**Section Plan: Learning Through Case Construction**

1. Activity
   1. Set-up—writing case studies
      1. We’ve done quite a bit of work with case studies in the second half of the semester, using general stories with non-descript actors to highlight certain ethical issues and to track how different kinds of information yield particular assumptions & forms of ethical reasoning.
      2. NOW, I’d like to reverse directions & have you all come up with a case of your own to illustrate and think through a particular issue from this week’s readings. In my experience, it works a different analytical bone—to construct a basic scenario and then to consider how you might alter the scenario to enrich an ethical discussion.
         1. Q&A: What have been the general characteristics of the case studies we’ve discussed in lecture and section? [short, A/B characters, general, open-ended]
         2. With these qualities in mind, you’re going to construct a short case study following this model. Basically, this is your opportunity to pose a scenario to the class, a scenario that pokes at a particular issue or raises particular questions. We’ll start with some time for individual brainstorming, then break into groups, and then come together as a section to deconstruct the case studies that we’ve created.
      3. Split the group into 2—in order to get a good breadth of topics, we’ll split the group into 2
         1. Ethics of fantasy (in particular, individual fantasy)
            1. What kind of responsibility is held by one who holds a sexual fantasy?
         2. Ethics of virtual sex (in particular, depictions of sex and sexual interactions online + the ethics of shared fantasy and sharing fantasies)
            1. Is virtual sex ‘real sex’? If so, is virtual rape ethically equivalent to physical rape? Should online communities cultivate and censor sexual content?
         3. On this slide, I’ve restated some of our key questions from the syllabus to help you frame and focus your scenario—you don’t need to try to answer all of these questions through your case & you can by all means try to focus on a different, though related, question
            1. Also, to help jog your memory and get the creative juices flowing, consider returning to our readings—what specific ethical questions do these authors highlight and how might you draw them out through an imagined real-life scenario?

The lines between these ethical questions are blurry, of course, so don’t worry if some of the implications of your scenario fade into the other group’s set of questions.

* + - 1. ***Any clarifying questions??***
  1. Solo writing [10 minutes]
     1. Brainstorm ideas for a case (feel free to draw on examples from media/pop culture)
        1. What question most interests you?
        2. What scenario best captures that question?
        3. What might the narrative arc or dialogue look like?
        4. What information might you add to complexify the case?
        5. \*Feel free to draw on examples or scenarios from pop culture, movies, etc. (*Westworld* and sex robots; virtual reality games)
     2. \*\*If there’s time at the end, we’ll make some space to share additional case ideas/scenarios.
  2. Writing your own case study
     1. Small groups (2)
        1. Designate team assignments
           1. a scribe to record your notes & final paragraph
           2. a respondent to the other group’s reading and questions
        2. Share the ideas you came up with individually & determine the particular issue you’d like to highlight and draw out + determine any information you might add/subtract in order to complicate the case—what variations might you add?
        3. Once you’ve finalized your case, send your scribe over & we’ll input your paragraph into our powerpoint (or submit by email)
     2. In big group, project onto screen—have grp mmbrs read out their respective cases to the class
     3. Return to small groups to think through the alternate case, asking standard questions of case analysis
     4. Big group—each group responds to the other group’s case (respondent plays role of questioner)
        1. Initial Questions: Do you see any ethical concerns presented in the case? What ought the characters to do?
        2. Reflection: After initial discussion, ask each group’s respondent to explain the basic premises and themes they hoped to draw out through their case, anything the other group’s analysis left out
        3. **What, if anything, would the group rewrite or change after hearing the other group’s responses? How might they better home in on their central concerns? Or would they highlight different concerns?**
  3. Discussion Board on Canvas to post any finished or unfinished case ideas developed during solo writing or group brainstorming

1. **Example Powerpoint Slide Content**
   1. Slide 1 (slide to be displayed during activity)
      1. Title: Guiding Questions
      2. Content:   
         Topic 1: Ethics of Private Fantasy

When do people become ethically responsible for indulging or expressing their sexual fantasies?

Are there fantasies that one ought not to have?

What is the relationship between fantasy, desire, and action?

Are private fantasies different from widely circulated, public fantasies?

Topic 2: Ethics of Virtual Sex/Public Fantasy

Is virtual sex ‘real’ sex?

If so, is virtual rape ethically equivalent to physical rape?

Does it matter if virtual sex is depicted/performed visually as opposed to textually?

What responsibility does an online archive or community have to curate out problematic or offensive content?

* 1. Slide 2 (example case made by Team 1 for Topic 1)
     1. Person A has private sexual thoughts about B, their stepchild, who is under 18. A doesn’t want to have these intrusive thoughts, because they know they’re wrong. A says they would never act on these thoughts.
  2. Slide 3 (example case made by Team 2 for Topic 2)
     1. Person A and Person B meet on an online platform. They interact several times, share some personal information with each other, and have a lot in common. After several days of chatting, they agree to meet on a private chatroom and have virtual sex. A few days later, B reveals that, during the virtual sex encounter, it wasn’t them using their account, but actually person C.