

7:52 P.M.

FACILITATOR: What do you mean by "value clarification?"

P3: I mean that government does, and should, play a role in what is accepted and not accepted. Blowing someone's head off with a gun on TV is not what I want my kids watching after dinner and before bed. The Constitution is not a "free pass" for violent people and perverts. It is just a set of values that says we basically support free speech; it says nothing about supporting violence, hatred, and so on.

P9: I think the focus really has to be on schools and not on these larger issues. I think schools have to play a larger role in counseling students and identifying these problem kids earlier in the process. I know it is a family responsibility but families are breaking down, we live in a mass society now, and government, in this case the schools, have to take a stronger role.

P4: Yeah, I've remember hearing about a really successful program in Seattle called the Second Step program that taught little kids about taking turns, conflict resolution, and anger management. And, we all know that mental health funding is inadequate, right?

P8: I don't think that we are going to solve the problem tonight. But just talking about this has been helpful. I guess there are a lot of different views on the subject. I am surprised. But how can society possibly solve this problem when we all have such different views? Maybe the experts can sort things out. I don't know.

8:00 P.M.

FACILITATOR: I guess our time is up; thank you all for participating.

### Questions/Problems

*Note:* The professor may choose to have you answer all of these questions or only some, depending on time limitations, but please read all of them and think about the issues raised. If you were frustrated by participants seemingly getting off topic, and the way that issues and popular culture references that seem unrelated and often inappropriate to the serious issue at hand recurred throughout the transcript, you are not alone. Yet this is expected, since policy entrepreneurs use the media and more salient issues—such as school shootings—to address their pet problems and attempt to couple their solutions to the issue at hand. Some of our students reading this case struggle with the relevance of these competing stories as they try to understand school shootings as a political and policy issue. Some students feel that the facilitator should be more aggressive and cut off participants when they stray off topic. Other students contend that this is indeed (sadly) how citizens talk about school shootings and that the focus group facilitator should spend more time exploring why individuals talk about the issue in this manner, where they get their information, and so forth. Then again, as other students note, the school board wants practical advice, not theoretical exploration. What do you think?

### Conduct a Content Analysis of Problem Definitions

What are the major categories of respondents' views of the causes of school shootings? How are their views of causes related to policies? Are the respondents always consistent in their views? Do their facts check out?

- a. What type of method did you use to conduct your analysis (deductive, inductive, combination)?
- b. Did you look for manifest or latent content or both?

(continued)