



# Chem!stry

Name: ..... (    )

Class: .....

Date: ..... / ..... / .....

## Case #5: Personal Values

The brightest of the graduate students has agreed to work with you for her Ph.D. You have a very interesting project, supported by the army's chemical warfare division, in mind for her to work on. Although the compounds are prospective chemical warfare agents, they also have some very interesting chemistry. The project will be difficult, and you are delighted to have such an excellent student to work on it. You describe the project to her, emphasizing the interesting chemistry and the generous funding. She tells you that she will not work on a project related to chemical warfare because it is against her personal values. How do you respond?

Taken from Kovac, J. (2004). *The Ethical Chemist: Professionalism and Ethics in Science*.

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### **Commentary: Personal Values**

This case illustrates the tension that can arise between personal values and research. Here the student does not want to be involved in a project related to chemical warfare, despite its other attractions. As her supervisor, you do not share these values, but you do want to have her working in your research group. The challenge for you is to affirm her values and find her an equally interesting and challenging project that she will be willing to work on.