

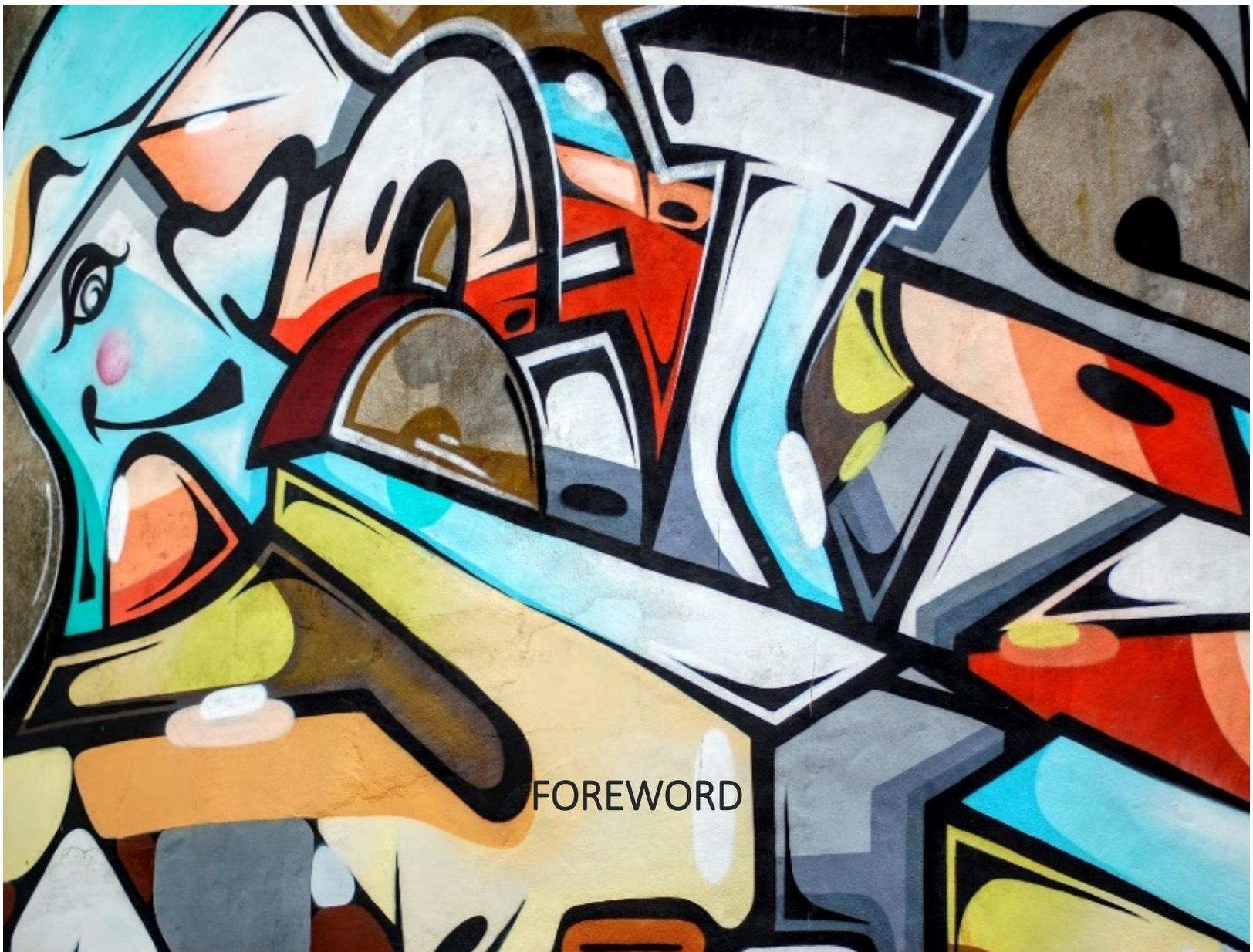
FOREWORD

ENTREPRENEURIAL ETHICS

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Moral Entrepreneurship

This textbook, *Entrepreneurial Ethics*, is not a book about applying ethics to entrepreneurship. It is a book in which the principles of entrepreneurship are applied to ethics.

Entrepreneurship is all about seeing. It is about seeing possibilities within a situation where others see only problems and dead ends. Many researchers have tried to figure out how original entrepreneurial insight happens, how it can be taught and nurtured. Nobody knows for sure. But I believe that, in general, the development of practical insight and original in-seeing or insightfulness—the heart of entrepreneurship—is naturally developed by reflective, philosophical study accompanied by targeted, practical exercises that stimulate and challenge how we see things, both in business and in the making of moral judgments. Enhanced, enlightened seeing is the natural end of such philosophical study. Thus, this present text aims to help you develop both your business acumen and your mastery of making sound, enlightened moral judgments. It might have been titled *On Becoming a Seer*.

Now, a “seer” is sometimes thought to be a person who has supernatural powers to see into the future. This idea is fanciful because there is no future ‘out there’ waiting to happen that can be ‘seen into’. Rather, entrepreneurs with original insights *create* the future and, by seeing it, make it present and real. When this kind of entrepreneurial in-seeing is directed at your personal, unique and dynamic configuration of moral values by which you live every day—what they are and what you want them to be—then this insightful reflecting and tinkering in the service of living the best possible life is what I think of as *moral entrepreneurship*.

The path to becoming a moral entrepreneur is the path of personal growth and development. This path leads sometimes to a disruption and reconfiguration of old moral values that were inculcated into your behavior patterns during childhood. These moral values can become calcified and overly rigid and may not be the right fit for you anymore. They can become like old products which have served their purpose but now need to be replaced with something new and different



that works more effectively. Your most trusted moral values will stay with you for a lifetime. Yet, the way in which you value your moral values and deploy them in your everyday life will shift and change with experience, knowledge and circumstances.

Entrepreneurial Ethics, developed on the classical philosophical model for in-seeing and insight creation, will illuminate and allow you to critically evaluate and change old, sedimented and conventional moral values when you see that they are no longer as comfortable as they once were, no longer fit just right, as if you have outgrown them. This will open-up the possibility for something new and different to happen: a renewed *you* produced by your own entrepreneurial efforts within the social world in which you are immersed.

Whereas the capitalist entrepreneur desires to start or creatively re-configure a new business, strategy, or product line, the moral entrepreneur desires to create or creatively re-configure a new moral self. To be successful with this, entrepreneurial ethics, like capitalist entrepreneurship or social entrepreneurship, requires concerted effort and commitment on your part or it won't happen. *Entrepreneurial Ethics* is an active, hands-on approach to moral value creation that wants you to be 'doing ethics' rather than merely talking about it or memorizing abstract formulations. You don't want to hear a carpenter talk-talk-talk about building your house; you want her to build it!

I learned this 'can-do' attitude from my good ol' dad, George F. Walsh. The son of Irish immigrants who grew up during the Great Depression, he was an intrepid entrepreneur. While studying advertising and marketing in night school, he worked his way—by dint of hard labor he would tell us, proudly—into the advertising department of Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia, PA. This hard-earned beginning would lead him to eventually create his own business, Walsh Advertising Agency. He worked with a variety of industrial clients, mainly in the specialty glass industry that grew up in South Jersey due to the abundance of silica thereabouts. He was a fervent proponent of free-market capitalism guided by Christian values. My dad helped me to see the value of diligent work in pursuit of an original idea; the fundamental importance of straight-shooting honesty as the backbone of success; and the willingness to take calculated risks to achieve your heart's desire. "Success is never final," he would remind me, "and failure never fatal."

My mom, Dora L. Walsh, was the daughter of Italian immigrants. She was a social entrepreneur. She was a Registered Nurse and army veteran who worked in hospitals for years. She saw a need for personal health care to extend beyond the hospital, especially for the elderly. Never content with an inadequate status quo, she created a Home Health Care organization that brought together hundreds of volunteers and professionals to assist sick and elderly persons at home. Her organization would become the model for all other counties in the state of New Jersey, influencing state-wide health care policy. She won numerous awards for her work, served on the boards of hospitals, and had a perpetual scholarship named in her honor. She was a tireless advocate for the vulnerable her entire life. My mom taught me to care.

Because my parents thrived on entrepreneurial energy, I found myself at a young age being entrepreneurial before I knew what that meant. I started my first business with a premium shoe shine kit my dad gave me for Christmas when I was twelve, so I could shine his shoes properly. I soon became an expert shoe-shiner, and then I marketed my expertise. After school and during the summer, I would make the rounds of local businesses and shine the shoes of executives while they sat at their desks. My first introduction to the world of business turned a handsome ROI!

Using everything I learned from my parents and many teachers, the entrepreneurial approach to ethics that is reflected in the structure, purpose, design and function of this text is focused squarely on the creative development of your personal moral self through a process of

insightful illumination that I believe will be of real, practical value to you for the rest of your life. Creating personal benefit for you is what entrepreneurial moral education is all about—producing morally driven, enlightened individuals like yourself who have taken control of their moral value orientation and are intent on seeing how to configure it to achieve living the best possible life here and now in a world with others. All of your other success in life will surely depend on your success with achieving that.

Welcome!



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