



Reasoning with Ethics

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Ethics in action creates character.

Use this blog to:

1. Lead class discussions in social studies, civics, ethics or advisory classes.
2. Teach students skills to analyze cases with core ethical values.
3. Recognize skills in support of SEE's Tri-Factor Model of ethical functioning.

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Cheating in Sports

If you aren't cheating, you aren't trying. This old sports saying received a harsh rebuke recently from Major League Baseball (MLB). On January 13, 2020, MLB announced the one-year suspension without pay for the general manager and manager of the Houston Astros for a sophisticated strategy to steal signs during games. The Astros were accused of using a system of video cameras to capture signs from the visiting team and transmit the information to the dugout where they were relayed to players.



In addition to the suspensions, the Astros were fined \$5 million and will forfeit their first and second-round draft picks in 2020 and 2021. Both the GM and manager, who are widely respected for their respective abilities, were subsequently fired by the Astro's team owner. It was noted that MLB's research for this case was extensive. Questions now swirl around the legitimacy of the Astro's 2017 World Series Championship, which included the period of the sign stealing.

Stealing signs is as old as baseball itself, and there are a lot of grey areas in MLB's rule adjudication, but one thing has been clear and that is the forbidden use of technology to capture or relay signs. From Little League to professional teams, athletes and their coaches are confronted with the question of how they will respond to the "not cheating, not trying" legend. Every sport has its grey areas of rules and enforcement and every coach and player needs to choose as to how they want to respond to any opportunity to cheat.

Students are asked to respond to the question, should the same core ethical values govern behavior on and off the field of play? Does the value of winning take precedence over core ethical values during competition? Finally, when a teammate or coach begins to compromise ethical values to win, how should a student-athlete respond?

Regarding this archived case, SEE encourage students to review supplemental information at Supplemental links:

Owner fires GM and Manager

https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/28476282/mlb-hits-astros-huge-penalties-houston-fires-hinch-luhnow-answering-all-questions

Analysis about two fired

https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/28476780/astros-jeff-luhnow-aj-hinch-fired-sign-stealing

Astros manager banned for cheating

CBS Story- <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/astros-gm-luhnow-manager-hinch-suspended-one-year-by-mlb-for-electronic-sign-stealing-scheme-today-2020-01-13/>