kegan's stage theory of identity formation. The discussion section will summarize the main findings of the present study for each of these topics in the context of the relevant literature. Limitations of the study, theoretical and practical implications of results, and future research directions will also be discussed.

Exemplar Coaches' Definition of Professionalism

This study adds depth and breadth to the existing literature on ethical professional identity development, or professionalism. No studies up to this point included the conceptions of professionalism of moral exemplar coaches in high-stakes college sport, which is a unique and socially relevant sample. The findings of this study were highly consistent with previous research on the ethical professional identity development of other exemplar populations, both validating the results of this study as well as strengthening the conclusions of existing research (Hamilton, 2011; Hamilton & Monson, 2012; Rule & Bebeau, 2005).

Similar to these previous studies, the in-depth interviews with moral exemplar coaches elicited a wide range of content and varied understandings of professionalism. No simple definition and fully shared understanding of the meaning or professionalism could be determined. Rather, coaches exhibited diversity among each other as well as multiplicity within their own understandings of professionalism. This is likely reflective of the fact that a universally known and accepted code of conduct or ethical behavioral standards does not exist for coaches.

However, given this lack of a universal code of ethics or accepted understanding of professionalism, this group of exemplars demonstrated they had reflected on professionalism whether directly or indirectly. While coaches articulated a meaning of professionalism that included competence at the technical skills of coaching, all mentions of the "science" of coaching were qualified with statements explaining the "real" job of coaching involves building powerful interpersonal relationships and growing both self and others toward ideal values and ethics.

Themes that emerged from coaches' comments on what it means to be a professional were (1) having an internalized moral compass and moral values, (2) coaching as teaching, (3) feeling a deep responsibility toward others, (4) having care and respect for others, (5) engaging in ongoing personal and professional growth through self-reflection and learning from mistakes and learning from others, (6) having a high internalized standard of excellence for self, (7) being able to reconcile conflict/paradoxes/polarities in their personal and professional lives, and (8) viewing their work as a passion and "calling." These eight themes were consistent with previous literature on moral exemplars in other professions.

The most similar studies to the present are explorations of moral identity and professionalism in exemplar dentists (Rule & Bebeau, 2005) and lawyers (Hamilton & Monson, 2012) as well as Colby and Damon's (1992) study on exemplars from a variety of fields. All three studies found evidence of an internalized moral compass. Another way to describe this moral compass is having a unified understanding of self and morality. This allows for one to have and demonstrate consistency and certainty in matters of principle. Rule & Bebeau (2005) describe this theme in one of their conclusions about exemplar dentists: "What sets the exemplars apart from ordinary good people is a unity of the self with moral concerns" (p. 162).

Related to coaches' themes of a deep responsibility, care, and respect for others, Rule and Bebeau (2005) and Colby and Damon's (1992) exemplars demonstrated service to others as central to their professional identity, and lawyers (Hamilton & Monson, 2012) showed analogous

themes to coaches of a sense of commitment and responsibility toward others, relationships built on trust, and respect for others. Personal and professional growth like that of exemplar coaches was also shared by lawyers in the theme of "habits of reflection and learning from mistakes as an important element of dynamic growth in understanding" (Hamilton & Monson, 2012, p. 948) and Colby and Damon (1992) shared a similar theme of exemplars "preserve a lifelong openness to change while still retaining a core stability in their moral commitments exemplars" (184). Rule and Bebeau's (2005) exemplars noted reflection and self-examination of dentists during the interview process itself as well as a commitment to continuing education and technical competence. This theme of technical competence was paired with the dentists' theme of having a will to succeed and lawyers' theme of an internalized standard of excellence at the technical skills of lawyering (Hamilton & Monson, 2012), which was shared by coaches.

Coaches in this study were also consistent with Rule and Bebeau's (2005) theme of dentist exemplars experiencing the "reconciliation of internal conflicts," and "no longer feel[ing] that they are defined by what others think of them and are not torn among multiple shared identities" (p. 158). Coaches, like dentists, demonstrated "an ability to negotiate the conflicting roles and obligations that are inevitable in their working lives" (p. 158).

The two themes that emerged with coaches relating to professionalism that were not found in other studies were teaching and a sense of passion and "calling" for their work. The theme of coaching as teaching was unique because none of the other exemplar researchers looked at teaching-type professions (or individuals in those professions). Like teaching, other populations of exemplars wanted to and did make a difference in people's lives, but they did so in different ways. For example, dentists (Rule & Bebeau, 2005), lawyers (Hamilton & Monson, 2012), and computing professionals (Huff & Barnard, 2009) provided pro bono work, and Colby and Damon's (1992) exemplars fought for social causes. In addition, the specific theme of having deep passion for and seeing their work as a "calling" did not come up as a theme in other studies.

Seeing coaching as a "calling"—something one is fundamentally *meant* to do—can be interpreted as coaches believing their work has a broader moral and even religious significance. One coach's words demonstrate one's calling having a moral bearing: ". . . .but I feel that it's kind of a calling. It's what I've done actually for a long time, and leading young people and mentoring. . . . I personally think coaching is the biggest platform to changing society. I think we feel that at many times, but it's an honor and a great responsibility that I don't take lightly." The connections between and among coaches' understandings of professionalism, their faith, and their sense of their work as a "calling" could be a fruitful area of future research.

The themes of coaching as teaching and coaching being a "calling" are two unique facets of coach moral exemplarity and are perhaps indicative of why this group of coaches have persisted and succeeded over time as the landscape of collegiate sport has changed and shifted. Unfortunately, the "coach as teacher" theme is also troubling because the "teacher-coach" model of coach preparation is becoming extinct and being replaced by a "coach as former athlete" model for pursuing a career in the coaching profession. Most coaches today do not undergo any formal pedagogical training and learn to coach through apprenticeship and experience.

Overall, these coaches understood professionalism in a deep, rather than a "surface" way. Hafferty (2006, cited in Bebeau & Monson, 2008) explains these concepts in the context of the medical profession: "A professionalism that is deep must exist at the level of identity. Surface professionalism . . . is nothing more than doing one's job in a 'professional manner.' . . . Professionalism as a deep competency . . . is more real/authentic because behavior is consequentially linked to the social actor's underlying identity (as a professional) rather than to how the job was carried out" (p. 567). Through moral exemplars' themes of what professionalism means, the collegiate coaches in this study clearly have incorporated it into their identities as individuals and do not see being a professional simply as acting in a professional manner but explain it as a complex and interwoven set of ideas.

The Formation of Coaches' Ethical Professional Identity

This study also brings greater understanding to the mechanisms that influence the development of moral variables, specifically the formation of individuals' ethical professional identity. The factors that impacted the formation of exemplar coaches' ethical professional identity were also consistent with previous literature. Coaches were highly influenced by mentors, significant events and experiences they have had in their role as a coach, their religion/faith, their parents and upbringing, observing others through social learning, significant life events, and the process of self-reflection. The influences of mentors, through coaching experiences, and through social learning are consistent with research specific to coach learning, which finds that most coaches learn through ongoing interactions in a practical coaching context and through a variety of informal sources such as observing and talking with significant others and peers (Cushion, Armour, & Jones 2003; Gilbert & Trudel, 2001).

Social influences on coach professional identity were consistent with other studies in professionalism as well. Though not specifically an exemplar study, early career lawyers shared many of the same sources of influence with coaches, however their influences were most frequently cited as deriving from social learning, their law school experience, self-reflection, upbringing, religion, life experiences, and mentoring, in that order (Monson & Hamilton, 2011b). Exemplar dentists were most influenced by colleagues who acted as role models and made important contributions to their development as professionals (Rule & Bebeau, 2005). Colby and Damon (1992) noticed the consistent themes of colleagues and mentors, life experiences, and faith shaping their exemplars' moral identity.

What is important to note about the formation of coaches' ethical identity is the nature of the formation itself. The influences coaches mention all helped to do one thing: move them from a less developed moral identity—one based more on self-interest and external rewards and

punishment—to a more complex identity and understanding of self—one based on self-defined

values, service to others, and more universal ethical principles (e.g., justice, caring, generosity).

When asked how their understanding of what it means to be a professional has changed

over their careers, the majority of exemplar coaches talked about their early careers being driven

by winning, obtaining prestigious coaching positions, and being highly concerned about what

others thought of them. Along their careers, the influences of mentors and life experience, for

example, helped this group of collegiate coaches to become more secure in themselves, more

unified in their personal, professional, and moral values, and, in turn, more focused on the people

and greater purpose of their work than on external indications of "success." This is consistent

with Colby and Damon's (1992) argument that as one's moral identity develops, "personal goals

are transformed into moral goals and moral goals become more and more central to the

individual's sense of self. In this process, the moral goals eventually become less distinguishable

from self-interest and thus ever more powerfully motivating" (p. 173). This transition and growth

demonstrated by exemplar coaches follows the broader theories of ethical professional identity as

a social and developmental process.

Coaches' Moral Exemplarity

This study fills gaps and adds to the existing literature on moral exemplars in various

ways. First, it broadens the understanding of the nature of morality itself by utilizing the "moral

exemplar" methodology suggested by Damon and Colby (2013) to study "moral geniuses" rather

than simply extrapolating on moral variables from studies of "ordinary" people. Second, by

studying moral exemplar collegiate coaches, this research adds a unique population to existing

exemplar literature. No other exemplar research to date has specifically studied a group of

individuals whose profession is as visible and as tied to success or failure in a zero-sum context

such as competitive sport. Nor has any other known exemplar research specifically focused on

individuals considered to be educators, as coaches certainly are. The findings of this study

support and extend the findings of existing moral exemplar research, and the themes relating to what made these coaches moral exemplars, specifically their ability to maintain their personal integrity in the face of trials, temptations, and pressure to compromise it in their profession, were also closely tied to the themes of professionalism noted in the results of Research Question 1. These themes of exemplarity included: having an internalized moral compass, having a commitment to personal and professional moral growth, engaging in self-reflection and learning from mistakes and life experiences, showing care for others, focusing on goals and concerns greater than oneself, having the ability to reconcile internal conflicts, and demonstrating gratitude and positivity.

These exemplar themes add not just to the moral exemplar literature but also to the literature on morality in coaching. The themes noted here update and expand Gerdes's (1994) dissertation on the morality, leadership, and excellence of four of the most successful and most highly respected NCAA Division I men's basketball coaches of the time. Though not specifically a "moral exemplar" study, Gerdes reported similar coach characteristics in his study, including having a holistic view of success, viewing themselves as servants to others and to the higher purpose of education, demonstrating a conviction to principles, and being good models of teaching, leading, and virtuous living. The current study extends this work by addressing a more diverse population of coaches and employing methods with well-established validity and reliability.

The most fundamental and consistent theme across all moral exemplar studies, including Gerdes's and the present study, is the evidence that points to exemplars having a strong moral identity or moral compass. Again, moral identity is often defined as the degree to which moral values are a central part of an individual's identity or sense of self (Blasi, 1983, 1984). Exemplars in studies up to this point universally seem to hold moral values *as* self, not just part of oneself. These coach exemplars, like other exemplars, seem to have a compulsion to do the right thing. It

would be inconsistent with their sense of self not to do so. All the coaches in this study were at a point in their careers and professional and moral development that when faced with any sort of moral choice, such as one that put athlete well being against external successes such as winning, exemplar coaches did not hesitate or even consider that there was a choice. There seemed to be no other option but to follow their principles. Similar to Rule and Bebeau's (2005) exemplar dentists, coach moral exemplars largely appear to have constructed "self-systems" (i.e., an example of Kegan's Stage 4 identity) that provide an internal compass for negotiating and resolving tensions among multiple, often conflicting expectations. Statements from coaches such as "that's just not who I am," "I won't compromise anything as far as how we treat the kids and treat each other and the culture," and "my convictions carry me" are all examples of this unquestioning commitment to moral values.

While the other themes that emerged from coach exemplar interviews are informative and help us to understand what makes these coaches exemplars, it is the unity of moral and professional self that subsumes the rest of the themes. Consistent with Blasi's (1983, 1984) theory of moral identity, *not* being committed to personal growth, showing care for others, serving others, reconciling internal conflicts, and being grateful and optimistic in one's life and work would be counter to these coaches' sense of self.

Evidence of Stages of Ethical Professional Identity Development

The interviews of moral exemplar collegiate coaches generated adequate content and structure for analysis using Kegan's stage theory of identity formation. Stages assigned included one coach at Stage 3 (Socialized Mind), two coaches as Stage 3/4 Transition, four coaches at Stage 4 (Self-Authoring Mind) and four coaches at Stage 4/5 Transition (movement from Self-Authoring to Self-Transforming Mind). This spread of stages most closely mirrors that of Eigel's (1998) CEOs and Hamilton and Monson's (2012) exemplary lawyers. Of the 21 CEOs in Eigel's study, 17 were scored at Stage 4 and four at Stage 4/5 Transition. Of the 12 exemplary lawyers,

four were Stage 3/4 Transition, six were Stage 4, and two were Stage 4/5 Transition. The findings

in the current study as well as others cited support Kegan's (1982) observations that identity

transformation into a Stage 3 socialized understanding of self and others usually occurs in early to

mid-adulthood and transition into a Stage 4 self-defining stage happens in mid- to late-adulthood

(though some adults never fully reach Stage 4). A complete transition to a Stage 5 self-

transforming/humanist stage is considered very rare and was found in less than 1% of adults in

Kegan and Lahey's (2009) work. While one-third of the moral exemplar coaches studied scored

in the 4/5 Transition Stage, none reached a complete Stage 5. Due to the rarity of Stage 5

individuals, this is not surprising, however potential explanations for this absence may be both the

social nature of the profession of coaching and the fact that coaches must be aware of, and at least

to some extent focused on, the external goal of winning. First, in order to be effective with their

athletes, even if they have a deeply self-referenced and even humanistic identity, coaches have to

be highly concerned with others. This may appear in the context of Kegan's framework of

identity development to be more aligned with a Stage 3 socialized level of identity. Second, any

focus on external goals and values such as winning could be interpreted as falling into early

stages of identity development (Stage 2 to early-Stage 3) within in Kegan's theory. Though

overall stage scores should reflect how individuals *primarily* understand or make meaning of their

life experience, these factors specific to coaches may have limited the perceptions of their ethical

identity development.

Slightly inconsistent with the exemplar literature on individuals in other professions cited

above, was the one coach who scored at a Stage 3 level of development. Kegan (1998) suggests

that most high-level management and leadership roles require a Stage 4 perspective in order to be

successful. However, because helping their athletes seemed to be a main focus for all 12 coaches,

it would seem that more than just one of them might have fallen into a predominantly Stage 3

socialized, team-oriented perspective.[16] A coach at Stage 3 still has many highly desirable traits

for working with impressionable young adults. The typical Stage 3 professional can be both

idealistic and self-reflective, and they often see themselves and the world in terms of shared

values, mutual expectations, and identification with institutional ideals and principles (Rule &

Bebeau, 2005). One main difference between a Stage 3 and Stage 4, more self-authoring

individual, is that the Stage 4 individual has defined themselves not so much through their role as

a professional but rather through their personal values and ethics, which they then apply to their

profession. Rule and Bebeau (2005) note that because the Stage 4 individual is defined by more

than their job or what they see is expected of them, they are more able to "think outside the box"

and "become a change agent for the profession" (p. 174). This was true of later-stage exemplar

coaches—they were the ones who more often made comments critical of college sport and the

direction it is going—for example recruiting younger and younger athletes and the for-profit

model of college sport—and were involved in their professional organizations in an attempt to

make changes. In the current culture of college sport, this type of coach—one demonstrating a

Stage 4 or later understanding of professionalism—may be the necessary ingredient for bringing

lasting changes to college athletics because of their dedication to the holistic development of their

student-athletes, the unity of their moral and professional identities, their commitment to moral

values in the high-stakes environment of college sport, and their ability to think critically about

their own profession yet remain loyal to it, thus potentially becoming change agents for the

coaching profession.

Links to Moral Variables in Coaching

This study on moral exemplarity and the professional identity formation of moral

exemplar NCAA Division I collegiate coaches also adds to the literature on moral variables in

coaching. As noted in the review of literature, while research on athlete moral variables is

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[16] The author hypothesizes that most "non-exemplar" coaches most likely fall into this stage for this reason.

plentiful, coach moral variables and the moral development of coaches has been virtually ignored, and studies on moral identity development in coaches are nonexistent. Considering their highly visible, powerful role in sport and the enormous influence they can have on the moral development of their athletes, this study's contribution to the coaching literature is significant.

This study adds to the ways in which the role of the coach and coach characteristics such as moral identity development can influence athletes' psychosocial, developmental, and performance outcomes, as well as the valence of their experience. It also offers insight into how coach moral identity is related to other variables often studied in sport, such as motivational and moral climate, and how coach identity development can be related to athlete moral functioning and development in a season and over time.

Regarding the moral variable of coach moral identity development, the unity these coach moral exemplars revealed between their "real life" morality and their morality in their professional role suggests that moral exemplar coaches do not engage in the same game reasoning Bredemeier and Shields (1986b) found that athletes employed. The coaches in this study have strong moral identities and they all demonstrated a strong commitment to a philosophy where the development, including the moral development, of the athlete is central, rather than winning.

Additionally, as mentioned in the literature review, research shows that coaches are agents of influence on athletes through modeling (see, e.g., Guivernau & Duda, 2002; Shields et al., 2005; Winters, 2011), sanctioning prosocial or antisocial behavior (see, e.g., Givernau & Duda, 2002; Power et al., 1989; Stuart & Ebbeck, 1995), and creating motivational and moral climates (e.g., Shields et al., 1995; Shields et al., 2005). The moral exemplar coaches in this study all discussed the importance of themselves as modeling appropriate and ethical behavior, condoning prosocial behavior, and creating team climates focused on mastery. Thus, this study adds to this body of literature by providing insight into coaches' ethical identity development as a possible antecedent to athlete moral outcomes.

The Coach Moral Exemplar Interview Guide

The current research was the first to use this particular interview guide to study any

population of exemplars as well as the first to use this interview guide to better understand the

concept of ethical professional identity development. A similar set of questions has been used in a

short-answer essay format (see, e.g., Bebeau & Lewis, 2004; Hamilton, 2011; Monson &

Hamilton, 2011), but the questions had never been used in a face-to-face interview setting. Due to

the quality and depth of the responses received in all but one of the interviews, the researcher

believes this interview guide achieved the intended purpose of gaining insight into the ethical

professional idenity development of moral exemplar collegiate coaches. Several coaches

mentioned they had not previously reflected on the topics raised in the interviews and appreciated

the opportunity to do so. This appreciation for the interview process itself is consistent with both

Colby and Damon (1992) and Rule and Bebeau's (2005) findings in their exemplar studies

despite the differences in the interview questions themselves. This suggests that the interview

guide used here was successful in its objective of eliciting thoughtful responses from exemplars

and encouraging self-examination of their lives and their work.

There are only a few changes the researcher would make for future studies. The first

change would be to put more emphasis on getting coaches to provide specific examples and

stories to illustrate their answers. For example, when asking "How is your current understanding

of what it means to be a professional the same or different from when you began coaching?" the

interviewer could follow up by asking "Can you give me an example of how your understanding

shifted?" The stories and real-life examples coaches did provide were the most powerful parts of

the interviews and generated the most insight into coaches' moral identity and their level of

consistency between their cognitive processes and their actual behavior (i.e., moral thought to

moral action). A second change to the interview guide would be to the question "What do you

think society expects of you?" While many of the questions were intentionally worded broadly to

encourage coaches to draw their understandings from their own unique experiences, this particular question frequently confused participants. Several coaches asked what was meant by "society"—was it American society at large or their own more intimate communities? This question was intended to gain clarity into they type of pressure (or lack of pressure) exemplar coaches felt from a winning-is-everything driven American culture and could be reworded to specify broader society.

In the future, researchers could also use both this interview guide and Kegan's Subject-Object Interview to test the construct validity of this interview guide and its ability to generate content and structure adequate enough to determine coaches' stage of professional identity development using Kegan's stage theory of identity formation. While the two certified SOI scorers employed in this study believed there was enough data to reliably score the interviews, using the SOI itself could strengthen the validity of the current interview guide.

Theoretical and Practical Implications of Results

The present examination of the ethical professional identity development of moral exemplar collegiate coaches has numerous theoretical, philosophical, methodological, and practical implications. This study adds considerably to the minimal research on moral identity development, ethical professionalism, and on moral exemplars in sport contexts. It advances the understanding of coaching by deepening the literature on moral identity development and moral development as a whole. The study adds to the body of research using Colby and Damon's moral exemplar methodology and is the first study to develop an operational definition of a "moral exemplar" for the collegiate coaching profession. This study also adds to the growing literature using evaluations based on Kegan's theory as a method to determine stages of identity development. As noted above, a unique interview guide was developed for this study to investigate specifically ethical professional identity development and moral exemplarity in

collegiate coaches. As the first study to provide an assessment of the moral identity of college coaches, it can provide a baseline for future comparative analyses.

On a more practical level, a better understanding of successful coaches who have made sustained commitments to moral values in their personal and professional lives can offer hope to the coaching profession at a time when media coverage paints a negative picture of college coaches by highlighting discouraging examples of the least ethical coaches and the for-profit model of big-time college sport. Exemplar coaches provided insights that support the notion that coaches who face the most pressure at the highest levels of collegiate competition can be and are committed to moral values and ideals over external gains such as winning, and they are successful in terms of win-loss records nonetheless. These findings challenge the popular notion that doing the right thing, following rules, and concern for holistic athlete development are incompatible with winning at the highest level of collegiate sport. Findings also tip a hat to the idea that a commitment to moral principles by coaches may in fact increase the likelihood of performance success, but this idea warrants additional examination. These exemplars demonstrate things almost all professionals strive for—personal and professional growth, true connections with those they help, and passion for their work, which can come from feeling one's work is part of and reflects oneself—an integration of professional and moral values. These insights can elevate the coaching profession and inspire other coaches to reflect on their own morality and coaching philosophy to become better coaches.

The researcher proposes that a major goal of coach education should be to move beyond simply teaching the technical skills of coaching. The goal should be to foster ethical professional development and help coaches move toward deeper understandings of self and others like the moral exemplar coaches in this study demonstrated. Similarly, the researcher proposes that the NCAA, individual conferences, and institutions of higher learning should go beyond reliance on codes of ethics that can encourage moral minimalism by replacing virtue requirements with rules

(McNamee, 2011) and can lead to the disintegration of a profession's moral core. Codes of ethics cannot be depended on to create or motivate moral character and behavior. One suggestion is that coach education (in formal and informal settings, through support of the NCAA, and in institutional hiring practices) should move toward a mentoring and apprenticeship model for young coaches. Mentoring programs in education have been shown to promote moral developmental progression across the adult life span, moving individuals from a socialized meaning-making structure to a self-authoring structure, and perhaps in some cases (depending on the developmental stage of the mentor), toward a self-transforming meaning-making structure (McGowan, Stone, & Kegan, 2008). Mentors such as these exemplar coaches and others could be part of the solution to realigning both the social contract of the profession with society and improving the moral state of college sport.

Future Research Directions

The qualitative interview methodology used in this study offers a preliminary exploration of the professional identity development of moral exemplar collegiate coaches—a construct that has not been studied before. Additional research is required to more fully investigate the topic. Possible future research could include:

- Studies establishing the construct validity of the interview guide used in this research by also using Kegan's Subject-Object Interview.
- Longitudinal studies that look more specifically at the formation of professionalism across exemplar coaches' careers
- Studies with larger sample sizes and control groups that explore differences in ethical professional identity development between exemplar and non-exemplar coaches
- Studies that investigate the influences of institutional/departmental culture on ethical professional identity development

- Studies on the effects of coach mentoring programs on the ethical professional development of novice coaches

- Studies looking at student-athletes' perceptions of exemplar coaches

- Correlations between identity development stage of coaches and athlete moral outcomes.

Conclusion

The focus of this study has been on exemplar coaches' ethical professional identity development. These 12 exemplars were nominated for their commitment to their integrity and values in their personal and professional lives. This unity of personal and professional values—their strong moral identity—makes them models for others. What makes their example even more powerful is that they do not fit the "nice guys finish last" stereotype; they are not just "good" people, they have all had tremendous success on the field as well. Eleven of the 12 exemplar coaches had career winning records.[17] As noted in Chapter 3, nine of the 12 coaches whose head coaching career win-loss records were publicly available had an average winning record of .683, with none below .620. This is an impressive feat, especially as several of the coaches have played well over 1,000 collegiate games. These exemplar coaches have won a combined total of six NCAA Division I national championships, had 102 NCAA championship team appearances, and have received six NCAA Coach of the Year awards in their sports. All of the coaches had significantly improved their teams' success on the field (and often in the classroom as well) since taking their positions.

Why does it matter that these moral exemplar coaches are also successful on the field? Because winning coaches get the most attention. As many of the exemplar coaches noted in their interviews, society expects them to win. Our culture attaches great importance to winning, and the stakeholders in college sports—administrators, alums, fans—want to support, monetarily and

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[17] The one exception was a coach who started a team from scratch as her first Division I head coaching position. However, the team has dramatically improved under her leadership.

otherwise, winning teams and coaches. As LaVoi (2014) notes, "What winners do in the most visible and popular sports matters, because winning is valued in sport culture and society. *Winners get to communicate what is valued, important, and relevant*" (para. 5, emphasis in original). If the most visible, winning coaches are also the individuals doing it the "right way," their values of putting the athlete first and being caring, compassionate leaders will be observed and, hopefully, mimicked as what leads to success. This study brings to light the values of these coaches, showing others that for coaches who are moral exemplars, "winning" isn't the "W" on their record; winning is making a lasting difference in the lives of others.

Perhaps in some ways, the development of these individuals as coaches who are more committed to athlete development and deeper moral values than to doing whatever it takes to win is precisely what has helped them succeed on the field. Though a chicken-or-egg situation, athletes and parents may be more drawn to the philosophies of more morally centered coaches, and athletes might be more willing to give their best and reach their potential with coaches and teams they truly respect and feel respected by, leading to better teams and more victories. Or, maybe the victories lead to bringing in more talented athletes. Both are probably true to some extent, but from the words of these exemplar coaches, they build teams by finding the best *people* not the best *athletes*, and the most rewarding aspect of coaching for many of them is what their athletes go on to do well after they have hung up their uniforms. In the words of one coach,

> Investing in these players' lives and really seeing them grow from when they're a freshman to when they're a senior and beyond, I mean, that to me is the ultimate. If we go on and win it all, and our players aren't a team of loving, supportive, do-anything-for-their-teammate types of people, then you can find somebody else to come in here and . . . teach kids how to win. But it's way more than that.

This look into the moral and professional identities of exemplar coaches demonstrates that even in the current highly competitive culture of big-time Division I college sport, it is possible to

uphold one's values and be a role model for one's athletes, colleagues, university, and broader community. The coaches in this study strive for *eudaimonia*—they attempt to live the "good life" by consistently demonstrating virtue—by doing good and being good—and by bettering the lives of others in the process. The charge now is to use these and other exemplars to help all intercollegiate coaches develop into moral leaders who can be both successful on the field and as ethical professionals.

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APPENDIX A

Exemplar Coach Nomination Criteria Email: Athletic Directors and Peer Coaches

Exemplar Coach Nomination Criteria Emails

Nominations from athletic administrators:

Do you have a head coach who stands out as a person of great character and integrity? My doctoral research at the University of Minnesota explores collegiate head coaches who are exceptional moral leaders in the face of the immense and varied pressures of Division I athletics. By "moral," I mean someone who is concerned with the care of others and seeks to act in fair and just ways. I am seeking nominations for male and female coaches who fit most of the following criteria:

- Has high ethical standards and conducts him/herself with professionalism
- Follows institutional and organizational rules/policies
- Consistently receives high rankings/evaluations from his or her athletes for being a caring and concerned coach
- Honors the game by demonstrating sportsmanship and showing respect for the rules, opponents, officials, athletes, and self
- Demonstrates a willingness to put the well-being of his or her athletes ahead of self-interest and/or winning
- Teaches and inspires good character and sportsmanship in his or her athletes and others

Do any of your men's and/or women's head coaches come to mind? If so, please take a second to hit "reply" and provide his or her name and sport (you can nominate as many people as you'd like). If you could jot down reasons for your nomination(s), that would be very helpful, but it is not required. All nominations will remain confidential.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact me. Thank you in advance for your time!

Regards,
Maya Hamilton

Peer nominations from coaches:

Do you know a fellow head coach who stands out as a person of great character and integrity? My doctoral research at the University of Minnesota explores collegiate head coaches who are exceptional moral leaders in the face of the immense and varied pressures of Division I athletics. By "moral," I mean someone who is concerned with the care of others and seeks to act in fair and just ways. I am seeking nominations for male and female coaches who fit most of the following criteria:

- Has high ethical standards and conducts him/herself with professionalism
- Follows institutional and organizational rules/policies
- Honors the game by demonstrating sportsmanship and showing respect for the rules, opponents, officials, athletes, and self
- Demonstrates a willingness to put the well-being of his or her athletes ahead of self-interest and/or winning
- Teaches and inspires good character and sportsmanship in his or her athletes and others

Do any of your coaching peers come to mind? They can be men's and/or women's head coaches of any sport either at your own institution or at another Division I school. If so, please take a second to hit "reply" and provide his or her name and sport (you can nominate as many people as you'd like). If you could jot down reasons for your nomination(s), that would be very helpful, but it is not required.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact me. Thank you in advance for your time!

Regards,
Maya Hamilton

APPENDIX B

Interview Guide

Moral Exemplar Interview Guide

1. What does being a member of the coaching profession mean to you? How did you come to this understanding?

2. How is your current understanding of what it means to be a professional the same or different from when you began coaching?

3. What experiences have been significant for you in reshaping your understanding of what it means to be a professional?

4. What do you expect of yourself as a coach?

5. What do you think others expect of you (your student-athletes, your coaching peers, broader society)?

6. How do you see yourself in relation to your coaching peers?

7. How do you think your peers see you?

8. What conflicts do you experience regarding your profession, such as between your responsibility to yourself and to others (student-athletes, family, athletic department, college/university, community, profession)?

9. What would be the worst thing for you if you failed to live up to the expectations you have set for yourself?

10. What would be the worst thing for you if you failed to live up to the expectations of others (your student-athletes, your coaching peers, broader society)?

11. How has your development as a coach and moral person changed over time?

12. When you reflect on your experiences as a coach or outside of coaching, what experiences have been significant for you in reshaping yourself as a person?

13. Is there anything I've missed? Anything else you can share that can help me better understand you and how you've developed into the person and coach you are today?

APPENDIX C

Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA: CONSENT FORM
Coaches Who Care: An Examination of the
Moral Identity Development and Professionalism of Moral Exemplar Collegiate Coaches

You are invited to participate in a research study about how moral identity develops in collegiate coaches. You were selected as a possible participant because you have been nominated by your peers as an ethical leader and "moral exemplar" in the Division I coaching community. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate in the study.

This study is being conducted by Maya Hamilton, doctoral candidate in Kinesiology—Sport and Exercise Psychology, at the University of Minnesota and assistant swim coach at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.

Background Information
The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of moral identity and its development in collegiate coaches who have made sustained commitments to moral values in their personal and professional lives. Recent headlines demonstrate that the immense and varied pressures on coaches can cause them to undermine moral and educational values and betray the virtues attributed to sport. This is especially concerning because coaches have immense influence on their student-athletes. Studying the identity and motivations of moral exemplar coaches and sharing their stories can inspire other coaches and inform coach education to give both current and future coaches the tools to help form student-athletes into the next generation of moral citizens.

Procedures
If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to participate in an interview lasting approximately one hour that will be audio recorded. In the interview, I will ask you about your personal moral development and how you see your identity as a moral person and ethical coaching professional. Follow-up interviews or other communication (email, phone, etc.) may be conducted to clarify your answers and/or gain additional information. Following the interview, you will be given a chance to review the interview transcript and clarify your responses or add additional remarks. Written accounts, or "stories," about your development as a moral exemplar will not be published without your prior consent.

Risks and Benefits of Being in this Study
The study has no anticipated risks and there are no direct benefits to being in this study, however participants in past moral exemplar interviews report having profoundly positive experiences gaining insight into their own morality and moral identity development.

Compensation
There is no direct compensation or reward for participating in this study.

Confidentiality
The records of this study will be kept private. Should you wish to remain anonymous in any report I might publish, you may use a pseudonym and no specific identifying information such as the name of your university will be used. Research records and data, including the audio recording of your interview and written transcripts, will be encrypted according to current University policy for protection of confidentiality, will be stored securely, and only the researcher

will have access to the records. Study data will be kept for three years. After the interview, you will have the opportunity to review the full transcript and clarify, add, or retract any information you have previously shared. I will also ask for your consent and approval of any personal stories related to the development of your moral identity that are generated from the transcripts. No stories will be published without your consent.

Voluntary Nature of the Study
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota or the researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to refrain from answering any questions or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions
The researchers conducting this study are: Maya Hamilton and Dr. Nicole LaVoi (doctoral adviser). You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact Maya Hamilton at the University of Minnesota, (612) 625-7327, hami0146@umn.edu; or Dr. Nicole LaVoi at the University of Minnesota, (612) 626-6055, nmlavoi@umn.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. SE, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked any questions I have and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature:_____   Date: _____

Signature of Investigator:_____   Date: _____

APPENDIX D

IRB Approval

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus	*Human Research Protection Program*	*D528 Mayo Memorial Building*
	Office of the Vice President for Research	*420 Delaware Street S.E.*
		MMC 820
		Minneapolis, MN 55455
		Office: 612-626-5654
		Fax: 612-626-6061
		E-mail: irb@umn.edu or ibc@umn.edu
		Website: http://research.umn.edu/subjects/

04/29/2013

Maya G Hamilton

RE: "Coaches Who Care: An Examination of the Moral Identity Development of Moral
       Exemplar Collegiate Coaches"
       IRB Code Number: **1304P31662**

Dear Dr. Hamilton:

The referenced study was reviewed by expedited review procedures and approved on April 26,
2013. If you have applied for a grant, this date is required for certification purposes as well as the
Assurance of Compliance number which is FWA00000312 (Fairview Health Systems Research
FWA00000325, Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare FWA 00004003). Approval for the
study will expire one year from that date. A report form will be sent out two months before the
expiration date.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval of this study includes the consent form, exemplar
coach nomination, exemplar recruitment phone script, and exemplar recruitment e-mail text.

The IRB would like to stress that subjects who go through the consent process are considered
enrolled participants and are counted toward the total number of subjects, even if they have no
further participation in the study. Please keep this in mind when calculating the number of
subjects you request. This study is currently approved for 16 subjects. If you desire an increase in
the number of approved subjects, you will need to make a formal request to the IRB.

The code number above is assigned to your research. That number and the title of your study
must be used in all communication with the IRB office.

As the Principal Investigator of this project, you are required by federal regulations to inform the IRB of any proposed changes in your research that will affect human subjects. Changes should not be initiated until written IRB approval is received. Unanticipated problems and adverse events should be reported to the IRB as they occur. Research projects are subject to continuing review and renewal. If you have any questions, call the IRB office at 612-626-5654.

On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success with your research.

Sincerely,

Christina Dobrovolny, CIP
Research Compliance Supervisor
CD/ks

CC: Nicole LaVoi

APPENDIX E

Excerpts and Definition of Professionalism by Kegan Stage and Theme of Identity Development

Excerpts and Definition of Professionalism by Kegan Stage and Theme of Identity Development

Stage	Theme and Commentary	Quotations
Stage 2: The Instrumental Mind	**Technical competence** Emphasis on technical aspects of a coach's work and meeting fixed, black-and-white role expectations external to self.	*[Professionalism involves] how you act, how you comport yourself, how you dress/present yourself . . . it all matters. . . . There is a chance that someone just might be watching.* *[Professionalism means] that I don't cut corners or break any NCAA, conference, and school rules and policies.*
Transition between Stage 2 and Stage 3	**Technical competence with emerging relationship orientation** Emphasis on technical aspects (Stage 2) but growing self-reflection, focus on meeting others' expectations, personal identification with their profession (Stage 3).	*[As a professional coach] I expect to learn more about technique and mental training every year and to incorporate new ideas into the team each year.* *[It has to be] within the confines of following NCAA rules, graduating your players, having good kids on your team, and having success that way.*
Stage 3: The Socialized Mind	**Relationship focused** Emphasis on social relationships; professional identity grounded in external authorities.	*[Being a professional coach] means positively influencing my athletes to be great teammates, leaders, and students.* *Being a coach to me means being a mentor, educator, counselor, friend . . . all in one.*
Transition between Stage 3 and Stage 4	**Relationship focused with emerging self-authorship** Emphasis on relationships (Stage 3) with development of deeper personal values or moral compass integrated with values of the profession (Stage 4).	*At the end of the day I would want my players and my team first to say that I taught them something about life and that I was a good example and that they learned something beyond tennis from me.* *Our duty is to provide guidance and leadership and direction to young people. We teach them life values through our sport.*
Stage 4: The Self-Authoring Mind	**Self-authorship** Emphasis on trusting in a self-defined moral core rather than following social expectations; demonstrating integration of personal and professional values; grounded in reflective practice; ability to see others' viewpoints.	*[I need] to be an example of what I believe a good person should be, and that's to treat people with respect, do the right thing at the right time in the right way, to be disciplined in my own life, to be a good dad, to be a good husband.* *[As a professional] I need to realize that I can't make others happy and myself unhappy at the same time. If I live up to my expectations, I need to understand that I may not live up to the expectations of my peers.*
Transition between Stage 4 and Stage 5 (Self-Transforming Mind)	**Self-authorship with emerging recognition of limits self- and professionally defined values and commitments** Emphasis on unity of personal and professional values (Stage 4) with evidence of understanding the limits of those values; growing authenticity and recognition of the interdependence of all people.	*The longer you coach, the better coach you are because the more pieces of [people] that you have drawn from. . . . Every athlete I've had has made me a better coach because they've taught me something about myself or . . . about dealing with [others]. You become this mosaic that's of all the people that you've interacted with in coaching.* *It's about seeing there's lots of ways to be moral, lots of ways to be a good person, and all of it . . . comes back to who do you really want to be and are you staying inside of that. To me immoral is getting outside of who you are at the core.*