The Development of Sociomoral Knowledge
A Cognitive-Structural Approach

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Abstract

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This dissertation organizes in a conceptually and historically coherent form the available knowledge on sociomoral development. The purpose in doing so is to bring the information into the mainstream of social work education and practice. Emphasis is placed upon the significance and compatibility of sociomoral development to the field of social work from interventive, psychological, and philosophical perspectives. It is viewed as congenial to ego psychology and as fitting within the ecosystems orientation being advanced by contemporary social work theorists. Its potential as a heuristic model for generating new and effective methods of intervention across a diverse range of settings and populations is elaborated upon.

The material synthesized in this dissertation is organized and presented within the cognitive-structural framework of Jean Piaget. At the heart of the synthesis, however, is the moral developmental psychology and philosophy of Lawrence Kohlberg. The six stages of moral development which Kohlberg's longitudinal research have led him to identify are elaborated upon at length. They are posited as universal stages in light

of the extant cross-cultural validation. Although only a relatively small number of people pass through all six stages, it is necessary that passage through each stage be in an unvarying sequence. Each stage signifies a particular conception of justice that is more differentiated and integrated than the previous one and is, hence, said to be more adequate for resolving competing claims between individuals or between an individual and the general welfare. In order to successfully achieve any given stage, it is necessary to first arrive at a corresponding stage of social perspectivism, which is the ability to take another's or a societal point of view. Therefore, the relevant work on perspectivism of Mead, Feffer, Flavell, and Selman is examined. The relationship between cognition and moral development, as well as between moral judgment and behavior, is also explored.

To provide depth and full comprehension of Kohlberg's work, the cognitive-structural developmental psychology of Piaget is formulated, followed by an extensive presentation of Piaget's early and only material on moral judgment, which serves as a point of departure for Kohlberg. An analysis is offered to differentiate areas of agreement and disagreement between Piaget's and Kohlberg's basic findings on moral development, the latter position representing a refinement and extension of the former.

One section of the dissertation is devoted exclusively to marshaling criticisms against Kohlberg's methodological practices

and the theory supporting his psychology and philosophy. A related section provides a comparative analysis of alternate approaches to moral development, focusing specifically upon psychoanalytic and social learning models. In effect, the presentation of opposing approaches, held to be viable by their proponents, also constitutes critical commentary.

Methods of intervention are classified into psychodynamic, interpersonal, and organizational categories. Assignment of an interventive method is more a matter of emphasis, however, than mutually exclusive categories.

It is urged that the Piaget-Kohlberg sociomoral model, based upon a cognitive-structural developmental psychology, be integrated into social work education. It would contribute to professional education a relevant, but neglected, body of knowledge and would also provide a means for facilitating the sociomoral advance of students. Most importantly, this organismic-environmental model of human development would provide new strategies of intervention that could be readily assimilated to the philosophy of contemporary social work practice.

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Introduction

Social work is predicated upon a respect for persons. It holds a conviction in the individual's self-determination and potential for growth. It seeks the psychosocial enhancement of people functioning within a just society. These beliefs and ideals will be found reflected in this dissertation. They will be treated as psychological realities and philosophical values.

The exposition in this dissertation is upon the development of sociomoral knowledge as conceived in the cognitive-structural tradition. Social work has struggled over the years to create an independent body of knowledge based upon its experience in serving a diversity of populations across a wide range of disparate settings. It has also done a yoe-man's job of eclectically selecting relevant theory for integration and application in its practice from an overwhelming amount of material amidst a perennial knowledge explosion. The development of sociomoral knowledge is a significant area from the behavioral sciences which has been neglected, however. Psychologically it is compatible with ego psychology and philosophically it meshes well with the profession's aspirations. Further, it has distinct viability from the standpoint of providing direction for intervention at the clinical level.

In this prelude I wish simply to provide an orientation

to the organization of the dissertation. All that follows is an amplification of these few words. Although each chapter may be read in isolation, the sequence of chapters builds a hierarchy of knowledge which reflects the character of the very subject of the dissertation. Therefore, maximum comprehension and appreciation is likely to follow from reading the chapters in order.

Because of the very nature of this subject area there is an inherent logic which strongly urges a particular approach. Sociomoral knowledge is embedded in cognitive-structural development. Its theoretical underpinnings are rooted in this field with its emphasis upon stages, interaction, adaptation, structure, differentiation, integration, hierarchy, and equilibration. Therefore, a general presentation of the theoretical foundation of cognitive-structural development is essential. This is also a requirement for comprehending sociomoral development because specific stages of such development cannot be achieved without the presence of the appropriately corresponding cognitive period; although the presence of any cognitive period does not assure a corresponding level of moral development.

Although this dissertation is not exclusively on the work of a single theorist, the central figure is Lawrence Kohlberg, the leading contemporary moral developmentalist. His work draws heavily upon Jean Piaget's genetic epistemology in general, as outlined in the first chapter, and specifically upon Piaget's only book on moral development, which

is discussed in the second chapter. The influences are unmistakable and a scholarly grasp of Kohlberg demands an acquaintance with the earlier theorist's research and observations on moral development, first published in 1932.

Similarly to what has been stated above in relation to cognitive-structural development, the construction of social knowledge is also a necessary, but not sufficient condition for moral reasoning. Egocentrism, the inability to take another's point of view, is present in varying forms at each level of development. As egocentrism at one level declines, a step forward is evident in the developing child's ability to take another's point of view. This increasing capacity for perspectivism undergoes qualitative advances in development as each new form of egocentrism is conquered. In order to adequately reason morally at any given level of a Kohlbergian stage the corresponding stage of role-taking ability must be achieved. It follows logically, therefore, that one cannot fully comprehend moral development without a knowledge of the acquisition of social role-taking skills and structures. The work of Mead, Flavell, Feffer and Selman will be examined in Chapter Three to provide the necessary orientation to this area.

The areas of cognitive development and role-taking ability logically dovetail into a full exposition of Kohlberg's highly researched position on moral development in Chapter Four. The six universal stages are examined in depth. Both their philosophical and psychological foundations are explained.

The developing nature of the "justice structure" is analyzed.

There are several major themes that dominate the literature on Kohlberg's research and these are examined at some length in Chapter Five. These themes are as follows: the relationship between moral stage and action, the hierarchical nature of moral stages, and the relationship between moral and cognitive development.

In Chapter Six a critique is presented on Kohlberg's methodology and theoretical position. I have attempted in the Chapter to do justice to the serious criticisms that have appeared in various quarters. Therefore, I have avoided offering point by point rebuttals on Kohlberg's behalf. In a very real sense, all of the Chapters preceding the criticism constitute a response.

To broaden the scope of approaches to moral development, I have presented in Chapter Seven the psychoanalytic and social learning viewpoints. Both of these psychologies are extensive and continue to be enlarged upon by contemporary figures. An exhaustive treatment of either would be beyond the parameters of this dissertation. Therefore, I have emphasized the two theorists whom I consider to be the major contributors. In the case of psychoanalysis this is Freud who founded that school of thought and is now deceased; while in the case of social learning theory I have chosen Bandura who has built upon a rich tradition of predecessors and who, very much alive, continues to effectively refine the model.

The two final chapters take a pragmatic turn. Various perspectives on intervention are described in the first of these. Interventive theories and practices at psychodynamic, interpersonal, and organizational levels are examined. The next and last chapter explores the salience of the Piaget-Kohlberg paradigm to social work practice in terms of application to diverse settings and problems. Its congruence with a contemporary ecosystems orientation is underscored. A closing suggestion is made urging that it be integrated into social work curricula both as a body of knowledge to be learned and as a process to facilitate the student's own sociomoral development.

It is an underlying premise of this dissertation that the sociomoral developmental system of Kohlberg, based upon Piaget's constructivist psychology, is greatly relevant to the lives of social workers and the people they are committed to helping. Therefore, the scope of the Piaget-Kohlberg model is presented through a conceptual organization that I hope the reader will find both personally and professionally meaningful. Comprehension of the model has the potential for transforming what we do and how we view it.

CHAPTER ONE

A. COGNITIVE-STRUCTURAL FOUNDATION

Structuralism and Epistemology

The heart of this dissertation, the work of Lawrence Kohlberg, pulsates within the body of cognitive-structural developmental psychology. In order to understand Kohlberg's contribution to sociomoral knowledge in depth, it is necessary that one be familiar with the historical and theoretical framework which encases it. In this chapter I will present salient aspects of the epochal work of Jean Piaget (1896-), from which Kohlberg has drawn so freely in pursuing his own innovative findings. The following chapter will concentrate exclusively on Piaget's theory of moral development, since it has served as the point of departure for Kohlberg's investigations into that field.

Both Piaget and Kohlberg adopt a theoretical position known as structuralism. A structuralist approach cuts across disciplines and has been applied to such wide-ranging areas as mathematics, biology, anthropology, sociology, linguistics, and literature. Two major sources on the subject of structuralism, Piaget and Gardner,¹ offer useful expositions which

¹Jean Piaget, Structuralism, trans. C. Maschler (New York: Harper & Row, 1971); Howard Gardner, The Quest for Mind (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973).

identify its essentials. Structuralism is a method of analyzing and understanding phenomena rather than a dogma of content. The structuralist scans the surface manifestations of things or events and penetrates below these to grasp underlying order and significance which form a meaningful pattern. The superficial detail and diversity that appear on the surface prove to be less significant than the coherent pattern of the deep-structures which give rise to what is overtly perceived. The submerged patterned relationships of whatever is under consideration are what constitute the sources of reality and account for observed regularities rather than do the atomized surface details. Emphasis is placed upon the self-regulating system of relationships and transformations amongst the interdependent elements comprising the totality or whole of a phenomenon.

Prominent amongst modern structuralists are Chomsky, a linguist, and Levi-Straus, an anthropologist. Both believe in the existence of deep universal structures within the human organism which account for formal patterned regularities in language and cultural behaviors, despite the manifest variation of peoples across the world and through time. However congenial this outlook may appear to be to the work of Jean Piaget, the Geneva genius breaks sharply from it on one extremely vital issue. The theories of Chomsky and Levi-Straus are agenetic. They do not deal with the genesis of those underlying structures which govern behavior. Piaget, to the contrary, sees the emergence of structures deriving from a

continual process of construction. This process is auto-regulated and is promoted by the organism's interaction with its environment.

Piaget is a genetic epistemologist before all else. Regardless of how valuable his contribution may be to developmental psychology, his own avowed primary aim has been to study the nature of knowledge and its origins. He chose to work with children because approaching his goal this way seemed to be the best means for achieving it. The work of Piaget and that of what has become known as his Geneva School is set apart from that of the famous epistemological philosophers who preceded him in that it rests upon extensive research. This is true despite the sometimes intimidating features of its theoretical components. In effect, he introduced a scientific approach to epistemology, with an emphasis upon the development of knowledge in each individual from birth through adolescence. Piaget has attempted to avoid the pitfalls of either empiricism or rationalism which great thinkers in the tradition of Western philosophy had previously fallen into. Rationalists, such as Plato, Spinoza, and Leibnitz formulated theories of knowledge which denied sensory experience as a source of reality. Instead they identified a priori mental activity divorced from sensory data as the true mode of acquiring knowledge. In fact, those familiar with Plato's illustration of the cave will recall that he went so far as to characterize sensorial impressions as having distracting and distorting effects upon the epistemic

subject. Embracing the empiricist tradition in epistemology are such theorists as Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, each of whom stressed the role of sensory experience in the acquisition of knowledge. Locke rejected the notion of innate ideas and likened the mind to a blank slate which receives impressions from experience in the environment, the ultimate source of ideas. Simple ideas thus derived from sensory data are combined into aggregates of complex ideas. These complex ideas do not follow in their formation any predetermined pattern of organization or sequence. In the work of Kant we find an attempt to reconcile these two divergent orientations to epistemological theorizing. While acknowledging a contribution to knowledge of sensory experience, Kant maintained that we do not come to know objective reality as it exists independently of the knowing subject. The explanation for this assertion resides in his contention that we have certain a priori intuitions and categories of mind which restructure and impose meaning upon the incoming data. Conceptions of time, space, and causality, for example, are innate to the human mind and these assure that experience will be ordered and processed in a particular way, exclusive of any alternative possibilities. The emphasis upon the knowing subject actively participating in construing knowledge from his experience justifies characterizing Kant as an intellectual forerunner of Piaget. In a later chapter we will see that Kant also plays a significant role in Kohlberg's theory of moral development. However, as with Chomsky and Levi-Straus,

Piaget makes a concentrated effort to differentiate his epistemological position from that of Kant's in one major respect. Piaget thoroughly rejects any notion of innate ideas or structures. Yet this in no way brings him into the empiricist camp.

Piaget is a radical constructivist who posits the continuous development of new structures out of old ones, which become more complexly organized into increasingly adaptive superordinate structures. Emergent cognitive structures usher in qualitatively different ways of thinking. Intellectual development is not a simple matter of quantitative increase in intelligence. Young children comprehend reality in ways that are qualitatively different from those in middle childhood, who in turn comprehend reality differently from adolescents. The child's cognitive developmental level, therefore, confers meaning upon experience, while at the same time limiting the scope and depth of that meaning. What Piaget has proposed is quite different from Skinner's radical behaviorism with its total exclusion of internal mediating variables and emphasis upon operant conditioning. It also differs essentially from the variety of stimulus-response learning theory models which, along with the work of Skinner, have their roots in associationistic Lockean epistemology. In recent years social learning theory, through the efforts of Bandura, Mischel and other leading psychologists, has expanded the behavioristic model to introduce a strong focus upon cognitive mediating variables and modeling in the learning process. Despite this

shift in behaviorism one should be careful to recognize that social learning theory lacks completely the developmental perspective that is the hallmark of Piaget's psychology. Further, while it allows that there occurs an internal processing of information, it does not posit the existence of structures. Hence, there is nothing to be developed over time.

What is a structure? Kohlberg explicitly states, "Structure refers to the general characteristic of shape, pattern, or organization of response rather than to the rate or intensity of response or its pairing with particular stimuli"¹. In elaborating further, he goes on to say, "... 'cognitions' are internally organized wholes or systems of internal relations, that is, structure. Cognitive structures are rules of processing information or for connecting experienced events"². The developing changes which structures undergo comprise the stage theory in Piaget's work, which shall now be examined.

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "Early Education: A Cognitive Developmental View", in Intellectual Development, ed. P. S. Sears (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1971), p. 104.

²Ibid.

Developmental Stages and Periods

Cognitive structural development progresses in an unvarying sequence. In the passage from one stage to the next, lower order structures are integrated into a higher order system of structural wholes. The rate of progress will vary from individual to individual, as well as from culture to culture. The demands of the environment and the nature of personal experience undergone by the interacting organism within it will greatly affect this rate of cognitive development. However, according to Piaget there is an inherent logic to cognitive-structural development which does not permit deviation from the sequence with which structures are found to evolve. Therefore, although general age trends can be identified in development, age cannot reliably be utilized as a predictive measure of stage in any given individual. To know what stage a child is capable of performing at, the investigator must make a cognitive diagnosis of that particular child. In fact, making an accurate stage diagnosis is an incredibly complex matter. The more one becomes familiar with the intricacies of the cognitive developmental field, the more this becomes apparent. For example, if a child does not perform at a given level during an assessment, he may possess the structural competence and yet not be exhibiting it for any number of reasons. Methodologically, this may be termed a false negative. Conversely, there have been established instances in which subjects ostensibly appear to demonstrate a

cognitive capability, which proves to be misleading upon further examination. This situation is known as a false positive. Smedslund and Flavell¹ have both provided fruitful explorations of this important area which would lead down many byways were it to be pursued further here.

Piaget's assertion of the universality of stages is sometimes misinterpreted to mean that all people will pass through all stages. The achievement of arriving at the final stage of cognitive development is by no means assured. All that can be accurately predicted from the theory is that as far as one has progressed, he will have followed the same sequence of development as anyone else who has reached the same end point.

There are four periods of development formulated in Piaget's work, each one marking a major qualitative advance over the child's previous way of knowing the world. Piaget has concentrated primarily upon the child's construction of knowledge regarding the physical world. In more recent years, while Piaget's indefatigable efforts continue unabated in the same direction, there has been an intensive surge of activity attempting to extend his cognitive-developmental approach to social and moral domains. The interrelatedness of all these efforts will become increasingly manifest in the course of this dissertation.

¹Jan Smedslund, "Psychological Diagnostics", Psychological Bulletin 71 (1969): 237-48; John H. Flavell, "Stage Related Properties of Cognitive Development", Cognitive Psychology 2 (1971): 421-53.

In his numerous expositions of developmental periods, Piaget is most respectful of whatever stage the child happens to be at. He does not view the child as simply being wrong when a response does not measure up to the highest level of cognitive functioning. Precisely because it is necessary to invariably pass through each stage if one is ever to arrive at the next, he accepts the child's present state as the natural way of knowing for that child at that time in his life. In fact, Piaget is somewhat amused at what he calls "The American Question" a recurrent theme whenever he finds himself lecturing in the United States. The question is about whether we can speed up development. It is not one that holds much interest for Piaget, himself. Most of Piaget's studies have been within what Hartmann would call "the average expectable environment". Given such an environment, it is reasonable to expect that development will progress fairly well. It does not follow in comparing two individuals of the same age at the same level of cognitive development that if one had arrived at that point earlier than the other he would necessarily be more intelligent, in a Piagetian sense, than the one who moved through the stages more slowly. Despite Piaget's serene position on this matter, there have been numerous training studies in which attempts have been made to accelerate development, conducted in the United States, and prominent members of the Geneva School have recently been active in such efforts as well.

~~The developmental periods presented below have been~~

elaborated upon by Piaget in innumerable works throughout his professional career extending over sixty years. Often he has devoted entire books to an exposition concentrating on only one period or cognitive dimension. Fortunately there exists a fairly recent and concise summary by Piaget and Inhelder and in addition there is now available for the first time a comprehensive anthology of his works.¹

The Sensorimotor Period

The sensorimotor period covers the phases of infancy ranging from birth to approximately eighteen months to two years. At birth the child exists in a virtual state of radical egocentrism. He experiences everything in his small universe as an extension of his own body and yet he completely lacks any sense of self. Piaget views the early infant as being in a state of narcissism, yet without there being any Narcissus. There is no distinction made between perceptual sensations and the stimuli in the environment from which they derive. Entering the world without any innate cognitive structures and equipped only with such primitive reflexes as sucking, grasping, and looking, the infant swiftly begins to explore his world. Gradually he begins to differentiate between his own body and that which exists beyond it. Reflexes encountering resistance from the material begin to adapt

¹Jean Piaget & Bärbel Inhelder, The Psychology of the Child, trans. H. Weaver (New York: Basic Books, 1969); Howard Gruber & J. Jacques Vonechè, eds. The Essential Piaget (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

to the environment. Interesting and novel chance encounters with objects are reproduced to satisfy curiosity and acquire greater mastery. These reinstated chance encounters are called circular reactions, a term Piaget borrowed from J. M. Baldwin, a precursor to genetic epistemology. Circular reactions are body-centered at first, as when the child attempts to reinsert his thumb into his mouth once it has fallen there by chance, but gradually they extend outward toward objects existing independently of the body, and eventually include the child's deliberate attempts to vary the chance encounter in an "experiment to see" what will happen.

The earliest cognitive structure is referred to as a scheme. Use of the term scheme is generally confined to the sensorimotor period. It is a construct inferred by observing the infant's overt behavior and it represents an abstraction of an entire class of similar patterned behaviors. Schemes generalize, differentiate, and integrate. For example, a grasping scheme is increasingly exercised across an ever-widening range of objects. In the process of generalizing this way it must attend to the unique features of each object it grasps. Hence, the basic scheme which is initially globular and undifferentiated becomes increasingly more differentiated in order to cope more adequately. In time, schemes which had been functioning independently become integrated into one smoothly coordinated scheme. As an illustration, we may observe the infant beginning to grasp an object which he brings before him while intensely exercising

his visual scheme, i.e. looking at the object. In the same manner, he may now exercise his visual scheme, looking intently at an object, as he brings to bear a concentrated effort to grasp it. Later in development many more complex examples of differentiation and integration occur. For example, young children may value many things indiscriminately in a globular fashion. In time they differentiate amongst them and proceed to integrate them into a hierarchy of values and preferences.

Implicit in the above description is Piaget's theory of the functional invariants. In contrast to structures, which undergo qualitative changes throughout development, functions remain the same regardless of age or stage. The two functional invariants are organization and adaptation. Because of his employment of these functions in his theory of cognitive development, Piaget's conception of human intelligence is understood to be rooted in a biological model. In adopting this framework, Piaget avoids the split between mind and body to be found in Cartesian dualism. For Piaget, human intelligence is simply a subset of biological functioning. Organization is essentially an internal affair in which more basic elements, schemes or structures, are integrated into hierarchical systems of relationships. This occurs with increasing complexity throughout development. Adaptation is an external matter in its emphasis upon the organism's interaction with the environment. It is comprised of two aspects, assimilation and accommodation, which are both present to

varying degrees in all mental activity. Assimilation is a conservative force which leads to interpreting reality in terms of the present level of structural development. Accommodation is progressive in that it forces change upon the structure to meet the demands of what is new and novel in the environment. Hence, an infant which attempts to grasp everything it can lay its hands on is getting to know things in one of the few ways at its command, through assimilation to the grasping scheme. However, when it comes upon objects with unaccustomed shapes the scheme must undergo change as it accommodates the unyielding resistance of novel properties in the unfamiliar object. It should not be overlooked that assimilation and accommodation also work in tandem when acting upon familiar objects, although the grounds for change are less fertile at such times.

The origins of intelligence as viewed by Piaget reside in the sensorimotor period. Although this is a time frame that precedes language and conceptual capability, there is a progressive logic to the infant's overt action that supports his view. Piaget's theorizing about this period is based upon extensive observations, made with painstaking meticulousness, of his own three children during their first two years of life. He has documented six stages of development constituting the period preceding representational thought. His comments upon these stages have been conceptualized into specific areas within which the infant is said to construct a knowledge of reality on a behavioral plane. The areas encompass intention-

ality or means-end behavior, object permanence, causality, space, and time. Many rich and innovative discoveries are detailed in Piaget's works covering these areas. However, a few summary remarks will suffice here. The infant advances from engaging in overt trial and error behaviors in which he attempts to reproduce interesting chance happenings to behavior in which the goal is set in mind at the outset and is efficiently achieved without the necessity of trial and error behaviors, as he can finally invent solutions to some problems through mental activity. Throughout the sensorimotor period the infant struggles to develop an adaptive object concept, which enables him to know firmly that an object continues to exist without benefit of his directly perceiving it. Although earlier he acts as if an object ceases to exist when removed from his vision, the infant fully comprehends that this is not the case by the time he arrives at the sixth stage. In the domain of causality, on a behavioral plane, he learns that he cannot produce effects at a distance by initiating magical actions such as kicking his legs to activate a rattle too far away for spatial contact. Ultimately at stage six, the infant can infer causes from observed effects and anticipate effects from contemplated causes. Regarding the subject of space, the stage six child has achieved much greater efficiency in his ability to devise alternate routes to attain his destination and return to the starting point. All of the preceding in one way or another entails an enhanced concept of time. Ranging across each sphere of development in the

sixth stage is the emergence of representational thought; the cognitive ability to re-present mentally that which is absent from perception. Lastly, the child is no longer solipsistic, now demonstrating a behavioral comprehension of his position as one object relative to a multiplicity of others with none being the sole and fixed center around which the others revolve.

The Preoperational Period

The preoperational period extends roughly from two years to six or seven years. It is generally divided into the pre-conceptual phase (2-4 yrs.) and the intuitive phase (4-7 yrs.). Emphasis has been upon the cognitive limitations of this period and it is traditionally construed, correctly I think, as a preparatory period paving the way to the emergence of logical thinking in the concrete operational period. Nevertheless, some of the most appealing aspects of child development occur during this period, as reported in the early work of Piaget.

Foremost in significance when chronologically approaching the preoperational period is the development of the semiotic function which stands at its threshold. The advent of representational thought undergirds the semiotic function, which is divided into signs and symbols. Signs are publicly shared meanings such as language, as well as mathematical and scientific notations. Symbols are private and personally motivated. They include images, play, and dreams. Signs bear

no resemblance to that which they stand for. In public language, for example, one word may be eliminated and another automatically substituted for it, as long as there is consensual agreement. It makes no difference. Contrary to this, symbols are idiosyncratic and do bear a resemblance to that which they stand for. For example, an image is specific to the person who maintains it and its material nature imitates the sensorial attributes of whatever it represents and has mentally reconstructed.

What Piaget has in mind in referring to the early pre-operational period as preconceptual is the lack of stability in the concepts the young child does entertain. The concepts are said to lack true individuality and true generality. Separate objects which are of the same class and observed at different times are often mistaken as identical. The pre-conceptual child does not yet possess a stable abstract concept of a whole class which subsumes an indefinite number of individual objects that are known to be separate from one another, but similar in that they share certain properties that accord them membership in a common class. At the same time the early preoperational child does not conserve identity of an individual. Surprising as it may appear to those uninitiated in Piagetian psychology, it can be demonstrated that very young children believe that individual identity can be lost or transformed by a change as superficial as a change of clothing in another person. Related to these preconceptual limitations is a feature of cognitive reasoning known as

transduction and it is quite prevalent in the child's thinking during the preconceptual phase. It is a mode of reasoning which, unlike either induction or deduction, goes from particular to particular. One aspect of transductive reasoning leads the child to conclude that if two objects are alike in some respects, then they are alike in all respects. Hence, a dog and a cat are alike in that they both are covered with hair and, therefore, a dog and a cat are the same. Preconceptual children reasoning transductively are also prone to think that if A causes B, then it necessarily follows that B causes A. Piaget tells of one child who has observed repeatedly that whenever father wants to shave he draws water. Hence the child concludes, without evidence, that drawing hot water requires that his father will be shaving. Underpinning transductive thinking is the absence of a hierarchical classification system and of any general laws to account for phenomena. An attempt is made to explain each event as an isolated one without applying any general rules of logic. This results in preoperational thought, especially during the early phase, being fraught with contradictions which do not at all disturb the little thinker.

During the intuitive phase thinking becomes somewhat more logical but there are still serious cognitive deficiencies. The ability to properly handle members of a simple class arrives, but the child cannot correctly handle the relationship between subparts of a whole class or between one subpart and the general class. For example, faced with a task involving twelve wooden

beads, ten of which are brown and two of which are white, the child is able to identify that all the beads are wooden and that they add up to twelve. However, when asked to compare the amount in the subset of brown beads to the amount in the whole class of wooden beads he will respond that there are more brown beads than wooden beads. The child is not able to simultaneously coordinate the two perspectives of class and subclass; he is consequently misled by the perceptual saliency of the brown beads, which leads him to a false conclusion.

The intuitive character of preoperational thought is well illustrated in the classic example of the rotating beads of different colors; let us say red, blue, and green. They are inserted into a tube in that order with the green on top while the tube is being held vertically. The child is asked to anticipate the position of the green bead through a series of rotations of 180 degrees each. The later preoperational child comprehends the question, in contrast to the earlier one who does not. He even answers the question correctly for several to many rotations, but eventually he falters. The child who has gone beyond the preoperational period entirely can consistently answer the question correctly for an indefinite period because he derives a rule for doing so based on the distinction between a half versus a total revolution of the tube. The intuitive preoperational child answers the question as long as he can maintain an image supplying information about the changing order of the beads. Eventually, however, he becomes confused and loses track of the image. Although clearly

more advanced over the preconceptual child, the imagistic-bound thinking of the intuitive child does not provide his thought with the mobility of the rule-maker he will soon become.

The concept of egocentrism is central to Piaget's entire system. What Piaget means by this rich and varied concept is the individual's inability to differentiate between subject and object. The egocentric knower does not distinguish between self and other. All of development may be seen as a series of conquests, at each major period, of the limitations imposed by egocentrism. Of particular relevance is the form of egocentrism during the preoperational period in which the knower is so embedded in his own perspective that he does not realize that the other may have an alternate, possibly even opposing, perspective. In Chapter three I will elaborate upon this aspect of development at considerable length. Egocentrism is also prevalent amongst preoperational thinkers in relation to the inanimate world. The child does not conceive of events occurring by chance and instead he ascribes psychological motives to natural events. His turn of mind is artificialistic, by which Piaget means that he construes natural events as having been created by man. The mountains and lakes, for example, were so created. He is also finalistic in his thinking so that he may be inclined to believe that the mountains were made for climbing and the lakes for swimming. He has a tendency to think animistically in which he ascribes such attributes as consciousness, will, purpose, and feeling to

inanimate objects. He is especially prone to do this with objects that exhibit motion or function. Piaget has catalogued as many as seventeen egocentric types of causality which he more aptly refers to as precausality. Realism is still another manifestation of egocentrism, one in which psychic content is externalized and viewed as if it truly had substantial existence. For example, the preoperational child believes that dreams originate from without and may be observed by another person in the same room. The ontological egocentrism described in the preceding comments declines gradually through a series of stages, as the child increasingly defines his own self in relation to the external world he comes to know with ever increasing adaptive prowess.

The preoperational child tends to absolutize relational notions such as left-right, above-below, and heavy-light. He thinks of these attributes as absolute entities, failing to recognize their relative character. Thus, heavy is an integral property of a bucket of water; the bucket of water is not something experienced as heavy for him, but light for father. In a similar view, the child has difficulty grasping the relativity of kinship systems: He may know that he has a brother, but not recognize that he is, himself, a brother to that person. The tendency to absolutize relative notions declines slowly and is eventually replaced with a genuine comprehension of their true nature sometime during the concrete operational period.

The Concrete Operational Period

A discussion of additional major features of pre-operational thought has been delayed for this portion of the exposition because they will best be illustrated by a comparative analysis to the concrete operations. Before entering into the comparison, however, some introductory comments on the concrete operations are in order. The emergence of concrete operational thinking brings the rigor of genuine logic to the developing child. Although he is not consciously aware of it, his thinking is now governed by a rich interlocking network of systematically organized cognitive structures. Thought processes no longer occur in isolation from one another and this fact contributes significantly to the elimination of contradictory explanations. Piaget has drawn from the fields of logic and mathematics to formulate a set of nine models, which he calls groupings that form a cognitive unconscious promoting the advances of this period. As with each cognitive epoch, however, there is a serious limitation. The logical thought of this period can only be carried out upon concrete objects either being presently perceived in the environment or, in some cases, manipulated through mental representation. In either case the operational activity is confined to the familiar and known; it cannot be carried out on a highly abstract and purely hypothetical plane.

Piaget's logico-mathematical model is not an etherial construction of Piaget's own mind unrelated to the activities of the child. In fact, he derived it only after countless

investigations of children's cognitive performance and through analysis of the explanations proffered by them to account for their actions. It is Piaget's contention that the mode of information processing exhibited by the children studied appeared as if it flowed from the model he devised. The most significant areas explored in relation to this period involved tasks of conservation, classification, seriation, number, and transitivity.

Conservation, the invariance concept, is the ability to recognize that certain fundamental properties of an object remain the same even though the object is subject to alteration. The invariant properties are of a quantitative nature and the changes involve a deformation in shape, which results in a previously observed perceptual equivalence, to a compared standard, being destroyed. For example, a child has before him three beakers. Two are the same size and contain an equal amount of water. They are designated A and B. They are low and wide in comparison to a third beaker designated B1, which is narrow and high. The liquid from B is poured into B1 and the child is asked whether there is now the same amount in A as there is in B1 or if one beaker contains more than the other. A concrete operational child will give a conservation response, stating that the amount remains the same. A non-conserving preoperational child will fail to do so, pointing out that there is more liquid in B1 since the water level is higher than that of A. Probing further with the conserving child it is discovered that he will advance one or more of

three explanations to justify his conclusion. Two of these explanations are categorized as reversibility operations. One is reciprocity, in which the child explains that although the liquid in B1 is taller, it is also narrower. This operation is alternately called a compensatory mechanism by the Geneva School, emphasizing that a change in one direction is compensated for by a change in another direction. The other reversible operation is negation or inversion and is contained in the child's statement that since the liquid in B1 could be poured back into B, at which point there would be the same amount in A and B, there must now be an equal amount in A and B1. It can be seen in this supporting argument that the child is capable of a mental action which facilitates his ability to infer a correct conclusion. It is not necessary for him to actually pour B1 back into B. The preoperational child can handle empirical reversibility, recognizing that an equivalence in amount is reestablished between A and B, when B1 is actually returned to B, but he cannot perform the operation mentally. The third type of supporting argument offered by the conserving child is called an identity operation. In effect, the child asserts that nothing has been added or subtracted from the original quantity and, therefore, the amount remains the same.

An examination of the cognitive features differentiating conservers from nonconservers will assist in recognizing the contrast between concrete operational and preoperational thinkers. It should be noted first of all that the preoperational child

is perceptually bound. The salience of the high water level in B1 is so distracting that he does not reason beyond it. This is in marked contrast to the concrete operational child who is not misled by mere perceptual cues. His newly constructed operational system enables him to process the information beyond appearances to a deeper reality. The non-conserving child centers on one aspect of reality to the exclusion of others. Hence, he centers entirely upon height in the illustration given, whereas the conserver decenters, taking into account both height and width simultaneously. Preoperational thought is static as the child takes into account only end states, such as water levels before the pouring and then again after the pouring. To the contrary, concrete operational thinking attends to the intermediary change that is taking place during the pouring as well, hence recognizing that as the water is getting higher it is also getting narrower. For this reason it is said that his thinking is transformational rather than static. Finally, because the preoperational child cannot mentally grasp the effect of pouring B1 back into B, his thought process is characterized as irreversible. In contrast, the older child who can perform this operation mentally possesses thought processes that are characterized by reversibility.

There is a *décalage* in the development of conservation which spans several years. A *décalage* is literally an unwedging or uncoupling. Applied to conservation it means that the emerging cognitive structures promoting a comprehension

of invariance of amount, which have been under discussion, do not automatically facilitate an understanding of quantitative relationships being conserved in all content areas. Conservation of substance or amount usually appears at about age six or seven. However, conservation of weight does not arrive until about eight or nine and of volume not until eleven or twelve. Because it deals with an invariant sequence of development within the same period of the same cognitive capability across different contents it is called a horizontal *décalage*. (Vertical *décalages* will be taken up in the discussion on classification.) Conservation is perhaps the most frequently researched of all Piagetian tasks. It is impressive that children all over the world, without any specific training, acquire the ability to conserve. In addition, they all tend to give the same supporting explanations that have been described and to acquire conservation of substance, weight, and volume in precisely that order. Findings such as are to be found in this type of cross-cultural research tend to strengthen the claim of the Geneva School regarding the universality of cognitive-structural development. Dasen¹ has recently edited a collection of papers which amplifies the contemporary state of cross-cultural investigations and explores the role of culture in cognitive development.

¹Pierre Dassen, ed. Piagetian Psychology: Cross Cultural Contributions (New York: Gardner Press, 1977).

An individual without classification competence would be highly inefficient in effecting problem solving strategies. The ability to classify enables us to impose order upon an otherwise bewildering diversity of phenomena and to grasp both the similarities and dissimilarities amongst things. Although complex systems of classification are constructed in the concrete operational period, their roots are observed by Piaget in the primitive actions of the infant. For example, an infant upon coming across an object which can be shaken, such as a rattle, picks it up and shakes it. He has assimilated it to his sensorimotoric scheme of shaking which demonstrates an act of recognizing the rattle as a thing to be shook. Piaget refers to this as an act of practical classification, just as more generally he refers to all of sensorimotor development as an expression of practical intelligence. During the early part of the preoperational period children between the ages of two and four form graphic collections when asked to classify a group of diverse objects. Given a collection of toy objects a child is likely to put things together in a manner that suggests a functional relationship rather than to separate and join objects according to a simple defining principle which is utilized clearly and consistently. For example, in a collection of items he is found to select a tree and a house to go together because one offers shade for the other, rather than to put trees in one pile and houses in another, as the older child or adult would do. Alternately, as he begins to put certain objects in one

pile he may begin to discern the outline of a train and will then continue selecting objects from the master group that will further the building of a train. As has been noted previously, the intuitive child between the ages of four and seven can handle single classes. Hence, he can put all the circles in one pile or all the blue objects in another. However, he does not yet have the cognitive structures which enable him to cross multiply so that he can classify the blue circles in one group. The concrete operational child does develop the competence to cross multiply and this undergirds his capacity to handle a four-celled classification. In other words, from amongst a heterogeneous collection he can separate blue squares, blue circles, red squares, and red circles each into a separate section.

In the late phase of the preoperational period the child is capable of classifying a collection of objects in a way that suggests an understanding of nesting hierarchies, although upon questioning it is revealed that he does not comprehend, despite his behavioral accomplishment. For example, confronted with a collection of geometric objects he will first assemble two groups, putting all the rectilinear objects in one and all of the curvilinear in another. He then further subdivides the two piles separating squares and triangles from within the rectilinear class and separating circles and half-circles from within the curvilinear class. In so doing he has demonstrated a mastery of intension and extension. Intension involves the identification of an attribute which defines an

object as qualifying for membership in a class. Extension signifies the full range of objects which possess the attribute gaining each of those objects entry into the class. The problem is that even though the child at this stage can assemble what are flawless classes, he does not understand the relationships amongst them until he develops a class inclusion structure, which does not occur until the concrete operational period. The inclusion structure promotes an understanding of the difference between all and some, which confuses the younger child. When asked a series of questions along these lines, the younger child will demonstrate that he thinks there are more squares than rectilinear objects and more rectilinear objects than total geometric objects. Since the preoperational child does not decenter he cannot simultaneously compare part to whole. Because he lacks reversibility in his thinking he does not have the mobility of thought to know that squares added to triangles in this illustration result in the rectilinear class and that the process can be negated such that squares subtracted from rectilinear objects yield triangles. Symbolically, $A + A_1 = B$; $B - A = A_1$. It is precisely because he can decenter and perform the mental operation of negation or inversion that the concrete operational youngster does understand class inclusion.

It has been observed that despite the qualitatively different ways of knowing which characterize each period examined thus far, there have been advances made in the

construction of ever more complex classification structures. This will continue into the formal operational period where it is found that the concrete operational child's ability to handle a 2x2 or four-way classification structure will expand into the capability to generate all of the sixteen possible combinations of those four variables. The phenomenon of classification competence developing across cognitive periods is an example of a vertical *décalage*. Unlike horizontal *décalages* which occurs within periods, vertical *décalages* occur across periods. A vertical *décalage* involves qualitatively different structures but there is a similarity from one plane to another with regard to the content to which they apply. A growing child may classify the same objects from one period to the next, but because of structural changes he will do so in qualitatively different ways. On the other hand, in a horizontal *décalage* the structures remain essentially the same, but are applied across different content in an invariant sequence, as in the case of conservation.

Competence at seriation is another middle-childhood achievement. As with all cognitive advances it also has its roots in the sensorimotor period. Basically, it is the ability to comprehend the relationships between a series of gradations ordered in a systematic progression from smallest or least intense to largest or most intense. In his experiments on the subject Piaget asked children to assemble a collection of ten different sized sticks so that there would be an orderly array going from smallest to largest.

The children go through various stages ranging from the youngest who do not understand the task to concrete operational children who perform the activity with the most efficient strategy. The late preoperational subjects do succeed in arranging the sticks in proper order, but they do so only after several trial and error efforts. The hallmark of those in middle-childhood is their demonstrated ability to select the appropriate stick each time without error. This entails a mental operation in which the child can scan the remaining sticks to select the one that is larger than all those that have already been chosen and yet smaller than all others that remain. It involves reciprocal relation in which he decenters recognizing that B is greater than A, but smaller than C, D, etc. The relations involved are known as ordinal signifying that concern is with the magnitudes of lesser or greater than. They are not concerned with specific or absolute relationships as in cardinal numbers. Reciprocity is also present in that as B is recognized as greater than A, reciprocally A is recognized as less than B. Lastly, the concrete operational child has mastered empirical transitivity. Comparing A to B and then B to C he can conclude that A is less than C or, reciprocally, that C is greater than A. To do this it is not necessary for him to observe A and C together.

Competence with number is itself an achievement of the concrete operational period. Prior to this time the child lacks the ability to conserve number. The capacity to do so

generally arrives at about six or seven years. The inability to conserve is readily illustrated by a simple experiment in which a child arranges two rows of discrete objects, such as pennies, in one-to-one correspondence. Hence, directly under each penny in the top row is a penny from the bottom row. It is then established that there is an equal amount in the two rows. Subsequently the bottom row is condensed and the child is asked if there is still the same amount. The younger child centering upon the greater length of the top row and overlooking the compensating density of the bottom row will pronounce the longer row as containing more pennies. When empirical reversibility is enacted to restore the bottom row to its original state, the child automatically shifts back to stating that there is now an equal amount in each row. It is not until the concrete operational period that the child can invoke mental operations to conserve number. What is particularly striking and instructive about this illustration is that the nonconserving child can actually count the number of pennies in each row after the bottom one has been condensed and still conclude that there is more in the top row. Such is the force of perceptual salience in preoperational thought! The mental operations of middle childhood, however, perform their information processing task without perceptual distraction.

In Piaget's view the ability to comprehend the nature of number is essentially a synthesis of classification and seriation structures. He adopts this position on both

logical and empirical grounds. Logical analysis reveals that to understand number one must invoke an inclusion structure. For example, take the number eight. Accidental properties such as shape or color of particular things are irrelevant to this analysis. A set of any eight units form a class of eight. Each single unit or any combination of the subparts of the class will add up to something less than the total class of eight. Any union of subparts subtracted from the total class will leave the balance of subparts. Any addition of all the subparts in whatever combination will yield the total class of eight. Further, in understanding the number eight one must realize that it is simultaneously greater than seven and less than nine. Therefore, it is a specific case of the general structure operative in seriation in which B is recognized as greater than A, but less than C. The integration of classification and seriation in understanding number is a relatively complex example of the functional invariant known as organization. The empirical argument advanced by Piaget is based on the observation that a comprehension of number never precedes the development of classification and seriation, seeming always to emerge only as these two other cognitive abilities are becoming relatively crystalized.

It is on the basis of the preceding material and a variety of related experiments that Piaget constructed the complex logico-matematical model of the concrete operational period. Although it will not be elaborated upon here,

Flavell¹ offers a commendable exposition of the model in his classic text on Piaget's work. Sigel and Hooper² have edited an extensive collection of research papers which focus on this important period of the child's cognitive development.

In summary, thinking during this period has become freed from the perceptual rootedness of preoperational thought. It is now decentered, transformational and reversible. These attributes derive from mental operations which are interrelated systems of interiorized actions. Cognitive acts no longer are carried out in isolation and this fact eliminates the tendency toward contradictory statements existing side by side. Although capable of rigorous logical thought the child's thinking is egocentric in that it is limited to the familiar objects of his everyday world.

The Formal Operational Period

The formal operational period represents the fullest flowering of cognitive development in the Piagetian system. It generally reaches its threshold at about eleven or twelve years, but does not become stabilized until fourteen or fifteen. Currently it is being suggested that this period may be sub-divided into two parts. The scope of the formal operational thinker is broadened to encompass the full range of the possible, with reality being merely one subset of this.

¹John Flavell, The Developmental Psychology of Jean Piaget (New York: Van Nostrand Co., 1963).

²Irving E. Sigel and Frank H. Hooper, ed. Logical Thinking in Children (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968).

Mental operations are no longer confined to familiar concrete objects in the environment, but are free to soar throughout the hypothetical universe. Where previously the object of thought were those known things in the environment it is now the case that one's own thought becomes the object of thought. Instead of using only single propositions to make a statement about reality, such as "This ball is red," formal operational thought is interpropositional, hence deals with the logical relations between two propositions irrespective of reality. In elaborating upon this point Flavell states, "The less mature mind looks only to the factual relation between one proposition and the empirical reality to which it refers; the more mature mind looks also or instead to the logical relation between one proposition and another".¹

Interpropositional reasoning may be completely detached from any content and, hence is purely formal. For example, one type of logical relation takes the form that if x is present then y is present, but that if y is present then it does not follow that x is present. This is a pure case of formal reasoning. It makes no difference what x and y refer to. The logical relationship involved is one of many possible types. It may or may not prove to be true when tested out upon actual objects in the real environment. Confronted with

¹John Flavell, Cognitive Development (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1977), p. 105.

a set of materials and the problem of discovering cause and effect relationships, the formal operational thinker can invoke hypothetical deductive reasoning to resolve the problem. He utilizes the scientific method of developing an hypothesis and then proceeding to test it out by holding all variables constant except one to observe its effect. He performs this systematically with each variable. In one of the many experiments Piaget had children conduct, the logical relation presented above proved to obtain. In this particular experiment the children had to discover what it was that caused the bending of rods which were riveted over a basin of water. Several variables came into play such as length of rod, material it was made of, whether it was thick or thin, and its shape such as round or square. Another variable was the fact that a set of differing weights were available to place at the end of the horizontal rods. Children of varying ages participated in this experiment. Their problem solving strategies became increasingly more efficient with age. However, it was only the adolescent subjects who evidenced hypothetico-deductive reasoning in applying the scientific method. They discovered that a long rod would cause bending, but that the presence of bending did not necessarily indicate that there was a long rod. This was due to the fact that bending could also be caused by a heavy weight being placed on a short rod. Such a relationship between length and bending constitutes a sufficient, but not necessary condition. It is a logical relationship

referred to quite simply as that of implication. In other words, this turns out to be an actual case of the previous example involving interpropositional thought, i.e. if x, then y; but not if y, then x. A variation of this example is reciprocal implication, a causal relationship in which it follows that if x, then y and if y, then x. In a separate experiment formal operational thinkers effectively discovered precisely this relationship when attempting to determine the cause of rapid oscillation of a pendulum. Amongst the several variables only a short string, on the pendulum, would cause rapid movement. Therefore, it followed that whenever such movement would be observed it could logically be inferred that there must be a short string, as only that variable could cause such an effect. This constitutes a necessary and sufficient condition.

Piaget has designed two powerful models to explain formal operational thinking. One is the sixteen binary operations model. It is comprised of sixteen possible types of causal relationships which can logically be derived between two propositions. Reciprocal implication and implication are two of those possibilities and there exist fourteen others. In symbolic terms, let P and Q represent the two propositions. The negation or falsity of these propositions are represented by placing a horizontal sign above them, as follows: $\bar{P}$ and $\bar{Q}$. In modern logic the sixteen possibilities can be rendered into truth tables. An

incomplete truth table looks like this:

	P	$\bar{P}$
Q		
$\bar{Q}$		

Of the four possibilities in the four-celled truth table above there are sixteen possible combinations, ranging from all four cells being marked true to all four cells being marked false. To illustrate, two truth tables, one representing reciprocal implication and the other implication, will be presented below.

	P	$\bar{P}$	
Q	T	F	P=Short
$\bar{Q}$	F	T	Q=Fast

Reciprocal Implication
(Pendulum Experiment)

	P	$\bar{P}$	
Q	T	T	P=Long
$\bar{Q}$	F	T	Q=bending

Implication
(Rod Experiment)

The way to read the truth table is to note whether the combined propositions may logically be verified in reality or not. For example, in the pendulum experiment it will never be that one will discover a short string and a not fast or slow movement. Stated more generally, the causal connection of reciprocal relationship does not ever include an instance in which propositions P and $\bar{Q}$ are true. Hence an "F" for false has been placed in the lower left quadrant. To cite another example, in the rod experiment it is possible to have a not long or short rod and still have bending. In formal terms, it is possible in the causal relationship of implication to verify an instance of $\bar{P}$ and Q. Therefore, a "T" for true has been placed in the upper right quadrant.

Particularly pertinent to the above material is a comment by Gruber and Vonechè in which they state,

The point of this combinatorial system is that the operations in question form a closely knit system in which passage from one element of the structure to another is always possible... Thanks to this closed system of transformations the preadolescent becomes capable of inserting real cases in the set of all possible cases that can be generated logically. Reality has become a special case of possibility. The system of all possible combinations forms the logic of propositions...¹

By "preadolescent", Gruber and Vonechè mean the child on the threshold of formal operations.

The second great model advanced by Piaget to explain formal operational thought is the INRC structure. It is a highly integrated cognitive structuration of what has preceded in development. Piaget's account of the model is extraordinarily complex. I shall attempt here to present a simplified version of Piaget's specific application to the equilibrium problem. In this structure I = identity, N = negation, R = reciprocity, and C = correlation. A balance and a set of weights are used in this experiment. The point of the problem is to see if the child understands the set of relationships which obtain between the weights on both sides of the balance and the distance of the weights on each side from the center. Involved in dealing effectively with this problem is proportionality and the integration of both forms of reversibility. These are formal operational structures

¹Howard Gruber and J. Jacques Vonechè, eds. The Essential Piaget (New York: Basic Books, 1977) p. 395

offering a high range of power. Their conceptual sophistication are especially apparent when compared to the strategy of the young preoperational child who attempts to restore an imbalance of the scale by pushing down with his hand the end that is tipped upward. The identity is affected by adding weight to one side of the scale. Since this disrupts the balance, the problem is to restore it. The action can be negated by simply removing the weight that had been added. This, of course, restores the original balance. Reciprocity is an action that will restore the balance by compensating for the added weight rather than by negating it. Reciprocity neutralizes the effect of adding weight. By definition, the correlation is the inverse of the reciprocal. It has the same effect as would the adding of weight, but does not involve actually adding weight. If weight is added to one side the effect can be neutralized by moving the weight on the opposite side outward from the center of the balance. The inverse or correlation of this reciprocal action would be to move the same weight inward rather than outward. This correlation action has the same effect as adding weight on the opposite side would have had. An alternate way of achieving a reciprocal effect is to move the weight that has been added closer to the center. This neutralizes the effect of having added the weight. The inverse or correlation would be to move the original weight outward from the center without adding any more weight. In doing so an imbalance will be effected as would have been the case had weight been added. Conversely, the correlation of

removing weight from the original amount would be to move the original weight closer to the center instead of actually removing any weight. A simple reciprocal operation to adding weight on one side would be to add the same amount on the other side at an equal distance from the center. The inversion or correlation to that operation would be to remove weight from the opposite side from which one might have added the weight to create an imbalance. Either adding weight on one side or removing it from the other will produce the same type of imbalance. What can be seen from this analysis is that I and C will produce the same result. Applied to the scale problem, there will be an imbalance created whether one adds weight or performs the inverse of the reciprocal. On the other hand N and R will also produce the same effect as one another. Whether one removes the added weight or performs an operation that neutralizes it, the balance that has been disrupted by adding weight would be restored. In the concrete operational period the two reversible operations are applied separately; negation to the classification task and reciprocity to the seriation task. In the formal operational period negation and reciprocity are integrated into one unified system. For example, the adolescent thinker in resolving the equilibrium problem realizes that he can remove some of the added weight and move the remaining weight somewhat closer to the center. There is a recognition of the proportionate relationship that an increase in weight and decrease in distance is equal to a decrease in weight and an

increase in distance. In the INRC structure each of the operations is defined in relation to the others. It is only at the formal operational period that the young person fully understands the subtlety and multiplicity of these inter-related connections and is able to apply this comprehension across a wide range of problems. The INRC structure is actually a very abstract model of operational thought even though its application here has been to a tangible illustration. In fact, Piaget construes it as being isomorphic with the sixteen binary operations model.

Egocentrism during the preoperational period receives more attention from cognitive developmentalists than at any other period. Nevertheless, it should not be overlooked that each new period brings with it a variation of egocentrism to be conquered. The formal operational period is no exception. Blessed with a new found capacity to generate a multiplicity of possible worlds, including a utopian one, the adolescent thinker fails to differentiate between these grand ideas and the perspective of others upon whom he wishes to impose his reforms. It is through peer interaction, so intensified during adolescence, that the new formal operational thinker encounters confrontation and challenge as he avidly communicates his ideas. This social process has the felicitous effect of forcing the youngster to de-centrate and move back into the domain of reality where he must live his everyday life. Even more significant, however, is the work-role which the adolescent eventually enters.

Piaget states,

"The focal point of the decentering process is the entrance into the occupational world or the beginning of serious professional training. The adolescent becomes an adult when he undertakes a real job. It is then that he is transformed from an idealistic reformer into an achiever. In other words, the job leads thinking away from the dangers of formalism back into reality".¹

The unfortunate adolescent who fails to make the return and becomes lost in a schizophrenic universe is the focus of attention in a brief work by Lidz.²

In view of the fact that Piaget does not posit the existence of any cognitive periods beyond the formal operations, it is especially germane to raise the issue of how universally they are to be found. First, it should be recognized that even those who have arrived at this period do not always function with benefit of it. Even a scientist whose everyday livelihood depends upon employing the essentials of formal operational thinking in the laboratory may not utilize it in other areas of his life with any great consistency. Indeed, many of the demands of everyday life can be met adequately with the use of concrete operational thinking.

¹Ibid., p. 441.

²Theodore Lidz, The Origin and Treatment of Schizophrenic Disorders (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

Findings suggest that in Western countries approximately fifty percent of adults attain the formal operational period. There are serious methodological difficulties in testing members of non-Western countries. Nevertheless, some work carried out in this direction indicate relatively slow cognitive development and instances of entire groups lacking in formal operations when the population has been exposed to neither modern technological advances nor the influences of Western education. Piaget¹ has recently raised the question of the generality of formal operations across all contents by those individuals possessing the necessary structural development. Theoretically, precisely because they deal with form and not content, the operations should have wide-ranging applicability across all areas. Piaget has acknowledged, however, that the individual's aptitudes and professional specializations influence the content areas to which he will be likely to apply formal operational thinking. An excellent current overview of this period is found in a presentation by Neimark.²

¹Jean Piaget, "Intellectual Evolution from Adolescence to Adulthood", Human Development 15 (1972):1-12.

²Edith D. Neimark, "Intellectual Development During Adolescence", in Review of Child Development Research, ed. F. D. Horowitz, Vol. 4 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), pp. 541-94.

The Equilibration Model

Piaget's conception of intelligence is essentially one of adaptation. The human organism interacting with its environment strikes a proper balance between assimilation and accommodation to achieve adaptive intelligence. However, since structures are not innate, the existing cognitive structures at any given time are frequently encountering experiences in the environment which they cannot adequately cope with. At the point of such an encounter a disequilibrium occurs that results in a structural modification, ultimately a reorganization to a higher level of cognitive structuration, leading to greater adaptiveness. New encounters with moderately novel events in the environment reinitiate the same cycle which occurs repeatedly throughout the course of cognitive growth. The process of restoring equilibrium at a higher level of structural reorganization and greater adaptiveness is called equilibration. It is this process which accounts for stage transitions and the gradual evolution through qualitatively different ways of information processing and acquiring knowledge in Piaget's theory. He does not ignore the traditionally cited factors in development. These are experience with the the physical world, heredity and neurological maturation, and social transmission. However, such factors are not sufficient in themselves and must rely upon the fourth factor of equilibration which serves as a coordinating

facilitating force. Piaget¹ discussess the process of equilibration in terms of strategies for maximizing gains and minimizing losses. Confronted with an experience it cannot assimilate, it is costly in the short-range for the organism to undergo the effort necessary to invent more adequate structures, but the long-range advantage to be attained from such an effort maximizies the overall gains. This is true in infancy and throughout all development. Piaget points out that it is equally so in the affective and cognitive domains. Although more costly in the short-range for the infant to maintain object relations with those in his environment, he will mitigate his preoccupation with sucking and sphincter activities to achieve the balance of long-range gains to be had by doing so. Gains are maximized in the long run by giving up the immediate advantage of the more primitive developmental stage in favor of accepting the cost of development to the next more probable stage. The insertion of an example emphasizing the affective domain rather than cognitive is somewhat misleading for Piaget does not believe in a dichotomous split between the two any more than he would posit a split between biology and intelligence. It is his strong conviction that every mental act has both

¹Jean Piaget, "The General Problems of the Psychobiological Development of the Child", Discussions on Child Development, J.M. Tanner & B. Inhelder, Eds. Vol.4 The Proceedings of the Fourth Meeting of the World Health Organization Study Group on the Psychobiological Development of the Child, (New York: International Universities Press, 1960), pp. 3-27.

a cognitive and affective component which are indissociable even though he has emphasized the cognitive aspect throughout his professional career. Interest is viewed as an affect which serves as an energizer to motivate cognitive activity. Cognitive structures serve to channel affect. For example, it is not until adolescence that many young people will develop emotional attachments to ideas and ideals. This is because the concrete level of middle childhood reasoning does not yet open up access to these more abstract realms. The reorganization to a more complex cognitive structural system of formal operations broadens the field of application and, hence, permits affect to be channeled toward ideas and ideals.

Equilibration is a self-regulating activity. The organism acting upon the environment experiences negative feedback that is incongruent with the present level of structural development. The ensuing disequilibrium motivates structural change to the point at which the novel information can be assimilated, whereby equilibrium is restored. It should be evident that this process of increasingly greater adaptiveness is not predicated upon mere conformity or adjustment. Each level of cognitive reorganization widens the scope of mental activity, frees the organism from earlier constraints, and promotes greater mastery of reality. All of this is to say that with such development occurring the individual achieves greater competence and command over himself and the environment. The values and morals that will infuse this enhanced freedom are, in large measure, the subject of this dissertation.

Some examples of feedback inducing disequilibrium may prove instructive at this point. Illustrations are pervasive throughout the work of Piaget and others of the Geneva School. In one experiment Piaget describes the activity of an infant who pulls a support, which holds a desired object, toward himself. To test whether the infant truly has the scheme which promotes understanding of the relationship between object and support, the position of the object is varied. If the infant does not possess the scheme, he may still be observed pulling the support toward himself even when the object has been placed alongside the support rather than upon it. A facial expression of surprise reveals that the child had an expectation that the object would move toward him when he pulled the support. This misexpectation induces disequilibrium and leads to further grappling with the environment in order to resolve the problem and restore equilibrium. The restoration of equilibrium is predicated upon the development of a new cognitive structure which enables the infant to understand the relationship between support and object. The ineffective strategy of pulling the support when the object is alongside it will now be eliminated in favor of the effective action of pulling it only when the object rests upon it. The new structure permits differentiation between the two states of the object in relation to the support and is clearly more adaptive. Although the state of incongruity or discrepancy between structure and experience may be viewed as one of tension, it would be a misplaced emphasis to con-

strue the equilibrating process as having the primary goal of tension reduction. The reduction of tension is a secondary byproduct of the natural surge toward greater adaptiveness. Proponents of the Geneva School have devised a variety of ingenious experiments to induce cognitive conflict in training experiments with the aim of accelerating growth. One method is to ask the preoperational child to predict the level that liquid will attain when being poured from a short and wide beaker to a tall and thin one. The idea is that a disconfirmation of the prediction will generate surprise and lead to a resolution based upon conserving judgments. Still another method is to ask a preoperational child confronted with twelve wooden beads comprised of two different colors to place all the beads in the set of one color on one side and all the wooden beads of the total set on the opposite side. It is anticipated that the logical impossibility of dividing the beads this way will induce a cognitive conflict and lead the child to decenter as he is forced to differentiate between the whole and its subparts while coordinating the two perspectives simultaneously. In general, training experiments based upon this kind of strategy have met with greater success than alternate approaches. An important qualifier, however, must be inserted here. The tendency is for those subjects who already proved to be at an intermediary stage during the pretest in relation to the experimental task to exhibit the most significant gains at the time of the posttest. This is interpreted to signify that one's present level of cognitive

development imposes meaning upon stimuli presented by the environment; an interpretation clearly in opposition to traditional stimulus-response learning theories. The most contemporary position emanating from the Geneva School on these training studies are to be found in a work by Inhelder, Sinclair, and Bovet.¹ Piaget² has recently written a book in which he offers the most thorough exposition of his equilibration theory available thus far.

Conclusion

As it interacts with the environment over time from birth onward the human organism undergoes a progression of decentrations through which the knower becomes increasingly less egocentric and more objective. Acting upon the environment he invents cognitive structures for more adaptive knowing. The practical intelligence of the sensorimotor period is interiorized as representational thought emerges. Continuing to act upon the environment the growing child constructs complex interrelated mental action systems for processing information. The external world does not impose meaning upon the person, but through assimilation to one's developmental

¹Barbel Inhelder, Hermine Sinclair, & Mogali Bovet, Learning and the Development of Cognition, trans. S. Wedgwood (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).

²Jean Piaget, The Development of Thought: Equilibration of Cognitive Structures, trans. A. Rosin (New York: The Viking Press, 1975).

level and the process of auto-regulation the person confers meaning upon the environment. Hence, acts of knowing involve the process of mental transformations.

The present chapter of this dissertation is the cornerstone of all that follows. Though the connections may not be immediately apparent, it is my conviction that an in-depth comprehension of sociomoral knowledge cannot be achieved without a sound grasp of this material. An attempt to understand the work of Lawrence Kohlberg and his collaborators without knowing structuralism and the genetic epistemology of Piaget is like attempting to go from the preoperational period to formal operations without first passing through the intermediary period.

CHAPTER 2

PIAGETIAN ROOTS IN MORAL JUDGMENT

Jean Piaget's fifth book, The Moral Judgment of the Child,¹ was written over forty years ago. It constitutes the last of what is generally known as his early work and predates the construction of his complex logico-mathematical models. Nevertheless, although he has by now written approximately more than fifty books and hundreds of articles, this one book alone would have assured him an immortal role as a pioneer in the field of sociocognitive moral development. Piaget never again devoted a major work to moral development and has given only brief treatment to it in the years following publication of his fifth work. Yet the book has spawned a spate of replicated and modified studies, some of which have challenged, but none of which have disconfirmed the essential validity of Piaget's contribution. The most ambitious of these has been the work of Lawrence Kohlberg and his collaborators, which has refined and extended Piaget's earlier work to a considerable degree. Their findings and theoretical formulations will be examined in detail later in this dissertation, while

¹Jean Piaget, The Moral Judgment of the Child, trans. M. Gabain (New York: The Free Press, 1965), Originally published, 1932.

the present chapter will focus upon the Piagetian point of departure.

Piaget's investigations on moral development emphasized the verbally communicated judgments that children from five to thirteen years of age make when stories involving a moral component are posed to them. He did not explore the relationship between those judgments and behavior, as is being done in current research. However, he does comment that children's behavior may reflect a *décalage*, such that they may be carrying out actions in the moral sphere that are more sensitively related to others than their conceptualized version of morality would suggest. The paradoxical reciprocal to this, however, is the common phenomenon in which adult individuals demonstrating an advanced moral conception fail to act upon it. Piaget, himself, demonstrated a precursor to this amongst youngsters who break the rules of marble-playing while maintaining that the rules are immutable and sacred. In regard to the sequentiality of moral stages, Piaget cautions against construing this in absolute terms. There are definite age trends in which earlier and more primitive moral conceptions diminish as later and more mature ones emerge to assume an increasingly more dominate role. However, there is a considerable mix of primitive and mature moral judgments which may characterize the child's thought at the same time in development. Even after the latter are clearly in greater evidence, it may be observed that they will be applied only to some areas which are of lesser complexity and not until

later will they be applied to areas of greater complexity. Piaget remarks upon this especially in reference to children's developing attitudes toward rules, a point of no minor significance since he holds that one's attitudes regarding rules constitute the essence of morality. There exists a premoral stage which is basically asocial. Following this are the two major stages of moral development in the Piagetian model. The first is a morality of constraint in which deference to external authority is the primary characteristic. It is referred to often as the stage of heteronomy and roughly corresponds to the preoperational cognitive period of development. The second is a morality of cooperation in which group solidarity and mutual respect are paramount. It is referred to as the stage of autonomy and corresponds to the period of concrete operations. Piaget's pathbreaking book is divided into four main sections. It begins with an exposition of children's attitudes toward rules and their behavior in relation to them. This is followed by a section on adult constraint and the correlated concept of moral realism. The next section explores the idea of justice and notions children have of punishment. The final portion examines the two moralities in a social context. The influences of Bovet, Baldwin, and Durkheim are cited by Piaget at various points throughout the text.

Changing Conceptions and Practices of the Rules

The stories Piaget designed to test out children's responses to moral situations were based upon content familiar to them from their everyday lives. In exploring their conceptions of rules, Piaget actually got down on his hands and knees and played a familiar game with them. He selected the game of marbles because of its universality among them. He took the trouble to learn the intricacies of the game, although he concealed this fact from his young companions. Piaget, then, while playing the game with the children, proceeded to inquire what they thought the origin and nature of rules to be. In addition, he observed the practices they followed to discover the relationship between conception and action. This is the one exception, incidentally, to the general statement that Piaget studied moral judgment only and not behavior. It is emphasized that the game of marbles is by no means a simple matter, as it permits numerous legitimate variations and this, therefore, enhances its functional capacity for discovering how children relate to rules. The attitudes revealed by the participants do not signify that they had been carefully thought out in advance. They do not represent preconceived ideas, but instead are the spontaneous responses to the inquiries being made. This same qualifier obtains as well to Piaget's earlier works in which he sought to uncover the child's spontaneous thoughts about how the world is made and about the natural phenomena within it.

There are four stages observed in the child's practice of marbles. Motoric habits and desire dictate the manner in which the child deals with marbles in the first stage. There are no collective rules being followed, as the motor rule of this stage is purely individual and is merely ritualistic or habitual. There follows an egocentric stage which may begin between two to five years and extends to seven years. The child during this time becomes aware of the existence of external rules governing the game and he plays in a manner attempting to initiate them. Nevertheless, the spirit of his game-playing remains individualistic in that we find him either playing separately from others or if engaged with others he does not aim to win. The notion of winning has not yet dawned upon him. It is at about seven or eight years that the third stage emerges. Piaget refers to it as incipient cooperation to reflect the budding of social activity in playing the game. Although there is a lack of specificity and uniformity regarding the rules amongst players of this stage, each one attempts to win. The players attempt to unify the rules and may even succeed over the course of a single game, but there persists a vagueness about the rules which are not generalized from one game to the next. A stage known as the codification of rules becomes manifest at about eleven or twelve. At this point the fine details of each rule and variation are carefully worked out and consensually acknowledged. The rules are universally applied

across each game and locality where it is played. An earnest effort at consistent adherence to the rules is made and generally achieved. There has occurred a shift from an emphasis upon cooperation to an interest in rules in their own right. This last stage coincides with the beginning of formal operations.

The second or egocentric stage is viewed as an intermediate one which comes between the purely individualistic motoric stage and the socially cooperative third stage. Although sincere in his attempt to initiate the rule, the egocentric child's activities are not at all coordinated with the game playing of other participants in the game. There is a desire to be a member of the group at play and particularly to emulate the older boys, but the preoperational period of cognitive development prohibits the capacity for egocentric players to unify their use of rules in game playing. The essence of the following stage is the social cooperation that characterizes the game playing. Children in the third stage not only play to win, but attempt to do so while adhering to consensually agreed upon rules. The cooperative interaction demanded by playing the game this way is facilitated by the reciprocity of reversible thinking which is present in the concrete operational period. Although this aspect of development continues, the accent in the fourth stage is upon the nature of the rules themselves which, indeed, acquire a fascinating hold upon the child's mind. Piaget states, "Children of the fourth stage... have thoroughly mastered

their code and even take pleasure in juridical discussions, whether of principle or merely of procedure, which may at times arise out of the points in dispute".¹

There are only three stages in the development of conscious attitudes toward rules and they do not all coincide exactly with the chronological unfolding of actual practice in the game. The first stage is one in which there is no consciousness of the coercive or obligatory element in rules, despite the very young child's tendency toward engaging repetitively in a motoric scheme. At the same time, the fact is that the child has been exposed to regularities of action imposed by his environment and, thus, upon first encountering marbles there may be some dawning awareness that rules are involved in their use. The second stage in the consciousness of rules begins at about age four or five and extends to about eight or nine, that is to the middle of the cooperative stage in the actual practice of rules. During this period the child decisively experiences the coercive element in rules. He views rules as sacred and not subject to the possibility of change. There is a misleading appearance from four to six of accepting a change in rules, but upon analysis it is found that the apparently accepted change had not been recognized as an innovation, but itself had been mistaken for a perennial rule. By age six even this misleading aspect has disappeared and the conception of rules

¹Ibid., pp. 42-43.

as absolutely immutable is unmistakable. Although the egocentric child is found to express a belief that rules may never be changed and he even strives to imitate, he will be observed departing from rules with both minor and major infractions in practice. The rule for such a child remains external and has no binding effect upon him for this reason. The child believes that even if all children were to agree to change a rule they would be wrong to think they could succeed; so great is the reverence the child at this stage has for the sacred nature of a rule. Piaget makes the point that the egocentric child is not presocial entirely. To the extent that he is not in the cooperative stage in the practice of rules he is presocial. However, to the extent that he embraces the rule as unchanging and external, he is not. A belief in the immutable nature of rules derives from unilateral respect, a blind acceptance in parental authority and in God, the sources of rules. There is a self-imposed quality of constraint here, which has a definite social aspect, nevertheless. The egocentric child moves into the cooperative stage of practicing rules while retaining a conscious attitude of their eternal nature, even though he is achieving a recognition behaviorally that the players may themselves vary the rules. There is a lag in development during this phase between the behavioral and conceptual planes; one in which the former is more advanced than the latter. The third stage in the consciousness of rules starts at about age ten, approximately the middle of the stage of cooperation in practice, and

extends throughout the phase of codification. Piaget comments, "Autonomy follows upon heteronomy: the rule of a game appears to the child no longer as an external law, sacred in so far as it has been laid down by adults; but as the outcome of a free decision and worthy of respect in the measure that it has enlisted mutual consent."¹ The emphasis now is upon procedure rather than outcome. Rules may certainly be altered as long as the proper procedure gaining mutual consent is pursued. The established order is no longer revered and if it is the will of the members of a group collectively then innovations may be explored and tested. The children now come to realize that there is no such thing as the eternal origin of rules imposed upon the game of marbles, but instead that other children, much like themselves, had gathered together around a number of marbles and generated a set of rules to facilitate playing the game. It is precisely this awakening recognition of the origin and nature of rules that leads to a spontaneous obedience in playing the game that characterizes the period of codification. Piaget emphasizes the democratic basis of this newly evolved moral achievement. Procedure and the will of the collective now govern. The children are no longer bound by a false notion of eternal and unerring tradition. An era of genuine cooperation replaces the previous period of incipient co-operation as this new consciousness of rules arises to guide

¹Ibid., p. 65

codification. The rational foundation of this genuine co-operation is a more complete plane of reciprocity than any that had preceded. There must be fairness in playing the game so that all participants are subject to the same laws of chance and opportunities for winning.

There is a vital point which arises here in relation to Kohlberg's writings on stage five. We will see a distinct resemblance between that stage and what has just been described from Piaget's work. Yet Kohlberg does not find such a democratic morality emerging until considerably later in development than the youngsters in Piaget's studies would suggest. Perhaps anticipating this dilemma, Piaget raises the question of such a democratic attitude arising so early when it is well known that even many adults have not arrived at that level in some domains in their life. As one would expect, Piaget's observation on the matter is somewhat ingenious. He points out that since children generally discontinue playing marbles shortly after age thirteen, if not sooner, then it follows that there are no Elders for these young people to look up to as far as tradition in marbles is concerned. Those who have reached the age of twelve and thirteen are, in fact, the seniors upon whom all younger children rely as custom bearers. It is this situation which forces upon the senior youngsters a recognition of their own potential for autonomy. In the event that children customarily played the game for a much longer period, then the democratic attitude would be a longer time in developing. For Piaget, the history of the children's

game of marbles is as illuminating to that population of little people as is the history of government and religion to the older population of adults.

Moral Realism and Objective Responsibility

The concept of realism was first introduced by Piaget in discussing the child's tendency of mind to ascribe external substantial existence to such psychic components as dreams and names. He once again utilizes the same notion in presenting his ideas pertaining to the moral realm. He succinctly formulates, "We shall therefore call moral realism the tendency which the child has to regard duty and the value attaching to it as self-subsistent and independent of the mind, as imposing regardless of the circumstances in which the individual may find himself."¹ He is explicit in citing the three criteria to which moral realism conforms. First, the good is defined by obedience to adult rule, hence, moral realism is heteronomous. Second, it is the letter of the law which must be met. There is no allowance for flexibility or deviation. Third, objective responsibility determines the measure of culpability when assessing actions. It is the actual consequences of an act and not the intention motivating it which is taken into consideration.

Piaget explores objective responsibility specifically with stories posed to children in the areas of clumsiness and stealing in one section and lying in another. Clumsiness

¹Ibid., p. 111.

is accurately identified as a fairly common event in the child's life which fairly frequently evokes a negative response from adults. The stories constructed by Piaget juxtaposed one in which the damaging consequence of an act was great, while the child was either well-intentioned or merely carrying out an act precipitated by chance, to one in which only a slight damaging consequence resulted from an intentional violation of a command. An example is a story of a little boy who opens a dining room door upon being called and in so doing upsets a tray on the other side which had been resting on a nearby chair. All fifteen cups that had been supported by the tray fall and break. The alternate story is one in which a young boy left alone by his mother enters the cupboard and climbs up high to get some jam. In the process he knocks over a cup and it breaks. The clear implication is that he knows he was not to go after the jam. Upon relaying the stories, the investigator then asks whether the two children are equally guilty and, if not, which one is guiltier. The respondent must then explain why he has answered as he did. The results that Piaget obtained indicate that until age ten there will be found two types of responses amongst children. The same child may even alternate between the two types. One of these responses focuses exclusively on the objective damage and the other on motives. However, there is a decisive diminution of objective responsibility with age and there were no such instances of children focusing mainly on material damage rather than intention after

age ten. It is Piaget's view that objective responsibility has its source in adult constraint. In relation to clumsiness, a subtle distinction is made by Piaget. The adult will often model objective responsibility for he will scold even when the child accidentally breaks something of value, but he does not truly believe the child is morally flawed. However, the child, unlike the adult, makes no such distinction and the actor, himself or a peer, is morally at fault.

Either through repeated acts of scolding or simply asserting prohibitions, the adult has fostered a notion of absolute obligations and forbidden behaviors. Hence, Piaget suggests that deriving from the child's unilateral respect and the adult's constraint there is generated moral realism. In his discussion in this area, Piaget is most sensitive to the parents' potential for promoting subjective responsibility in the child by instituting certain egalitarian procedures. In addressing himself to the attempt to facilitate a responsiveness to intentions over objective damage, Piaget anticipated the work of Robert Selman by several decades. Piaget's observations are worth citing in this connection. He states, "In this way the child will find himself in the presence, not of a system of commands requiring ritualistic and external obedience, but of a system of social relations such that everyone does his best to obey the same obligations, and does so out of mutual respect."¹ It is reciprocity, in

¹Ibid., p. 138.

which individuals in the social system come to take the other's point of view and evaluate accordingly, that underpins the morality of this social system and not a rigid obedience to external rule.

Piaget finds lying a particularly fertile practice around which to explore the child's developing moral conceptions because it is so integral to egocentric thought. There is a fundamental conflict inherent in lying in the face of adult constraint. Analysis of children's protocols reveals that the youngest children conceive of a lie as saying naughty words. It is the utterance of forbidden expressions. Yet the very same child is demonstrated to have an understanding that to lie is to speak what is not true. The child's extension of the definition of a lie to encompass the use of naughty words is explained by Piaget's belief that the child sees language as the means through which lying as a moral fault is committed. Saying naughty words is also to display a fault through language. The child reasons further that lies are all those things which one is not supposed to say. Although generally children between six and ten years will define a lie more simply as something that is untrue, their genuine comprehension is limited because they omit the component of intention. It is not necessarily that he cannot distinguish between intentional and unintentional statements that are untrue. The point is that for the young child, if the statement is known to be untrue, then it is held to be a lie regardless of motivation. A child who is frightened by

a large dog in the street is said to be lying when he runs to his mother in alarm , announcing that he has seen a dog as big as a cow. It is at about ten or eleven years that children unambiguously recognize a lie as an intentional untruth. Surprising though it may be, Piaget discovered that younger children believed a lie to be more naughty if, in departing greatly from the truth, it was less likely to be believed than a lie that departed only slightly from the truth and, therefore, was more likely to be believed. In other words, the more successful the deception, the less naughty the liar. This proved to be the case even where the intention was not malevolent, as in the story where the boy said he saw a dog as large as a cow. Age progression leads to a reversal of this interpretation by the child and we find that older children realize that a blatant untruth is more an exaggeration than a lie. Piaget is most emphatic in conveying that he is not positing two pure stages, one sequentially followed the other. Both objective and subjective responsibility can be found in various proportions amongst the younger children. The passage of time, however, leads to a significant disappearance of the former and a dominance of the latter. Gutkin¹ views the notion of intentionality as part of the broader area of personal responsibility and he offers an enriching analysis of the subject.

¹Daniel C. Gutkin, "An Analysis of the Concept of Moral Intentionality," Human Development 16 (1973), 371-81.

Truth, for the egocentric child, holds no special value. He is governed by his own desires and fantasies. Assimilation predominates over accommodation with the aim of supplying personal satisfaction. The valuing of truth evolves as the child becomes more of a social agent gradually recognizing the moral demand of reciprocity and cooperation in relationships. As long as a relation of unilateral respect is maintained the child has no opportunity to hold peer level discussions of genuine mutual exchange and in the process discover the destructive aspects of lying. Unilateral respect is bound to generate objective responsibility. As unilateral respect declines, the child will interiorize necessary rules and make them autonomously his own. Mutual respect replaces adult constraint and the need for truthfulness as a constructive force in relationships becomes evident. The successful lie is now seen for the invidious force that it represents. Trust must be maintained in social relations and only truthfulness can be relied upon to achieve this. It is between the ages of ten and twelve that a full consciousness of what has been discussed here becomes apparent to the child. In Piaget's words, "Thus truthfulness gradually ceases to be a duty imposed by heteronomy and becomes an object envisaged as good by an autonomous personal conscience."¹ For the very young child a lie is considered wrong because

¹Jean Piaget, The Moral Judgment of the Child, trans. M. Gabain (New York: The Free Press, 1965), p. 174. Originally published, 1932.

it is that which gets punished. If punishment were not a consequence of lying, then the onus of being wrong would be removed from the lie. There is a progression with age to a realization that even if lying was not something for which punishment is received, it would still be wrong in itself. However, this realization is still not accompanied by interpersonal awareness and psychological insight. It is at the next stage of development that children characterized by a high level of reciprocity awaken to the fact that lying is necessarily wrong because it is in stark opposition to maintaining mutual trust and would sunder the affective bond.

Justice and Punishment

There are basically two types of justice. They are retributive and distributive. The former is concerned primarily with proportionate punishment and the latter with equality in distributing resources that are available. Piaget has observed in his studies that when the two are in conflict the younger child favors retributive action and the older child favors distributive justice. The stages of justice involve a shift from believing that whatever authority commands as punishment is just, to a conviction that a rigid equality ("A blow for a blow") is just, to a realization that equity, which takes into account a variety of factors, is the basis for justice.

Justice, in Piaget's view, is not an implant derived from external authority. The only necessary ingredients

are mutual respect and solidarity amongst children themselves. In fact, the derivation of the justice idea in children is not only independent of adults, but is sometimes at the adult's expense.

Piaget distinguishes sharply between two kinds of punishment. Expiatory punishment is governed by constraint. A moral transgressor must be brought back into line. Punishment is coercive and proportionate to the seriousness of the violation. It is also unrelated to the content of the violation. Reciprocal punishments are not arbitrary and lack the coercive element. Hence, one who has ruptured the social bond through some transgression should simply be punished in such a way that he experiences the natural consequences of that rupture. In order of severity, punishment by reciprocity has been classified as follows: 1.) Exclusion from the group permanently or temporarily; 2.) Being subjected to the transgression's immediate and material consequences; 3.) Deprivation of whatever it is that has been misused; 4.) Performing upon the child the exact violation he has committed; 5.) Restitution, in which the offender must replace or repay for what is damaged; 6.) censure, which entails no punishment other than communicating to the transgressor that he has, indeed, broken the bond of solidarity. In general, non-expiatory punishment ultimately seeks the restoration of solidarity and not mere conformity. There is an age trend leading away from expiation toward reciprocity in punishment. Kohlberg states the following in connection with Piaget's studies:

Four year old children do not use reciprocity as a reason for consideration of others, whereas children of seven and older frequently do. Even seven-year-olds show mainly selfish and concrete reciprocity concerns, including anticipation of retaliation and anticipation of return of favors. Most ten-year olds who were asked "What would the Golden Rule say to do if a boy came up and hit you?" interpreted the golden rule in terms of concrete reciprocity and said, "Hit him back. Do unto others as they do unto you." By age eleven to thirteen most children can clearly judge in terms of ideal reciprocity, in terms of putting oneself in the place of someone in a different position, and in terms of sentiments for past affection and favors.¹

Stark reciprocity in which the governing rule is to seek an exactly proportionate response to the offense is the stage of equality which on the average is from seven to ten years of age. It can have an almost brutal effect and it is not until beyond age ten that the more just form of reciprocity, equity, predominates over equality. Further comments on the nature of equity will follow shortly.

Punishment by expiation is clearly linked to a morality of heteronomy in which pure duty and obedience reign. The ultimate source of punishment is authority with which the child lacks a relationship of reciprocity, which is not possible in an non-equalitarian relationship. It is the morality of autonomy, grounded in mutual respect, which gives rise to a punishment ethos of reciprocity. Expiative punishment has roots in primitive vengeance, whereas reciprocity evolves from

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "Development of Moral Character and Moral Ideology," in Review of Child Development Research, ed. L.W. Hoffman, Vol. 1 (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1964), pp. 397-98.

it and through strict equality to a morality of forgiveness and understanding. The essence of punishment by reciprocity in its most evolved form is, for Piaget, inducing an awareness in the transgressor that he has broken the bond of solidarity.

Piaget points out that there may exist a conflict between retributive and distributive justice. For example, if a very young child drops a roll while hiking with a group in the mountains and the roll irretrievably falls over the side, should he be given another? Younger children responding to such a dilemma would choose a retributive response stating that he was wrong to let it fall over the side and should not be given more. As children grow older they favor distributive justice indicating that it would be unfair not to redistribute what remains in order that the young child may have a part of what is still available. As children first begin favoring distributive justice they will explain their position simply by stating that all should have equal shares. As they move beyond sheer equality to equity they will support their responses by introducing relevant variables, suggesting that the child is too young, for example, to understand and could not be held responsible for what happened. Equity is situational in the sense that the specific conditions obtaining are taken into account and coordinated to arrive at a just resolution. This is a more subtle and complex advance over advocating pure equality in either distributive or retributive spheres. In commenting upon the shift from authority based

concepts of justice to equalitarian justice, Piaget comments, "Equalitarian justice develops with age at the expense of submission to adult authority, and in correlation with solidarity between children. Equalitarianism would therefore seem to come from habits of reciprocity peculiar to mutual respect rather than from the mechanisms of duties that is founded upon unilateral respect".¹ Equity, in Piaget's view, extends equalitarianism one step further than the pure equality which defines it, to encompass the relative aspects of a given situation. In summary, Piaget posits three major periods in the child's developing conception of justice. In the first period justice is subordinated to the authority of adults. This generally lasts until seven or eight years. Ranging from ages eight to eleven the child's sense of justice is observed becoming increasingly more equalitarian. Finally there emerges the third major period at about eleven or twelve at which time equalitarianism yields to the relativity of equity.

Finally, there is a curious tendency of the young mind to adhere to what Piaget calls immanent justice. The child expects that wrong doing will automatically bring with it a corolary punishment. It is in the nature of things that this will occur. Perhaps it is not really a surprising belief if one considers that there is no pure chance operative in the world of the the preoperational child. The world is infused

¹Piaget, p. 295.

with purposiveness and finalism. Although immanent justice extends into the school years it diminishes with age and is finally abandoned.

Durkheim, Bovet, and Baldwin

The closing section of Piaget's great work on the child's moral development expands into the field of sociology and social psychology. Three influential theorists, Durkheim, Bovet, and Baldwin are treated at length by Piaget and their essential relevance to his work will be briefly summarized.

Durkheim was a French sociologist born in 1858. He formulated a theory of morality in which society was seen as its ultimate source and conformity to society's rules its major aim. He posited three components to morality. They are discipline, group attachment, and autonomy. There exists a set of socially promulgated commands and discipline requires adherence to these. Individual conscience interiorizes these commands and respects the authority which is their source. The individual is obligated to attach himself to the social group and work towards its welfare. Discipline and group attachment are both seen as good for the individual and adherence to these two dictates of morality will enrich the personality while it is simultaneously subordinate to society. By autonomy of the will, Durkheim means to propose a rational morality. Each moral agent should understand the rules of society and from that understanding should flow a willful embracing of the rules. Just as in science physical laws are

discovered and freely accepted, in the same manner social rules should be made known and conformed to by the individual. Piaget stresses that a failing in Durkheim's view is to ignore the fact that children have a society of peers available to them, and hence, are not exclusively subject to adult authority. The derivation of rules for Durkheim is truly outside of personal conscience and it is the role of society, in the form of the teacher, to transmit these rules to the child. The French sociologist has been accused of elevating society to the status of a metaphysical entity and Piaget interprets this facet of Durkheim's theory as being predicated upon intellectual realism. Piaget stresses that there exists neither a substantial being to be called society, nor a series of isolated individuals. There exists instead only relations and these must be understood from more than one perspective. The essential quarrel that Piaget has with Durkheim pivots around the latter's identification of constraint and co-operation. There is a fundamental distinction to be made between these two and Durkheim does not make it, tending to fuse them instead. An autonomous morality cannot be truly transmitted by a teacher or any authority. It must be constructed by each individual through interaction with peers, and those adults who relate to the child with equality, in mutual respect. Piaget agrees with Durkheim that morality has an essentially social component, but he differs sharply in rejecting the coercive element which Durkheim clings to.

Clearly, although both thinkers advance autonomy as vital

to morality, they do not agree upon the meaning of the term. Succinctly put, Piaget asserts, "In the moral as in the intellectual domain we really possess only what we have conquered by ourselves".¹ Piaget's formulations lead him to advocate the creation of a democratic society within the school system and to stress the student's own initiative. He somewhat sharply refers to the type of school that Durkheim advocates as being a monarchy acquiring its authority from divine right. Peterson,² advancing a position congenial to Piaget's critique, suggests that Durkheim had a fear of liberating the aspirations and fantasies of people and, therefore, overreacted with an excessive penchant for maintaining order, from which his theory of morality and moral education developed.

Bovet and Durkheim both discount the individual construction of moral law and the Kantian notion that respect is the product of a priori rational law. Bovet's emphasis, in fact, amounts to an attempt to account for rational law itself through the evocation of respect as the product of social interaction. A sense of obligation, it is held by Bovet, arises from being issued commands by those whom one respects. The compelling quality of the rules stems from the respect the receiver has for the bearer. It is this respect which generates a sense of duty in the subject.

¹Piaget, p. 366.

²Howard L. Peterson, "The Quest for Moral Order," Journal of Moral Education 4 (1974): 39-46.

For Bovet, there is nothing intrinsic to the law itself to which the mind yields. The child experiences both fear and affection in relation to his parents and these emotions generate the respect for them which becomes the source of accepting law. The parents are seen by the child as the prototype of perfection and are held to be godlike. However, in time, commands conflicting in their nature and implications will be put forth by various individuals who are respected. This will initiate personal activity as the subject will necessarily seek to reinstate consistency and his own reason will set up a hierarchy from amongst the diversified commands. Piaget believes that Bovet's explanation of the origin of child morality is essentially correct and that the latter has left his theoretical system sufficiently open-ended to permit further elaboration, which Piaget attempts. A difficulty inherent in Bovet's formulation is that since assent is compelled by unilateral respect, the rule promulgated by an authority may or may not be intrinsically good. However, with the emphasis on respect this allows a shift from unilateral to mutual respect. The shift to mutuality eliminates coercion and invokes reciprocity, which assures the formation of rational rules subject to mutual regulation. This avoids the potential pitfall in Bovet's system through which duty would by definition remain the good. As has been observed previously, Piaget believes it is essential to maintain a distinction between the heteronomous orientation of unilateral respect and the autonomous orientation of mutual respect. Bovet's system

blurs the distinction for it views mutual respect as essentially rooted in unilateral respect. Piaget's insistence on this point is a forerunner of his own cognitive system's strong emphasis upon qualitatively different stages of development.

Baldwin is also seen to emphasize the interconnection between individual and social. The apparent pure individuality of consciousness of self is analyzed by him and observed to be an illusion. This is because at birth there exists no sense of self whatsoever and it is only by interacting with other individuals and especially by imitation that it can be acquired. In development the child first imitates the behavior of others which gives rise to a subjective sense of self that is the same as others. This process is also reversed in that the child begins to realize that others have internal feelings which may mirror his. The initial process of imitation, hence, has a converse called ejection. There follows a sense of obedience which, being neither imitation nor ejection, induces friction. Out of this, in Baldwin's view, is created an "ideal self", which is a moral agent subject to adult constraint. It is in a sense an internalized command, imitating the authority from whence it sprung, that serves to convey what one ought to become. An inner sense of the morality of law and the good evolves to a point where it is seen as superior to individuals, beyond the dictates of authority figures, and ultimately elevated to a stage of absolute moral law.

Piaget does not believe that Baldwin, even though he posits an adualism between inner consciousness and outer reality, sufficiently appreciates the child's egocentrism. The child's egocentrism specifically places his own viewpoint at an absolute position. Hence, although the child appears to respect commands, his egocentrism leads to distortion and misapplication of them. Piaget insists that while imitation will illuminate for us what we have in common with others, it does not promote a particularized self. In an illuminating passage he states the following:

In order to discover oneself as a particular individual, what is needed is a continuous comparison, the outcome of opposition, of discussion, and of mutual control; and indeed consciousness of the individual self appears far later than consciousness of the more general features in our psychological make-up. This is why a child can remain egocentric for a very long time (through lack of consciousness of self), while participating on all points in the minds of others. It is only by knowing our individual nature with its limitations as well as its resources that we grow capable of coming out of ourselves and collaborating with other individual natures. Consciousness of self is therefore both a product and a condition of cooperation.¹

The work of Baldwin has held significance for both Piaget and Kohlberg. Kohlberg² decries the relative neglect of Baldwin's work by researchers today and has offered a rather extensive treatment of his theories. It is worth

¹Piaget, p. 394.

²Laurence Kohlberg, "Stage and Sequence: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Socialization," in Handbook of Socialization, ed. G. Goslin (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969), pp. 347-480.

noting, in passing, that although Piaget is justifiably credited with having created the new interdisciplinary science of genetic epistemology, the genetic psychology of Baldwin stands as an unquestioned precursor to that growing body of knowledge.

Summary of Piagetian Based Research

A voluminous amount of replication research has flowed from Piaget's pioneering work, The Moral Judgment of the Child. A good deal of it is sector research in the sense of being designed to test a specific hypothesis such as one involving objective responsibility versus intentional judgment. On the other hand, some of it is addressed to broader issues such as the universality of stage sequences. An exhaustive survey will not be attempted, but instead I shall identify the major findings that previously conducted surveys have revealed to date.

Kohlberg¹ cites eleven areas in which age changes are said to occur in Piaget's moral developmental Theory. He divides these into two groups; those areas in which age trends have been confirmed and those in which they have not been. The six dimensions supported by the research at the time of Kohlberg's survey are as follows: 1.) Intentionality judgments ascend in frequency over time as objective responsibility declines; 2.) Older children show a greater recognition that

¹Kohlberg, Moral Character, p. 397-98.

different perspectives may be adopted regarding the same situation, whereas younger children center on only one perspective as the right one; 3.) Independence of sanctions. For an older child a bad act is so because of its intrinsic nature, but a younger child will construe an act as bad solely on the basis of someone being punished for performing it; 4.) There is an increase in the use of reciprocity from four years through thirteen, as predicted by Piaget; 5.) The administration of harsh punishment is advocated during the younger years with a gradual diminution of such practices being advocated and an ascending frequency with age in favor of restitution and reform occurring; 6.) There is a tendency on the part of younger children to think that harmful events will automatically and naturally follow bad actions, but older children do not anticipate such teleological events.

Age trends in the above area have been supported by the research at least in Western cultures. These developmental trends have been observed to occur irrespective of religion, social class, and story content when being questioned. Child rearing practices regarding punishment may vary without eliminating the observed early characteristics in young children of absolutism, objective responsibility, and orientation to punishment. Kohlberg suggests that the cultural variations are not causal to these features of moral development, but that some of them may lead to deceleration or stage arrest. The cognitive developmental basis of moral development is

indicated in the positive correlation found between the areas confirmed and I.Q. scores. Lastly, each of the six aspects demonstrates a fundamental shift in orientation from emphasizing objective material consequences to subjective psychological components.

Kohlberg reports that the areas of Piagetian research which have been disconfirmed are not those with cognitive bases, but those that are rooted in what he calls socio-emotional elements. In these areas, he asserts, there may be found an increase with age of the anticipated developments followed by a decline in their presence. A clear cut emergence of a democratic spirit preceded by an authoritarian ethic is not observed. Kohlberg also concludes that the research does not support the premise that peer interaction amongst young children promotes either reciprocity or intentionality, even though he acknowledges that it plays a significant role in general moral development. He does contend, however, that social participation amongst preadolescents will facilitate the acquisition of more mature moral conceptions with respect to his own posited stages of development. The shift from unilateral to mutual respect is not fully supported and, in any event, we will see that Kohlberg places a different interpretation upon the non-egalitarian relationship between child and adult than does Piaget. There is greater variance to be found in these areas of socio-emotional aspects as influenced by religion, social class and culture, and content of stories utilized. This is in marked

contrast to those dimensions with a cognitive foundation, which are resistant to these variables. Lickona, in what appears to be the most current survey available on Piagetian based research, has reached a conclusion similar to Kohlberg's. He states the following:

The findings...suggest that while Piaget's analysis of the cognitive basis of moral judgment is well formed, his speculations about its affective side are on shaky grounds. Young children do not... stand in awe of the authority of adults or the rules they repeatedly set forth The research...indicates that loyalty to and genuine respect for personal authority, like respect for rules, is something that children must develop during the early school years (ages 4-7) and something that accompanies advance, not immaturity, on moral dimensions such as judging the rightness of an action apart from its external consequences. The child's early obedience orientation in moral thinking appears to be based less on respect for the moral status of adults than on simple recognition of their superior power.¹

In view of its extreme salience to the subject at hand, it will be fruitful to examine Lickona's report at greater length. He is emphatic in asserting that the evidence is ample to unequivocally accept Piaget's position of developmental changes in the area of moral judgments, reflecting qualitatively different moral modes of thought that change with age and experience. Nevertheless, the data pertaining to specific areas is mixed, some of it lending support and some not doing so. As with all research, it should be kept in mind

¹Thomas Lickona, "Research on Piaget's Theory of Moral Development," in Moral Development and Behavior: Theory, Research, and Social Issues, ed. L. Lickona (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), p. 240.

that disconfirming evidence may at times be explained by flawed conceptual analysis or methodology. Even so, when faced with such deficiencies in a given piece of research, the most one can conclude is "Not proven". Lickona,¹ in an article predating the research survey presently under consideration, has provided an excellent critique of misconceptions about Piaget's theory of moral development, which have led to false or irrelevant conclusions in the research literature.

A major disclosure is that moral developmental advances appear at a much slower rate than originally proposed. We are more likely to find youngsters achieving Piaget's morality of autonomy between the ages of twelve to seventeen rather than at age twelve. Furthermore, Piaget's highest stage of autonomy would seem to be coincident with Kohlberg's third stage, signifying three additional major stages which one could possibly pass through. Clearly, the autonomous morality uncovered in the prototypical study by Piaget will be seen to fall far short of the highest level of moral reasoning on the Kohlbergian scale, to be explored in Chapter Four of this dissertation.

With only minor deviation, all of the six areas Kohlberg reported as being confirmed by the literature were reaffirmed

¹Thomas Lickona, "Piaget Misunderstood: A Critique of the Criticisms of Theory of Moral Development," Merrill Palmer Quarterly 16 (1969): 337-50.

by Lickona's assessment of Piagetian replication and modified studies.

In general, although it is not the only significant variable, there is a positive correlation between mental age and Piagetian moral development. However, an individual's I.Q. does not reflect intellectual level in the manner that Piaget, himself, has conceived of it. Therefore, it is noteworthy that Lickona is able to cite several projects validating a positive correlation between moral judgment measures of the Piagetian variety and competence at performing Piagetian tasks of a logical nature. These findings lend support to the cognitive foundation of moral development. A detailed study of the connection between cognitive level of development and the Kohlbergian stages of morality will appear in a later Chapter.

Lickona has further inquired into the role of both peer interaction and absence of adult constraint to ascertain their impact upon progress toward a morality of cooperation. In a summary statement, Lickona reflects the following:

For all three hypothesized causes of moral change-cognitive development, experience of social equality, and increased independence of adult constraint-the research reviewed thus far has been correlational rather than experimental. The most that can be said on the basis of these naturalistic data is that the factors identified by Piaget as sources of moral growth have typically been found to correlate with mature judgment on one or another of his dimensions. The evidence is strongest for the role of cognitive development, mixed but generally supportive regarding

the contribution of peer experience, and weakest with respect to the role of freedom from the constraining influence of adult authority.¹

Lickona goes on to review experimental studies designed to foster moral growth in Piagetian areas. His overall conclusion is that it does not appear plausible to expect accelerated growth from the types of causes involved, such as cognitive development and peer-interaction, in so short a period of time as a laboratory experiment utilizes. He concludes with a recommendation of longitudinal studies with careful follow-up as the most appropriate approach to experimental research of a developmental theory.

Hoffman² has presented a balanced and even-handed discourse ranging widely across many approaches to moral development. Attention here shall focus upon his comments on consistency across moral attributes in Piagetian theory. The purpose in concentrating on these remarks is not to cite definitive conclusions, but to highlight some issues involved when dealing with Piaget's complex moral system. Hoffman begins with the premise that it is reasonable, given the nature of cognitive developmental theory, to expect to find

¹Lickona, "Research on Piaget's Theory of Moral Development," p. 235.

²Martin Hoffman, "Moral Development," in Carmichael's Manual of Child Psychology, ed. P. Mussen, Vol. 1 (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1970), pp. 261-359.

considerable consistency across attributes. One may search for consistency of a single attribute across different content areas. He cites the example of objective responsibility being applied to the two spheres of lying and stealing. There is also a type of consistency which deals with the interrelatedness of two distinct attributes. For example, one may search for a correlation in development between objective responsibility and immanent justice, both early modes of moral judgment in Piaget's theory. Hoffman concluded from a review of the literature that despite some mixed findings, in general, the evidence did not support a view of stages as structured wholes which consistently cut across all areas. It is his conceptual analysis of this conclusion that I am interested in pinpointing.

Peer-level experience is an important facilitator of moral development in Piaget's view, but it obviously does not occur at the same time in children's lives in all areas. Specifically, social interaction with peers in the game of marbles may very well promote autonomous attitudes toward rules in this area, yet the children may, for the time being, remain heteronomous in relation to rules applied to other areas in their lives. Piaget, himself, had made the identical point in his book on the subject. Similarly, intentional judgments may emerge in situations entailing behavior resulting in physical damage before it is observed in situations involving lying, since the latter is less palpable and more subtle. In other words, research must take into

account *décalages* in development, a phenomenon which is integral to a cognitive structural approach and does not run counter to it.

Another consideration is that of the complexity of situation and variables. As the child's cognitive capacities increase, he is more likely to take into account additional variables, especially more complex ones. Hoffman suggests that while it is an advance, making a judgment based on intentions over physical consequences when inanimate objects are involved is relatively simple in comparison to continuing to hold a well-intentioned person responsible for harm his actions have caused another person, when the unfavorable consequences could have been anticipated and, hence, avoided. In the case of the latter judgment, good intentions are recognized and yet the actor is not absolved from responsibility for his behavior.

Hoffman's observation is that research designed to test out consistency across stages in Piagetian moral theory has not instituted the proper controls needed to take into account the complexity of the system. It is through continual rigorous conceptual and methodological analysis such as Hoffman has demonstrated that progress in researching all facets of cognitive developmental psychology will occur. As for the absence of stage consistency confirmation in Piagetian moral theory specifically, a different picture will be presented in the modified and expanded work of Lawrence Kohlberg.

CHAPTER THREE

EGOCENTRISM AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVISM

As long as the child remains embedded in his own perspective he will be unable to progress in his capacity for moral reasoning. The very young child is not aware that others possess a point of view which may be different from his own. Hence, in his interpersonal relations he acts as if peers and adults share his limited outlook. He has no basis for even attempting to anticipate the needs, feelings, and motives of others. The concept of egocentrism, which represents this condition is a rich and central one in the field of cognitive-developmental psychology. It essentially signifies an incapacity for differentiating between internal and external. In its profoundest form the epistemic subject experiences a state in which knower and known are fused together as one. All of cognitive development may be seen as a series of progressions in which there is continual disengagement between subject and object leading to increased objectivity. However, objectivity is characterized by a relativism which takes into account the many perspectives that must be coordinated to provide knowledge of reality in a situation. Inhelder and Piaget characterize it in the following manner:

Essentially, the process, which at any one of the developmental stages moves from egocentrism toward decentering, constantly subjects increases in know-

ledge to a refocusing of perspective.... Objectivity presupposes a decentering-i.e., a continual refocusing of perspective. Egocentrism, on the other hand, is the undifferentiated state prior to multiple perspectives, whereas objectivity implies both differentiation and coordination of the points of view which have been differentiated.¹

The term egocentrism as it is used by the Geneva School is applied to logical, ontological, and social realms. Although there are notable exceptions, the bulk of Piaget's work utilizes it in relation to the child's construction of knowledge about the physical world. The meaning of the word in this discussion, however, will be restricted to its significance in a social context. This is in keeping with Piaget's use of the concept in his book on the language and thought of the child and the one on moral judgment, as well as his treatment of adolescence in the final chapter of his work on that development period. The egocentric child, then, will be viewed simply as one who centers upon his own point of view and is unaware that others hold a viewpoint of their own. Decentration refers to the ability to see things from perspectives other than one's own. It may be either sequential, in which case one shifts through time from his own to another's viewpoint, or it may be simultaneous, in which case one's own perspective and another's are coordinated at the same time.

¹Barbel Inhelder and Jean Piaget, The Growth of Logical Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence, trans. A. Parsons and S. Milgram (New York: Basic Books, 1958), p. 345. Originally published, 1955.

The ability to see things from another person's perspective is called role-taking. Both Piaget and Kohlberg consider role-taking to be a pivotal concept in their respective theories of moral development. It serves as a connecting or intermediary link between the necessary cognitive-structural development and the attainment of moral maturity. Because of its essential function and integral relationship to contemporary moral stage theory role-taking, or perspectivism as it is alternately called, will be examined in depth. The leading figures in this field are Piaget, Feffer, Flavell, and Selman. The theorist who coined the term role-taking and is the forerunner of much of the work in the area, Mead, warrants attention in his own right. As the discussion proceeds it will be observed that an examination of role-taking may emphasize either the individual, an interpersonal framework, or a societal perspective. In any case, egocentrism and perspectivism are complex concepts which develop in inverse proportion. As egocentrism declines, perspectivism increases. The concepts are subject to influence by such variables as familiarity of situation, task complexity, and social class. The nature of both at varying levels of cognitive development is qualitatively different from its expression in preceding stages. Some contemporary research on the subject has been criticized for testing role-taking with tasks that invoke cognitive skills that are unrelated to role-taking itself. The problem is that the subject may actually have the ability to deal with perspectivism

at some level, but the fact will be masked if the child lacks the contingent cognitive skill, which is not really essential to the main hypothesis. A false negative will then result. The corollary is that the age at which role-taking is then said to first appear is set higher than is truly the case.

Kohlberg's Perspective on Role-Taking

Since it is primarily because of the strong emphasis placed upon role-taking by Kohlberg in his moral stage theory that this material is being introduced, it may be useful to highlight the essential features of his use of the term, which he adopted from Mead. Kohlberg is quite explicit in citing the following characteristics of role-taking.

- 1.) it emphasizes the cognitive as well as the affective side.
- 2.) it involves an organized structural relationship between self and others.
- 3.) it emphasizes that the process involves understanding and relating to all the roles in the society of which one is a part.
- 4.) it emphasizes that role taking goes on in all social interactions and communication situations, not merely in ones that arouse emotions of sympathy or empathy.¹

Kohlberg is insistent that the emotional aspect of role-taking not be emphasized exclusively, with its implication of empathy and sympathy. The dual emphasis by Kohlberg is, of course, quite consistent with Piaget's position, promulgated many years prior, on the indissociable nature of affect and

¹Laurence Kohlberg, "Moral Stages and Moralization: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach," in Moral Development and Behavior: Theory, Research, and Social Issues, ed. L. Lickona (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), p. 49.

cognition. There exists no pure cognition without affect, just as affect cannot arise in a vacuum without being channelled by cognitive structuration. The structural base of affect and cognition is a shared one and, for both Piaget and Kohlberg, neither component of mental life solely determines the other. The purest act of cognition relies upon interest from the affective side to energize it. An emotion generated from within the moral sphere will derive its meaning to the individual from the sociocognitive stage of moral development that he is at. For example, anxiety precipitated by the transgression of a moral precept will be experienced very differently on a symbolic plane by the Stage 1 person than by the Stage 4 person. The meaning conferred upon the anxiety has its source in the sociocognitive moral stage from which it arose. According to Kohlberg, the Stage 1 person may be anxious in relation to the possibility of going to jail or suffering some bad consequence to himself, whereas this would be preempted for the Stage 4 person by a sense of guilt over having broken the law, which he felt obliged to preserve.

Kohlberg¹ presents his views on role-taking in a lengthy tract in which he formulates the cognitive-developmental position on socialization. His theoretical predecessors in this regard are Baldwin, Mead, and Piaget. He is also the

¹Laurence Kohlberg, "Stage and Sequence: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Socialization," in Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research, ed. D. Gaskin (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969), p. 347-80.

intellectual heir of Kant and Dewey, whose influences will be commented upon in the next chapter.

Role-taking capacity enables one to respond to his own behavior as seen through the eyes of another, as well as to react to the other person as if he were like one's own self. This is a reciprocal activity that structures the thinking and behavior of the subject. The social matrix is comprised of a number of selves that are like the own self of the subject, but which are not identical with that self. The essence of a moral conflict pivots around competing and oppositional claims amongst two or more selves and the key to a just resolution resides in the moral agent's role-taking ability which will be invoked variously depending upon his stage of development. Commenting that role-taking has a wide field of applicability beyond the moral sphere, Kohlberg goes on to state, "Basically, however, all these forms imply a common structure of equality and reciprocity between selves with expectations about one another. Our moral stages represent successive forms of reciprocity, each more differentiated and universalized than the preceding form."¹

Since role-taking competence evolves progressively through an ongoing structuration process of increasing differentiation and integration, Kohlberg is especially concerned with social institutions that promote role-taking

¹Ibid., p. 398.

opportunities. It is the direct participation in the life of a group or institution that affords the growing child an opportunity for development and enhancement of role-taking. Leadership roles in particular call upon role-taking skills as decision-making requires taking the roles of those who will be affected by the leader's actions. This is especially true of democratic leadership. Similarly, the non-leaders in a democratic group or institution will have greater opportunities for developing their role-taking skills for they will be called upon to engage in the decision making process. Clearly, the first group a child belongs to is the family. Although a good family offers role-taking opportunities and a bad family, in Kohlbergian terms, may foster moral arrest and pathology, children who have not grown up in a traditional family matrix at all may still reach moral maturity. Kohlberg contrasts children from an orphanage to children raised in a kibbutz. Interaction with family members is far less than ordinarily for the kibbutz child and, of course, the child in the orphanage will have no parents. While the institutionalized child is found to be morally behind in development, the kibbutz child is on a par with the child raised in an urban family, from a moral standpoint. What Kohlberg is seeking to establish is that it is the role-taking opportunities which is critical to moral development in child rearing and these may be lacking in certain families, on the one hand, while they may be present in the environment of some children reared outside the family

unit, on the other hand. Although one would not expect the child to be a leader in his family, the parents of a family high in role-taking activities are those who invite the child to participate in decisions, permit him to assume responsibility, encourage discussion, and point out to him his part in his own actions which affect other people, as well as their consequences to them.

Peer group interaction is another major avenue providing role-taking opportunities for children. Kohlberg, like Piaget, stresses the importance of this social activity for general moral development, but he denies that it promotes growth in specific Piagetian identified moral dimensions, such as intentionality in making judgments.

Kohlberg takes a position which is in opposition to a prevailing notion in traditional sociology. The convention has been to see the growing child as beset by conflicting moral values derived from multiple commitments to family, peer group, and the broader societal institutions on a politico-economic level. Each sphere is said to generate its own values which then place the growing young person in a quandary because of the conflict amongst them. Kohlberg's theory leads to a different formulation. He states, "Instead of participation in various groups causing conflicting developmental trends in morality, it appears that participation in various groups converges in stimulating the development of basic moral values, which are not transmitted by one particular group to anotherWhile various people and groups

make conflicting immediate demands upon the child, they do not seem to present the child with basically conflicting or different stimulation for general moral development."¹

It is precisely because Kohlberg's theory is founded upon a structuralist base that he may logically and consistently adopt this viewpoint. There evolves a meaningful pattern of organization through the development of moral role-taking structures which may be brought to bear in the resolution of conflict amidst competing claims within any social system regardless of its scale.

The roots of role-taking are to be found in early imitative behavior which serves a major function in the socialization process, according to Kohlberg. He cites both Baldwin and Piaget as early theorists addressing imitation in the sociocognitive development of the human organism.

Imitation is not only a source of social knowledge, in that it is a reconstruction by the child of what others are observed doing, but in Baldwin's view it helps the child to build both a self-concept and a concept of others. We have already seen in the preceding chapter that imitation is followed by a process of "ejection" in which the child ascribes to the other the feelings he, himself, has experienced upon imitating the other. The new activity taken on by the imitating child modifies his self-concept, as one competent to perform the action involved, and at the same time provides him with a phenomenological basis

¹Ibid., p. 402.

for inferring something about the other's subjective state when the other is carrying out the action. Thus, Kohlberg emphasizes that social knowledge and knowledge of the self are constructed from acts of sharing, by taking another's perspective. The development of a self is a social act motivated by a thrust toward competence. When the child at first imitates the observed behavior of the adult, he is submissive in that he is merely copying the valued action of another. However, when he initiates such action subsequently he is seeking to reverse the roles. He is manifesting a bid for status as having moved toward the competence and mastery of the model and he intends that the model will now accord him the admiration that he had previously accorded the model. This role reversal activity appears as early as the second year. It continues as the child at three and four years of age, having imitated a model, can be seen assuming the role of being a model for others as he exhibits his budding competence in performing the activity.

Having traced the origin of role-taking behavior to imitation in early childhood, a view Kohlberg derives primarily from Baldwin, we will proceed to an examination of related work by other major theorists, some of whom have had a significant influence on Kohlberg.

The Symbolic-Interaction Theory of Mead

Mead (1862-1931) was a social psychologist who adopted an interactional perspective, stressing that mind develops as a result of the organism interacting with its environment. He held that evolutionary direction could be altered by the exercise of the intellect of human beings. He wedded his social psychology to philosophy and shares a place alongside of James and Dewey, as one of the great American pragmatists. Mind and consciousness are developed through a social process which each growing individual participates in. Mead believed himself to be a social behaviorist. Although he held that the starting point of theorizing should be observed behavior, he was perfectly willing to construct a theory to explain behavior, which was complex and not itself observable, relying as it does upon inner experience.¹ Mead's frame of reference is distinctly related to role-taking. He emphasizes that through social activity a person develops the capacity to take the role of another and in so doing observe himself symbolically as he would be seen by others. In this manner he can shift from being a subject who observes others to being an object observed by another. Out of the process of social interaction we develop a notion of a generalized other which is a composite of how we think others view and respond to us. In reflecting upon the generalized other we will sometimes

¹Morton Deutsch and Robert M. Kraus, Theories in Social Psychology (New York: Basic Books, 1965).

modify our own anticipated behavior on the basis of how we think others may respond to us. The generalized other is moulded out of many experiences in which we have taken note of how people actually have reacted to us.

Mead¹ takes as the unit of analysis the specific interaction between two people in a social matrix. In an illuminating comparison he juxtaposes a man running through the forest to a man who is directly confronted with a number of combatants. The running man perceives the environment, its contours and obstacles, and will respond by adjusting his own behavior in an adaptive manner. He does not expect his adjusted movements, however, to exert a modifying force upon the environment. In the social situation the reality is different. One's own responses to the encountered stimuli can shape the course of things to come. The man who recognizes a stimulus from another which signifies he is about to be attacked may avert the attack by altering his own behavior. In observing an assaultive approach from an enemy, a man may place himself in the shoes of the other to see that if he acts boldly the enemy will back down, whereas if he assumes a submissive position, the attack will most certainly be carried out. Taking the role of the other then influences his own behavior, which in turn becomes a stimulus that modifies the intended behavior of the attacker. The man

¹George H. Mead, "Social Consciousness and the Consciousness of Meaning," in Pragmatism: The Classic Writings, ed. H. S. Thayer (New York: New American Library, 1970), pp. 341-50.

asserts himself boldly and his enemy turns to run. The course of events in a social reality has been shaped by role-taking. I have elaborated upon this illustration slightly beyond the original in order to fully capture Mead's meaning.

Although it is out of a number of specific experiences that the generalized other is forged, it takes on a transcendent character reflective of the generalized attitudes inherent in the group or community within which one holds membership. Just as in a specific situation a person may respond to the other's anticipated actions to his intended behavior, he may also respond to the anticipated reactions of the Community, in the form of his generalized other, to his intended behavior. There occurs a symbolic conversation or communication within himself which, for Mead, is the thinking process. Through this symbolic activity it becomes possible for humans to engage in rational behavior. This is quite different from the limited concrete activity of animals. A dog will respond automatically and inevitably with a hostile gesture to an aggressive act from another. His response then becomes the stimulus which elicits an automatic reaction from the aggressor. Mead's point in his illustration of the animal fight is that neither can take the role of the other to either anticipate what the other will do next or how the other might respond to his own intended behavior. The fight unfolds in a linear fashion without benefit of symbolic

activity which might have altered the possible course of the action and, thereby, modifying the outcome.

Piaget and Perspectivism

Two major foci of Piaget's work which are of concern here are visual perspective taking and communication. Piaget and Inhelder¹ have made some interesting discoveries regarding the growing young child's capacity to literally see things from another's point of view. In a classic experiment they placed a configuration of three three-dimensional simulated cardboard mountains on a table. A doll is rotated by the experimenter from one position to another. The child has ten photographs before him and his task is to select the one showing the scene the doll would see from its perspective. In a variation of the task, the child is to place the doll at a position which would give him a view corresponding to a particular picture. Lastly, he is given a set of flat cardboard pieces which he is to reconstruct to show what would appear on a snapshot if the doll were to take a picture from a specific viewpoint. The child is permitted to walk around the table after which he is to return to his seat. The youngest children did not understand the assignment. Once the child does understand the task, however, he exhibits a totally uniperspective stance. In effect, he indicates that

¹Jean Piaget and Barbel Inhelder, The Child's Conception of Space, trans. J. F. Langden and J. L. Lunzer (New York: W. W. Norton, 1967), Originally published, 1948.

he thinks the scenes observed by the doll are identical with his own. It does not appear merely to be a matter of not having the ability to recreate what the other is viewing. Rather, the evidence indicates that the child simply has no awareness that the doll has a viewpoint other than the child's own. This egocentric stage lasts from four to seven years of age. Between seven and eight years the child becomes aware that there is a point of view other than his own, but his version regarding the doll's perspective at various positions is incorrect. Finally, the child at nine or ten years can also formulate the correct version, indicating that he can take the other's visual role and accurately coordinate perspectives. A variety of experiments of this type have been conducted by subsequent researchers. Some of them have involved more complex arrangements and others more simple ones. The variable of task complexity does seem to have an affect on the results. Thus we find that children perform better at a younger age when the task is more simple, but when the demands of the task are more stringent, the age for successful coordination of perspectives is pushed upward. It should not be overlooked that this experiment involves both egocentrism and cognitive skills bearing on spatial relations, which is a confounding factor.

Piaget¹ studied the process of verbal communication very early in his career. In fact, he devoted his first book to

¹Jean Piaget, The Language and Throught of the Child, trans. M. Gabain (Cleveland:Meridian Books, 1955), Originally published, 1923.

this subject. Language as it exists amongst humans is undoubtedly one of our most fascinating and cherished attributes. Yet its first appearance in the second year is of limited scope as it continues to manifest its sensorimotor roots. It remains so action-laden in the beginning that many children in the early acquisition phase can actually be observed carrying out the action when using a verb. Hence, a toddler saying "jump" may be seen jumping as he speaks the word. Early language is also largely lacking in public meaning as words often carry private meanings, perhaps shared only with the mother. There occurs a diminution of these features of language as the sensorimotor imprint disappears and words become public increasingly in that they accommodate a consensual meaning. Yet there persists a serious deficiency in the child's communication pattern up to the age of six or seven. In brief, the child's speech until that time tends to be egocentric and it is not until about seven years of age that his speech shifts from egocentric to sociocentric.

Piaget's procedure was that of conducting naturalistic studies of children's spontaneous utterances, which he recorded and analyzed. The first portion of this work involved only two children, six years old, who were observed for one month. There followed a further study with twenty children between the ages of four and seven. The essential theme of The Language and Thought of the Child, Piaget's first book, is that the child's language is limited by and an expression of his cognitive level of development. Hence, the preoperational

child's language is egocentric in that he centers on his own viewpoint and makes no attempt to take the viewpoint of his listener. Therefore, his speech is not constructed to demonstrate the validity of his statements or to compel assent to them. Thoughts that are not logically related are juxtaposed without explanation. Causal connectives such as "therefore" and "because" are omitted. The referents to pronouns are omitted, leaving the listener uninformed about who "he," "she," "they," and "them," are. It is as if the child were speaking only to himself and did not realize that the listener had certain informational needs which must be conformed to if genuine communication were to take place. Piaget concluded from his study that, in fact, egocentric speech does not truly have the aim of communication. There are three subclasses of egocentric speech. There is repetition, which has nothing more than the intrinsic pleasure of talking as its aim. It bears the stamp of babbling and is not at all social. A second class is monologue which addresses no one. The child talks aloud in a manner suggesting that he is simply speaking his thoughts. It, too, has no social function. The third type is the collective monologue. This form of egocentric speech has a quasi-social character to it, but remains non-communicative speech. The child speaks aloud in the presence of others. He is still centered on his own actions and thoughts. At best, he seeks to draw the interest of others to himself. Although aware of the audience he is not really addressing it. The situation is compounded by the

fact that peer level listener's at this stage are equally egocentric. Therefore, they are equally centered upon themselves and the observer may witness a scene of preoperational children soliloquizing amidst one another without any dialogue occurring. Also, the listener who appears to be paying attention is more than likely assimilating what he hears to his own viewpoint without attempting to accommodate what is novel to him in the message. The result is that he believes he has understood when he has not. In the process of interpreting the message he has distorted it. Of course, the message was never a genuine communication in the first place.

Adaptive or sociocentric communication appears between the ages of seven and eight. It is not that children talking to one another suddenly understand everything they say to each other. However, at this time there is manifest a serious attempt to communicate effectively to one another. Children by this time have decentered from their uniperspective and take the point of view of the other while attempting to transmit information. The emphasis that Piaget has placed on peer interaction throughout his professional career has been evident from the time of his first book length work. He states succinctly:

What then gives rise to the need for verification? Surely it must be the shock of our thought coming into contact with that of others, which produces doubt and the desire to prove....We are constantly hatching an enormous number of false ideas, conceits, utopias, mystical explanations, suspicions and megalomaniacal fantasies, which disappear when brought into contact with other people. The social need to share

the thought of others and to communicate our own with success is the root of our need for verification. Proof is the outcome of argument.¹

The conquest of egocentrism during the preoperational period and the increasing competence to take the role of another are largely the outcome of dialectical confrontation in the social arena.

The egocentrism of adolescence, manifesting itself as the youngster first enters the formal operational period, has been introduced in the opening chapter. The young person is capable now of thinking about his own thought. His own thought, therefore, may be an object of his thinking process, which is no longer confined to known objects from the environment, as in the concrete operational period. Similarly, the thoughts of other people also become the object of his newly expanded thinking prowess. However, he does not properly distinguish between what has become the primary object of his concern and what is of focal interest to others. For the adolescent, both his own and the interests of others are channelled toward himself. He labors under the false impression that his actions and appearance are of paramount concern to others. This formulation has led Elkind, elaborating upon Piaget, to the following assertion:

One consequence of adolescent egocentrism is that, in actual or impending social situations, the young

¹Howard Gruber and J. Jacques Vonechè, eds. The Essential Piaget (New York:Basic Books, 1977), p. 92.

person anticipates the reactions of other people to himself. These anticipations, however, are based on the premise that others are as admiring or as critical of him as he is of himself. In a sense, then, the adolescent is continually constructing, or reacting to, an imaginary audience.¹

Elkind invokes this notion to explain much of the exaggerated and narcissistic behaviors of the adolescent and regards it as an hypothesis which gradually yields to repeated encounters with reality. This facilitates a differentiation in the adolescent's mind between his own primary interests and those of others, which he eventually comes to realize do not coincide. Thus, in early adolescence we have the paradoxical situation in which the young person is role-taking, but because of the particular form that egocentrism takes at this time his inference leads to the construction of a highly distorted perspective which he attributes to the other.

Feffer's Role-Taking Paradigm

Feffer has sought to concentrate upon expanding the social implications inherent in Piaget's fertile concept of decentration. The infant gradually decentrates from his solipsistic union with the objects in his environment. The preoperational child progressively differentiates between his own psychic properties and natural objects. He also decentrates in such areas as conservation, classification, and seriation, all of which allows

¹David Elkind, "Egocentrism in Children and Adolescents," Children and Adolescents: Interpretive Essays on Jean Piaget, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 91.

him to take into account and coordinate more than one aspect of reality at a time, which in turn fosters more adaptive knowledge of the physical world. Feffer accentuates the fact that an analogous decentering process occurs in the social realm, bringing with it enhanced interpersonal knowledge that is more adaptive than preceding cognitive limitations allowed. He developed a projective technique which is by now well known as the Role Taking Test (RTT). It is a method applied to Schneiderman's Make a Picture Story. The latter consists of a series of domestic and community scenes accompanied by a set of cardboard human figures. The subject is required to place three figures in three different scenes and then make up a story for each arrangement. He is further expected to retell the basic story in each instance by shifting from the various perspectives of each of the characters in the stories. The test involves an attempt at ascertaining the extent to which a subject will decenter from the content of his own initial perspective as reflected in the basic story he had made up and from the immediate perceptual stimuli of the scene. The assignment becomes increasingly more complex as the subject shifts from perspective to perspective for he must simultaneously maintain the continuity of the theme while at the same time embracing the limitation imposed by each new decentration or refocusing. Successfully accomplished this results in balanced decentering.

In a series of papers, Feffer and his collaborators¹ applied the RTT to explore several hypotheses. In the 1959 paper he concludes that the RTT is a valid means for evaluating level of cognitive maturity, having found an association between a formal analysis of role-taking ability and an independent measure of cognitive development derived from the Rorschach Composite Index. The essence of the latter pertains to the subject's cognitive ability at differentiation and integration in organizing perceptual stimuli. In the 1960 paper, Feffer shifts from having used an adult population to utilizing children of various ages. Further, he compared their RTT scores to independent scores on exclusively Piagetian tasks such as conservation. In so doing he is dealing with the unitary construct of decentration as it cuts across both personal and impersonal realms. Feffer again concludes that the decentering concept as revealed in the RTT may validly serve as a criterion for inferring cognitive maturity. He bases this on the findings that there was a positive association between decentration in the RTT and the various Piagetian tasks utilized. Also, both role-taking and decentration were positively associated with advances in age. In general, as

¹Melvin Feffer, "The Cognitive Implications of Role-Taking Behavior," Journal of Personality 27 (1959): 152-68; Melvin Feffer and Vivian Gourevitch, "Cognitive Aspects of Role-Taking in Children," Journal of Personality 28 (1960): 384-96; Melvin Feffer and Leonard Suchotliff, "Decentering Implications of Social Interactions," Personality and Social Psychology 4 (1966): 415-22; Melvin Feffer, "Developmental Analysis of Interpersonal Behavior," Psychological Review 77 (1970): 197-214.

children grow older their role-taking capacities increase with especially marked advances noted between eight to nine years and ten to eleven.

It is in the 1966 paper that Feffer begins to direct his research toward demonstrating that a high level of perspective taking, facilitated by decentration, has significant implications for social adaptiveness, a belief he intimated in his early work. Prominent in the present discussion is the manner in which single centrations produce distortions, as opposed to balanced decentrations which correct for distortions. A balanced decentration is one in which two or more perspectives are taken into account simultaneously and this allows the individual to modify his intended behavior in relation to how he anticipates the other would react to it were it to be carried out. This notion strikes a chord of recognition resonating from the work of Mead, with which Feffer was certainly familiar. For Feffer, optional social interaction between two people proceeds when both are utilizing simultaneous decentering. Subjects who shift perspectives in the RTT but do not maintain continuity and consistency amongst the characters are said to be engaging in sequential decentering. Those who go from character to character in the story, alternating perspectives, while maintaining continuity and consistency are engaged in simultaneous decentering. Feffer paired thirty six subjects into eighteen dyads, each matched for role-taking capacity as measured by the RTT. The subjects were undergraduate college students enrolled in a psychology

course. A separate measure pertaining to the effectiveness of social interaction characterizing each dyad was then made. The task involved the indirect communication of a key word from one member of the dyad to the other by use of one-word association clues. The partner receiving the message was permitted to respond aloud by guessing at the one word which he thought was the correct response. Feffer stresses that optional effectiveness involves social cooperation as each participant attempts to anticipate the other and dovetail his responses to meet the requirements of the activity. Each takes into account several perspectives simultaneously. For example, the receiver must alter his future responses in relation to both his own former responses and the clues that have been offered to him already. The donor, of course, must consider his knowledge of the correct word, past responses from the receiver, and thoughts of how the receiver might respond to the next association clue. This in turn might alter what word he will select to convey. Results of the research indicated that the dyads rated with higher RTT scores completed the password task with fewer clues and in less time than was required by those with lower RTT scores. The importance of this increases when compared to a variation of the task which eliminated the variable of social interaction, so that reciprocal adjustments as described above could not occur. In this variation there did not appear any significant correlation between RTT scores and successful completion of the task.

In the 1970 paper, Feffer presents a summary statement of the developmental stages in role-taking which his research uncovered. He states the following:

Essentially three main patterns of response have emerged from the analysis of such role-taking productions. The first, typically evidenced at about six years of age, is characterized by uncorrected decentering, that is, by obvious discontinuity between all versions of the story.... A second pattern becomes predominant between seven and eight years of age and is characterized by a limited, fluctuating form of coordination between perspectives. Although each of the perspectives may be relatively consistent with the initial story, they are sequentially focused on with respect to one another....The third pattern, which only becomes clearly evident at about nine years of age is characterized by a synthesis of the different perspectives and hence is considered as showing the simultaneous coordination indicative of the cognitive operation.¹

An example of the first pattern would be an instance in which the child originally tells a story that has the father eagerly prepared to give his wife a birthday gift. Then, when specifically shifting from the general story to the perspective of the father, he is described as preoccupied with what will be served for dinner. In the second pattern, there may be a consistent shift from a father who is suggesting that the family go out for a walk to the son who excitedly inquires where they will go. The third pattern is relatively complex, entailing a dual shifting between internal and external orientations. A teacher may be described as feelingly badly because he had to flunk a student, but he

¹Melvin Feffer, "Developmental Analysis of Interpersonal Behavior," Psychological Review 77 (1960): 211.

observes that the student did deserve it. Alternately, assuming the student's perspective, the student is described as feeling guilty because he did not do his assignments properly, but understanding that the teacher did what he had to do. There is a fine coordination of multiple perspectives in this final version of role-taking achievement.

Feffer's contribution is a substantial one and it is apparent that those who are highest in the type of perspective taking reflected in the RTT would be most likely to have the potential for resolving conflicts of competing claims amongst individuals in a just manner.

Flavell's Instrumental Model of Perspectivism

In a major work on the subject, Flavell et al. provide an especially explicit definition of role-taking, as follows: "The basic and essential ingredient of any sort of skill sequence in this area appears to be that process in which the individual somehow cognizes...certain attributes of another individual. The attributes in question are primarily of the type that could be described as inferential rather than directly perceptible, for example, the other's needs, his intentions, his opinions and beliefs, and his emotional, perceptual or intellectual capacities and limitations."¹ Flavell did not set out to uncover causal antecedents, believing that

¹John Flavell et al., The Development of Role-Taking and Communication Skills in Children (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1968), p. 5.

given the state of the field that should be a task for future research. He sought, instead, to provide a developmental-descriptive account of perspectivism, which would observe the ontogenetic qualitative changes which occur as the child moves through the early and middle years, as well as adolescence. Flavell conceives of role-taking activity as serving the function of promoting understanding of the other as an end in itself or of fostering communication and persuasion. It could be utilized on behalf of either cooperative or competitive behaviors. Since he emphasizes an instrumental function, he has carried his analysis a step beyond what is ordinarily encountered in the literature, to include the sub-skills employed in attaining the end goal of role-taking. The model that Flavell generated from his studies contains the following components: Existence, Need, Prediction, Maintenance, and Application. By Existence, he means to signify the subjects' fundamental recognition that one's own thoughts, feelings, and perceptions may not be the same as those another person experiences. It extends to an awareness that the knowledge two or more people may have of an identical object could differ with respect to thoughts, feelings, and perceptions depending upon their perspective. Acquiring this level of knowing represents the basic shift from egocentric to nonegocentric. It is not inclusive, however, of the requisite skills to make the correct inferences about taking other people's perspective, which successful role-taking demands. The Need component highlights the fact that one may

have the knowledge that other people's perspective could differ from his own, without having the awareness that a particular situation may call for invoking the role-taking capabilities at his command. An awareness of this need in appropriate situations facilitates calling into play the relevant skills. Prediction is the exercise of the actual role-taking skills necessary to making accurate inferences about another's role attributes. The exact nature of these skills is not well understood. What has been firmly established, however, is that there are definite differences of a qualitative nature characterizing these skills accompanying age progression. Flavell has emphasized that there is a strong tendency for one's own point of view to preempt consciousness even if correct inferences are made about another's role attributes. Therefore, this tendency must be countered so that inferential knowledge about another may be retained sufficiently to accomplish the role-taking goal in any given situation. This is precisely what Flavell intends to highlight by including maintenance as an element of the model. Assuming that one has successfully undergone the preceding aspects of role-taking activity, he must still possess a capacity for knowing how to apply his inferred and stably held knowledge to achieving the situational goal. For example, a subject may call forth the first four elements of the model in a communication task, but fail in the area of application because he lacks the skill required in the specific situation to verbally construct the exact message necessary for success

at the task. Skills involved in the field of application will also develop qualitatively with age. A point that Flavell seeks to accent is that a subject who fails in a role-taking task may be deficient in any one of the identified elements of the model. The researcher should, therefore, not simply make the globular assessment that the subject lacks role-taking capability, but should carry out an analysis to discover where in the total process, suggested by the model, the subject is lacking. Familiarity with Flavell's conceptualization of the full range of role-taking activities guided toward the instrumental achievement of specified goals should protect one against naive and overly simplistic views on perspectivism.

Once having formulated his model from the research conducted by him and his collaborators, Flavell then reflexively utilizes it to comment on their findings. The preschool child seems to lack a solid concept imparting knowledge of the existence of alternate perspectives held by others. Upon entering school, a knowledge of perspectivism seems evident amongst most children, but it is not as yet well developed. The neophyte in school does possess some abilities contingent upon the aspects of Need, Prediction, Maintenance, and application, but these are minimal and tenuous at this early stage.

It is during middle childhood and adolescence that the most extensive and deepest changes are observed in role-taking, as well as in communication skills. The Existence component is on firm ground by this time and the changes _____

appear mostly in the subsequent categories.

The 1968 work of Flavell et al. has been broadly described and the major theoretical model derived from it presented. It is a rich treasure of meticulously detailed research which bears reading by the motivated scholar. The remaining material on Flavell in the present discussion will cite one study from his book because of its intrinsic value per se and also because of its comparative relevance to an earlier procedure instituted by Feffer, which has been examined. Following this, a later research project will be introduced to highlight its contribution to the gains made in adolescent role-taking ability.

One incisive method utilized in the study of role-taking was to present a series of seven cards, each depicting a scene, in a predetermined sequence to the subject. The ordered sequence clearly manifests a particular story line, which the child is asked by an experimenter to state. Then three of the cards are removed and those remaining clearly reflect a quite different story. A second experimenter enters the room and it becomes the task of the child to anticipate the story that this experimenter, never having seen all seven cards together, will tell on the basis of the four remaining cards. Unlike Feffer's Role-Taking Test the materials are not ambiguous and, hence, do not require a projective response. Of course, the possibility of projecting onto a situation always exists no matter how well defined a situation may be. The point is that the structure of this task does not

by its nature call forth a projective response as in the case of the RTT. There is no way that the second experimenter, who has seen only the four cards, could logically know about the story contained in the seven cards, within the limits of the experiment. The responses of the subjects were divided into four categories. Basically, however, these could be dichotomized into subjects who persisted in providing a story founded upon their original perspective from the seven cards, which they ascribed to the second experimenter, and subjects who recognized that this experimenter, of necessity, had a different perspective based on the four cards and which could not logically coincide with the child's original perspective. The population studied consisted of 160 students, in 8 groups of 20 each. The groups represented grades 2 through 8 plus grade 11. There occurred a significant age trend in which more children increasingly acquired the ability to exclude the story version represented in their initial observation and to take the role of the second experimenter, hence, correctly predicting that he would tell the story reflected in the four cards before him. The most significant quantitative shift amongst those acquiring this capability took place between the ages of eight and nine.

A conceptual analysis is revealing, for in the second part of the experiment both the child and the second experimenter are facing the four cards only. What prevents the child from immediately identifying the experimenter's perspective since at the moment it appears to be his own as well?

Flavell advances the notion that there is a force or pressure exerted upon the child who does not shift perspectives in this context to interpret his original story as an absolute rather than relative reality. His thinking lacks flexibility as his conception of the story line is irreversibly fused to the initial version of the seven cards and he cannot decentrate from that. The persistence of the former story now imposing itself upon the present situation is akin to intellectual realism, in which psychic properties are absolutized and externalized. In effect, Flavell is saying that the general limitations of preoperational thought constrict the child's role-taking ability and preclude the capacity to shift perspectives. Briefly, role-taking ability is integrally related to overall cognitive functioning and development.

Miller, Kessel, and Flavell¹ have conducted a study on social cognitive development which is particularly instructive regarding the significant advances brought with age through adolescence. The major theoretical observation made here is that representational acts can be recursive based on a nesting hierarchy of structures. This is in contrast to motor and perceptual acts. For example, a person may observe another person who is looking at him, but he cannot proceed

¹Patricia H. Miller, Frank S. Kessel, and John H. Flavell, "Thinking About Thinking About People Thinking About....: A Study of Social Cognitive Development," Child Development 41 (1970): 613-23.

to observe the undergirding perceptual action which is part of that other person who is looking at him. In contrast, on a plane of mental representation, there may exist a recursive structuring such as, "I think that you think that we think that they think..." Conceivably this could go on indefinitely. Now, it is essential to understand that the foregoing does not signify mere mental gymnastics. Rather, it seems to be the case that attainment of recursive thinking of this sort is found only amongst adolescents and adults, carrying with it profound implications for role-taking competence and action strategies based upon it.

The study by Miller et al. did, in fact, demonstrate that recursive thought develops in an invariant sequence. The subjects utilized in their study were 72 in number ranging from grades one through six. There were four basic steps in development observed and even the youngest children in the study seemed to grasp the first. The four invariant steps were referred to as contiguous, action, one-loop recursion, and two-loop recursion. The procedure entailed showing to the subjects drawings which were designed to reflect various states from amongst the four possibilities, thereby permitting those subjects who could conceive of them to identify them from the test material stimuli. The contiguous category depicts one person thinking about another. The action category involves one person thinking about another person, who is carrying out a social interaction such as talking. This is structurally more complex as one person is conceived as

carrying out an action within an action. That is, the thinker is said to be thinking about someone who is in turn carrying out the action of talking to someone. One aspect is nested hierarchically within the other. In the third category, one-loop recursion, the scenes depict a nesting of thinking itself. That is, one person is thinking of another person who is also thinking of someone. This constitutes a mental act of thinking about thinking. In this case one person may be the object of two others who are said to be thinking about him. The third person is embedded in the thought processes of the second and the first, whereas the second and the third persons are embedded in the thought process of the first. Hence, a teacher may be thinking about a student who is thinking about his mother. In this illustration the mother is embedded in the thought process of both the student and the teacher in a nesting hierarchy. Similarly, the mother and the student are embedded in the thought process of the teacher. Miller et al. suggest that this capacity for one-loop recursive activity may be distinctly facilitated by the development of the Piagetian grouping 1, which is the composition of classes. This category of one-loop recursive skill does emerge in middle childhood and a conceptual analysis seems to reveal a structural similarity to classification competence. The final category in this developmental sequence of social cognition, a two-loop recursion, takes us one step further. Here we have a situation in which, for example, the teacher is thinking that the student is thinking of his mother

thinking of his father. In brief, there occurs thinking about thinking about thinking. Miller et al. point out that while this is structurally more complex than the developments of previous stages, its occurrence in everyday life is likely to be found much less frequently. As the fourth category is the last of an invariant sequence and the oldest children in the study were approximately twelve years, it is probable that it owes its presence to the emergence of formal operations. In closing, Miller et al. relate their work specifically to role-taking as follows:

It is not surprising to find that the understanding of recursive thought is not nearly complete by the sixth grade. This finding is roughly in accord with a previous study of role-taking activity..., in which game strategies requiring complex inferences about recursive interpersonal thought did not become common until adolescence. Understanding that thinking possesses a recursive, "wheel within wheels" property may well be a prerequisite for these complex, role-taking-type inferences found in adolescence.¹

Miller et al. in the above statement are referring to complex guessing games that have been utilized in the research on role-taking which involve invoking anticipatory strategies (i.e. I am anticipating, that he is anticipating, that I am anticipating that...) leading to the modification of one's behavior as it would otherwise have occurred. The relation of this current research to Mead's early theory of symbolic interaction is unmistakable.

¹Ibid., p. 622.

Selman's Social Perspectivism and Moral Development

The extensive contribution of Selman to the field of social perspectivism is creative and powerful. He has drawn freely from Baldwin, Mead, Piaget, Feffer and Flavell. Of greatest relevance is the intrinsic connection between his work and that of Kohlberg's theory of sociomoral knowledge. Selman, like Kohlberg, built his work upon the Piagetian structural-developmental foundation. Therefore, it will not be surprising to learn that Selman conceives of role-taking as developing through an increasingly more complex hierarchy of invariant stages involving a process through which each succeeding stage becomes more adequate and inclusive as it represents a reorganization of concepts from the preceding stage. The underlying structural development of social perspective-taking, which constitutes the central motif to Selman's work, has been pursued in two distinct but related directions. It has been applied to the domains of moral reasoning¹ and interpersonal concepts². Selman's view is

¹Robert L. Selman, "The Relation of Social Perspective-Taking to Moral Development: Analytic and Empirical Approaches," (Unpublished paper, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1975); Robert L. Selman and William Damon, "The Necessity (but insufficiency) of Social Perspective Taking for Conceptions of Justice at Three Early Levels," in Moral Development: Current Theory and Research, ed. D. J. DePalma and J. M. Foley (Hillsdale, N. J.: Erlbaum Associates, 1975), pp. 57-73; Robert L. Selman, "Social Cognitive Understanding: A Guide to Educational and Clinical Practice," in Moral Development: Theory, Research, and Social Issues, ed. L. Lickona (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), pp. 299-316.

²Robert L. Selman, "Toward a Structural Analysis of Developing Interpersonal Relations Concepts: Research with

that perspective taking is more fundamental than either of those two areas and exists as a necessary but not sufficient condition in relation to them. Because of its more immediate relevance to the subject of this dissertation, emphasis will be given to Selman's theoretical position and empirical findings regarding the nature of perspective taking and its correspondence with stages of moral reasoning.

Crucial to appreciating Selman's and Kohlberg's work is grasping the phenomenological aspect inherent in both positions. Whether it is social or moral reasoning that is the focus of attention, the essential point in relation to any particular child is how he views the world in these two domains. It is only by eliciting from the child, or even the adult, his specific conceptions and underlying reasons for holding them, that light will be cast upon the manner in which he organizes and comprehends his sociomoral matrix.

Selman is clear in his contention that role-taking is not a single skill which one either possesses or does not. The adoption of such a static conception by some researchers may account for the discrepant reports in the literature regarding the age at which it appears. By assuming the view that perspective taking is a process of progressive structural development, the important question becomes what form it takes

Normal and Disturbed Preadolescent Boys," Minnesota Symposia on Child Psychology, ed. A. D. Pick, Vol. 10 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), pp. 156-93.

at different levels. Although it may be true that the presence of a primitive role-taking sensitivity may be observed as early as age two or three, as maintained by some, there is no way that this can be held to even remotely approximate the qualitative level of perspective taking found in adolescence. Further, the view that perspectivism is characterized by qualitative changes runs counter to conceiving of it as a quantitative phenomenon based on additive pieces of social information. The critical function involved in the process is the promotion of comprehending the relations that obtain between one's own perspective and those of others. Of special interest at each level of development is how the child differentiates between his own and other's perspectives, as well as the manner in which these are coordinated by him. Also of concern is knowing how any given level signifies an advance in differentiation and coordination over the previous level and how it remains limited compared to the structural organization that may succeed it. Acquiring this dual perspective of past and future will deepen understanding of the present level.

A brief description of the levels through which perspective taking evolves is in order. They make this appearance in an invariant sequence as follows:

Level 0: Egocentric social perspective-taking (ages 3-6). An ability to recognize simple affect in others is manifest. Nevertheless, a child during this period confuses his own subjectivity with other's. He is likely to believe

that when in the same situation another person will feel as he does. Hence, there is no differentiation between his own perspective and that of other people.

Level 1: Subjective social perspective-taking (ages 6-8). At this time there is an awareness of the distinct subjectivity of each person's own viewpoint. The child recognizes that even when in the same situation as another person, the other may construe it differently than he does. He recognizes further that access to varying information will result in different subjective interpretations. However, he cannot simultaneously entertain both his own and another person's viewpoint. He also lacks the ability to see himself from the perspective of another person.

Level 2: Self-reflective perspective-taking (ages 8-10). There now develops a reciprocal understanding that just as the child, himself, can view the other as a subject, it is also true that the other can view the child as a subject. This awareness that the other can view him as a subject will influence his actions toward the other. The child can also now view himself through the perspective of another. The advance encompassed at this level is limited by the fact that the reflections involved take place sequentially and, therefore, the child is still locked into a dyadic situation.

Level 3: Third person perspective-taking (ages 10-12). There occurs a mutuality of role-taking. The child becomes aware that each person in a dyadic situation has the capability of a simultaneous knowledge of his own and the other's

subjectivity. He can transcend the immediate dyadic situation to adopt an abstract third person perspective which permits observation of his own interaction with the other and their mutual subjectivity.

Level 4: Qualitative systems level of perspective-taking (ages 12-15). The young person by now has generated a generalized other perspective which he knows he shares with others. It is a perspective that others in the community may also hold regardless of their social position. It is comprised of an integration of communally shared values, attitudes and beliefs. There is now an idea of a social system perspective which goes beyond the abstract third person perspective of level 3 that observes only a specific dyadic interaction. Social conceptions now include knowledge that relationships can exist at varying levels such as in a state of being lovers, best friends, friends, or simply acquaintances.

Level 5: Symbolic interaction perspective-taking (ages 15 +). The relativity of socially rooted perspectives is discerned. A perspective which goes beyond the confines of any given society which one happens to find himself in can be adopted.

Selman rejects the notion that moral judgment is merely a special case of these perspective taking levels applied to the moral realm. Although the former is necessary to moral reasoning, the latter calls into play components that are

distinctive to it. A recent report by Selman¹ attempts to offer longitudinally based data to support the fundamental hypothesis that perspectivism is a necessary but not sufficient condition to moral development. The report is based upon a massive collection and analysis of material from longitudinal interviews with ten of the original subjects in the Kohlberg study. The subjects were ten years old when the study by Kohlberg began and Selman utilized the same material that was accumulated by Kohlberg over the years as the young people continued in the study. Material from five interviews with each of the ten subjects was examined and scored for perspective taking level. There were a total of 47 interviews (3 had been missed) spanning 5 different ages that the subject passed through during the course of the study. A significant age progression was documented in regard to levels of perspective taking. For example, only 10 percent of the children at age ten demonstrated level 3 as their predominant level of perspective taking. By age thirteen, this figure had risen to 70 percent. At age nineteen one subject remained at level 3, while the remaining subjects had all passed beyond it. At age 22 all subjects had gone beyond the third level. Furthermore, the data confirmed the invariant hypothesis. There was not a single instance in which a subject went from

¹Robert L. Selman, "The Relation of Social Perspective-Taking to Moral Development: Analytic and Empirical Approaches," Unpublished paper, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1975.

being scored at one level to a lower level after the passage of time. The direction of change evidenced was invariably from a lower level to a higher level and there were no signs of any subject having skipped over a level. Finally, each of 47 interviews was analyzed and scored from the standpoint of correspondence between perspective level and moral stage. There was not a single case in which moral stage was higher than perspective level. In 54 percent (N=25) of the cases a parallel correspondence between stages in the two areas was noted. The perspective taking level was found to be one higher than stage of moral reasoning in 46 percent (N=22) of the cases. If there were not a necessary but not sufficient relation obtaining, then one would expect to find at least some instances in which moral stage would be more advanced than perspective taking.

Selman, citing the work of Byrne,¹ in the same report presents an additional study testing once again the necessary but not sufficient condition hypothesis. This cross sectional study utilized a population of 56 males evenly divided amongst ages ten, thirteen, sixteen, and adulthood. Unlike the previous study Byrne employed two independent sources of measurement, whereas Selman had derived his scores from the same data base. Special means were devised by Byrne to test perspective taking with a view toward assessing the levels specific to adolescence and beyond. Moral stages, as in Selman's study,

¹Diane Byrne, "Role-Taking in Adolescence" (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1973).

were defined in terms of Kohlberg's theory. Results,¹ once correlations were tabulated, revealed that 24 cases were parallel in development, in 25 cases perspective taking was one level higher than moral stage and in 5 cases it was two higher. In one case moral stage appeared to be one stage higher than perspective taking. The last statement would seem to be a logical impossibility if the theory is correct. However, in the light of Selman's evidence and the balance of Byrne's own findings, the greater likelihood is that it signifies an error in measurement.

Attempting to formulate a position statement in the relation between the dimensions under consideration, Selman suggests, "The structural core of the moral stages refers to the way in which the subject orients to the conflicting claims of all participants in the moral dilemma. The form by which one considers the claims of oneself and others presupposes the prior form of understanding the relationship of the perspectives of oneself and other."² Hence, perspective taking is always necessary but never sufficient for parallel moral reasoning.

¹The figures reported by Selman in the text of his paper do not coincide with those appearing in Table 8, p. 33 of the paper. I have cited the figures in the table, which leaves one case unaccounted for.

²Robert L. Selman, "The Relation of Social Perspective-Taking to Moral Development: Analytic and Empirical Approaches," (Unpublished paper, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1975).

Concluding Remarks

The twin concepts of egocentrism and role-taking, because of the prominent contribution they make to an understanding of moral development, have been examined at length. Some of Kohlberg's own comments on the nature and origins of role-taking have been introduced and the early relevant work of Baldwin, Mead, and Piaget has been presented. The contemporary work of Feffer, Flavell, and Selman has been formulated with a special emphasis upon Selman's social perspective taking levels and their relationship to moral stages.

Although everything that has been covered in this chapter may be subsumed under the broad category of social cognition, that field is too extensive to have justifiably included here all that goes under that classification. There do exist, however, two recent comprehensive and excellent literature reviews on social cognition.¹ Finally, Kurdek has made an exhaustive review of the literature which specifically covers the relationship between perspective taking and moral development. He has emerged from his search with a modest but forward looking thrust, as he states, "There are enough conceptual and

¹Carol V. Shantz, "The Development of Social Cognition," in Review of Child Development Research, ed. E. M. Hetherington, Vol. 5 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975) pp. 257-324; Michael Chandler, "Social Cognition," Knowledge and Development, ed. W. F. Overton and J. Gallagher, Vol. 1 (New York: Plenum Press, 1977), pp. 93-147.

methodological problems in the existing body of literature ...to conclude that the relationship between perspective taking and moral development has not been adequately assessed. The venture of searching for the cognitive components of various facets of children's moral development... remains defensible and perspective taking ability is the front-running candidate for the position."¹

¹Lawrence A Kurdek, "Perspective Taking As the Cognitive Basis of Children's Moral Development: A Review of the Literature," Merrill-Palmer Quarterly 24 (1978): 22-23.

CHAPTER FOUR

KOHLBERG'S STAGE THEORY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Lawrence Kohlberg (1927-) is the leading contemporary figure in the field of sociocognitive moral development. His work represents a profound extension and refinement of Piaget's early book on moral judgment. Research currently being conducted in the field today is largely a derivative of his complex system. Literally scores of critical articles have appeared in the literature and this phenomenon in itself is suggestive of the monumental impact of his work. Kohlberg has not been insensitive to these criticisms and it is known that he has been engaged in an ongoing process of revising his methods and formulations when encountering valid critical commentary or new findings that demand reconciliation with a prior position.

The first portion of this chapter will be organized around a general characterization of Kohlberg's moral psychology and philosophy. It will be followed by an in-depth examination of the six stages of moral development based upon his major longitudinal study and confirmed by cross-cultural research. In the following chapter the discussion will be carried forth by focusing upon several major questions which inevitably arise in the context of Kohlberg's work. Serious criticism will be reserved for a separate chapter following the exposition of this material.

To avoid misunderstanding, it is essential from the outset to be clear on what is implied by Kohlberg's use of the term "moral stage." It does not refer simply to an application of cognitive reasoning to the moral realm. Moral reasoning involves structural development which is specific to its own domain even though, as we shall see in the next chapter, cognitive operations constitute a necessary, but not sufficient condition for moral development. Further, a moral stage does not automatically signify anything about behavior. The relationship between stage and action is a separate issue and it, too, will be explored subsequently. The stage concept is utilized by Kohlberg to denote a moral judgment. It is prescriptive or normative in that it deals with what a subject thinks is right and, therefore, concerns what ought to be. Stages are derived by posing anecdotal conflict situations to subjects and asking them not how they would behave in that situation, but about the behavior of the characters in the situation. Conceptions pertaining to rights and duties, implying values in these areas, are then elicited. The dilemmas presented to the subjects are designed to place in opposition obedience to authority and law with individual rights and human welfare. Once a subject has made a moral judgment, the underlying reasoning that brought it forth is explored in the interview. It is not the content of the judgment that determines what stage a subject is at, but the form of covert moral reasoning that had led him to the position he adopted. It is theoretically possible for each of six subjects to make the same

overt judgment about a moral dilemma while at the same time each being at a different stage from the others. Similarly two different subjects may make opposing moral judgments and yet be at the same stage. This is because a structural analysis of the underlying reasoning is the stage determinant and not the content of the judgment. An elaboration of the actual stages, appearing later in this chapter will clarify this essential point further.

In a very significant way, Kohlberg's stage theory bears a greater resemblance to Piaget's cognitive stage theory than it does to the moral theory of Piaget. Kohlberg's stages are held to be universal and to follow an invariant sequence of development in all cultures. Each subsequent stage represents a reorganization and synthesis of the elements in the preceding stage and is generative of a qualitatively different mode of structural moral reasoning. Piaget did not make the claim that the stages in his moral theory meet formal stage criteria, whereas he has decisively made that claim for the development of logical operations. In passing through Kohlberg's stages, one person may move through them more slowly than another, but it would not be predicted that anyone could move through them by reversing the order of any of the stages nor could any of the stages be skipped. Also, a person would not be expected to regress to a previous stage. Passage through all six stages is not likely, however, and in the United States amongst urban middle class people the dominant mode of moral reasoning is at Stage 4. Stating that a person is at a particular stage indicates

that approximately half or more of his moral reasoning is grounded in the defining nature of that stage. It also implies that the balance of his moral conceptions is likely to be divided between one stage higher and one stage lower. Therefore, it should be obvious that a person will not always exercise moral reasoning at his basic stage and certainly not at the highest stage he is capable of reasoning at.

Kohlberg rejects the notion that moral judgment is founded upon an internalization by the growing child of cultural rules inculcated through verbal transmission, the administration of punishment, or identification with a model. The cultural moral relativism implied in internalization theories runs counter to his quite fundamental assertion that stage development is universal. The content of a particular culture will, of course, become grist for the structural mill, but will not alter essentially the development of modes of moral reasoning. The cultural environment will have a significant impact upon the rate of development as a function of the role-taking opportunities it provides, but this will have no effect on the universality and invariance of the sequence. Cross cultural research supporting Kohlberg's position has been conducted in Canada, Turkey, India, Martinique, Tawain, Mexico, Yucatan, and Israel. Studies have been made with both middle-class and lower-class groups, as well as with children from preliterate and semiliterate cultures. Kohlberg has also found that regardless of the particular religious faith a person may belong to or if he is an atheist, it will have no

bearing upon the invariant sequence. This has been investigated not only with Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, but with Buddhists and Moslems as well.

There are two central concepts which function throughout the developing process and which warrant citation prior to progressing to an exploration of the actual stages. One is the concept of equilibration which Kohlberg has borrowed from Piaget and which has been discussed in Chapter One. It is the dynamic mechanism utilized to explain stage transitions and will recur with still further elaboration in later portions of this dissertation. The other is the concept of differentiation and integration, which has been adopted from the organismic theory of Werner.¹ It posits that in the earliest phase of development there exists a globular and undifferentiated state which in time becomes differentiated, with the elements forming a hierarchic integration. The common biological example often cited is the one cell dividing into many cells which begin to interrelate functionally, while going on to organize into hierarchical structures. An example from cognitive development, which also has a biological foundation, is the development of classification. Early classification schemes are globular and undifferentiated. All furry animals may be classified by the very young child as "doggie". The perception of furry

¹Heinz Werner, Comparative Psychology of Mental Development (Chicago: Follet, 1948).

animals is globular and undifferentiated. In time differentiation occurs and the child has classification structures to distinguish amongst dogs, cows, foxes and other animals. These are organized into a hierarchy under the generic class of animals. In fact, the taxonomy of primates, including humans, which anthropologists have devised constitutes an extraordinarily complex hierarchy of finely differentiated elements. It is also the case in moral judgment that each stage represents greater differentiation and integration than the previous stage. The value of life, for example, is not differentiated from material wealth at Stage 1. The differentiation occurs by Stage 2, at which time there is a lack of differentiation between personal desire and the value of life, which does not become differentiated until Stage 3. The process continues throughout development. Not only is property differentiated from life in value terms, but a later development is the differentiation between human life and animal life. Implicit in the value differentiations is a hierarchy, with human life valued over animal life and animal life valued over property.

The Moral Developmental Sequences

Kohlberg commenced a longitudinal study on moral development with his doctoral dissertation.¹ The dissertation was

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Development of Modes of Moral Thinking and Choice in the Years Ten to Sixteen" (Doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, 1958).

completed in 1958; the study is still in progress. The results were first reported in the literature¹ in 1963. The monumental scope of this study imparts a degree of credence that is simply unattainable in non-longitudinal studies. I will first present a characterization of Kohlberg's comments on the original work and then proceed to discuss the stages in order of their ontogenetic appearance. In discussing the stages, however, the material brought to bear will not be confined to Kohlberg's earliest statements, but will range across the years that have followed as well.

The population of the study originally resided in the suburbs of Chicago. There were seventy two boys divided into three age groups of ten, thirteen, and sixteen. In each group one half was from the upper-middle class and the other half from lower to lower-middle class. Each age group had comparable I.Q.^s. Ten moral dilemmas were discussed on a hypothetical plane with each subject during a two hour tape-recorded clinical interview. The idea for conducting the research, it is acknowledged, was derived from Piaget's fifth book, The Moral Judgment of the Child. It was the task in the case of each dilemma to resolve the inherent conflict. The choice was always between an act that would comply with sociolegal rules or an act that would violate the rules but serve human needs

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Development of Children's Orientation Toward a Moral Order 1. Sequence in the Development of Moral Thought," Vita Humana 6 (1963): 11-33.

or the welfare of others, which would be neglected by obedience. Analyzing the content of the responses, i.e. the choice of which act should be carried out, proved unfruitful. The analysis of the underlying reason for the choice is what turned out to be revealing.

Analysis of the raw data from the interviews produced a pattern of 6 stages of moral development, reflected in 30 general aspects of morality inherent in the verbal responses of the subjects. Together these led to the construction of a typology with 180 cells (i.e. 30x6). The aspects included such categories as punishment, rights, and motivation. Each aspect could be considered from the standpoint of which stage it corresponded to. For example, in assessing a statement that had a motivational aspect, if the motivation for a particular choice of action pivoted around the theme of "disapproval by others" then it would be scored in a specific column for motivation in the cell reserved for stage 3, because that stage is defined by its emphasis upon good relations and approval. If the motivational aspect had been "punishment by another," then it would have been entered in the cell reserved for stage 1, which is defined by its emphasis upon physical consequences and avoiding punishment. All of the moral ideas conveyed during the interview were thus analyzed according to aspect and stage. It was then possible to ascertain what percentage of all statements by each subject was at a certain stage. Although dealing with 30 aspects, a rather heterogeneous array, there was an impressive degree of stage consistency, which Kohlberg has

viewed as a strong supporting argument for his position that moral stage theory constitutes structured wholes and not isolated skills. The typology provided a profile on each boy and the computation of percentages yielded information on which stage of moral development he was at. The original results indicated that stages 1 and 2 decline with age, whereas there occurs an increase in the appearance of stages 3 and 4 until thirteen years. Stages 4 and 5 increase until age sixteen. Kohlberg was to discover later that moral development continues for considerably longer than he originally concluded. His instructors in this vital lesson were to be these same boys as they grew older over the years, many of them going to college and subsequently graduating. (In this longitudinal study, N=53.)

Kohlberg believed that he had found a basis in his data for dividing the six stages into three natural levels, each one comprised of two stages. Hence, level 1 was comprised of stages 1 and 2, level 2 of stages 3 and 4, and level 3 of stages 5 and 6. There appeared to be a higher correlation between the two stages grouped within any one level than between any stage within one level and a stage in another level. The three levels and six stages will be presented, following this summary statement by Kohlberg from his first published work.

From the internalization view of the moralization process, these age changes in modes of moral thought would be interpreted as successive acquisitions or internalizations of cultural moral concepts. Our six types of thought would represent six patterns of verbal morality in the adult culture which are

successively absorbed as the child grows more verbally sophisticated.

In contrast, we have advocated the developmental interpretation that these types of thought represent structures emerging from the interaction of the child with his social environment, rather than directly reflecting external structures given by the child's culture....While these successive bases of a moral order do spring from the child's awareness of the external world, they also represent active processes of organizing or ordering his world.¹

It is clear that Kohlberg embraces an active organism model, which holds that the growing person constructs and reconstructs his own moral knowledge out of exchanges with social beings in the environment.

Three Levels of Moral Development

In a recent overview and update of his own work, Kohlberg² has presented the three levels in relation to social perspectives, which I believe is in itself a commentary on the significance he accords the latter. However, he distinguishes what he refers to as a sociomoral perspective from the role-taking stages of Selman, believing it is a broader concept underlying both role-taking and moral judgment.

The preconventional level (stages 1 and 2) is one at which the individual does not yet understand society's rules

¹Ibid., p. 30

²Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral Stages and Moralization: The Cognitive Developmental Approach," in Moral Development and Behavior: Theory, Research, and Social Issues, ed. T. Lickona (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), pp. 31-53.

and expectations. In relation to the self they remain external. He neither comprehends the grounds for their being nor does he have any sense of having participated in designing them. His is a concrete individual perspective. Paramount in his considerations are his own personal interests and sometimes those of isolated individuals other than himself. Responsiveness to rules at this level is based upon anticipated physical or hedonistic consequences of his behavior. There is a deference to the superior power of authorities. Children under nine years have rarely gone beyond this level and some adolescents may still be found to be at level 1. Kohlberg points out that it is also a prevalent level amongst adolescents and adults who have committed criminal offences.

The conventional level (stages 3 and 4) encompasses the majority of people, adolescents and adults, in all societies. People at this level advocate support of the law precisely because it is the law. Rules and expectations are identified with or internalized by the self. Hence, the rule of authority is no longer experienced as an external imposition and compliance has a more volitional character. This flows from a member-of-society perspective. The perspective no longer is a concrete individual one, but instead the individual's interests is secondary to the group's needs, welfare, and outlook. The individual at this level goes beyond mere compliance, seeking to actively maintain and justify the social order. A sense of loyalty is a strong feature at this level. The individual enjoys a sense of shared membership in the group.

The postconventional level (stages 5 and 6) is not arrived at before age twenty and even amongst an adult population relatively few people ever achieve it. The acceptance of society's rules is founded upon the individual's own capacity to construct and comprehend the general principles from which the rules derive. In time of conflict, convention is subordinated to principle. Kohlberg views this level as predicated upon a prior-to-society perspective. Paradoxically there is a return to an individual outlook rather than an unquestioning identification with the social group. However, it has a distinctively different quality from the individualism of the preconventional level. In Kohlberg's own words:

The individual point of view taken at the post-conventional level...can be universal; it is that of any rational moral individual. Aware of the member-of-society perspective, the postconventional person questions and redefines it in terms of an individual moral perspective, so that social obligations are defined in ways that can be justified to any moral individual. An individual's commitment to basic morality or moral principles is seen as preceding, or being necessary for, his taking society's perspective or accepting society's laws and values. Society's laws and values, in turn, should be ones which any reasonable person could commit himself to-whatever his place in society and whatever society he belongs to.¹

Seen in light of the above it would be expected that there would be a greater consistency of moral choices amongst people at the postconventional level because of the rational universality underpinning them than amongst people at lower

¹Ibid., p. 36.

levels. This is what Kohlberg claims to happen and he refers to it as a "probabilistic tendency" for people at the higher stages of moral development to reach consensual agreement.

Kohlberg makes an important point in cautioning against identifying a person as being at the postconventional level solely because he may make a judgment based on individual conscience and what he insists is morally right in opposition to the established order. It is entirely possible that such a person may be identifying with the rules of a sub-group which he accepts with as little question as any other conventional level person who, however, has identified with the wider social order. It is always the source and nature of one's moral reasoning that we must know to determine the structural level or stage.

It is perhaps useful to reflect upon the three levels from the standpoint of individuals' attitudes toward the law. Briefly, when the preconventional child advocates obedience to the law it is because harm may come to him if he doesn't obey it or good will come to him if he does obey it. When the conventional youngster supports the law it is because he perceives it as necessary to the preservation of good relationships and social order. Lastly, when the postconventional adolescent or adult is found embracing the law it is because he believes it to be based upon principles which safeguard individual rights.

Within any given level, the second stage is found to be more highly organized and mature in relation to its general perspective than the stage first entered into when arriving

at that level. In viewing the shifts from one level to another we see that the self of the preconventional individual decenters from his own personal interests as he moves onward to the conventional level. In turn, in order to accomplish the passage from the conventional level to the postconventional level, the individual must decenter from the perspective of society. His widening perspective, as the self disengages from the environmental and cultural embeddedness, requires an increasing capacity for abstract thinking and provides greater adequacy of moral reasoning.

Six Stages of Moral Development

As the stages we are about to examine were based upon subjects' responses to stories containing moral conflicts it would be instructive at this point to cite three illustrations as appear below.¹

1. In Europe, a woman was near death from a kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. He paid \$200 for the radium and charged \$2000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about one thousand, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it."

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, Moral Judgment Interview and Procedures for Scoring. Unpublished manuscript. (Cambridge: Center for Moral Education, Harvard University, 1976).

So Heinz gets desperate and considers breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.

2. Heinz did break into the store and get the drug. Watching from a distance was an off-duty police officer, Mr. Brown, who lived in the same town as Heinz and knew the situation Heinz was in. Mr. Brown ran over to try to stop Heinz, but Heinz was gone by the time Mr. Brown reached the store. Mr. Brown wonders whether he should look for Heinz and arrest him.
3. Joe is a fourteen-year-old boy who wanted to go to camp very much. His father promised him he could go if he saved up the money for it himself. So Joe worked hard at his paper route and saved up the \$40 it cost to go to camp and a little more besides. But just before camp was going to start, his father changed his mind. Some of his friends decided to go on a special fishing trip, and Joe's father was short of the money it would cost. So he told Joe to give him the money he had saved from the paper route. Joe didn't want to give up going to camp so he thinks of refusing to give his father the money.

Once a story is presented to a subject the investigator then poses a series of pertinent questions about it and probes the respondent's answers. For example, in the first story, the subject is asked whether Heinz should steal the drug and the reasons behind the respondent's decision are then pursued. He is further asked whether Heinz's feelings toward his wife should influence his course of action and whether the prescribed action should be any different if the woman is a stranger to Heinz. Questions are posed regarding the law in the story situation and in general with a focus upon obedience. In the third story, the questions involve relationships, promises, and property rights. The subject's responses to stories

of this type and their accompanying questions becomes the raw data from which an individual's stage of moral development is assessed.

Stage 1: Heteronomous Morality

The defining feature of this stage is the individual's conception of right as being obedient to the power holders. Those in authority have a position enabling them to impose punishments upon those who disobey, hence obedience is subscribed to by Stage 1 children because it will help to avoid punishment and other adverse consequences. There is no vision of a moral order which must be maintained through punishment as necessary to accomplish that end. Hence, a notion of right is arrived at by anticipating the physical consequences of the act, irrespective of any other consideration. It is not the case that the child has no realization that there is a right and wrong at this embryonic stage, but that his notion of it pivots around the desire to avoid punishment. There is an old familiar phrase, "Might makes right" which carries something of the central meaning of this stage. The imprint of preoperational thought is upon this stage as there is a distorting egocentrism in the child's centration upon only one aspect of the situation. The value of life during Stage 1 is not differentiated from an individual's material possessions. Therefore, moral judgments regarding the value of any one person's life will be heavily influenced by his wealth.

There is obviously a sharp departure in Kohlberg's interpretation of this stage from that of Piaget's. Where Piaget

emphasizes the child's emotional bond producing unilateral respect toward the adult, Kohlberg does not. He suggests that in Piaget's view anticipated punishment is important because it signals to the child what the respected adult will or will not approve. Kohlberg found neither respect for adults nor an attitude of rules as sacred in children of this stage.

Stage 2: Individualism and Instrumental Purpose and Exchange

In originally reporting his findings, Kohlberg observed that his Stage 1 coincided with Piaget's stage of heteronomy and that Stage 2 coincided with the autonomous stage in Piaget's work. However, it is frequently suggested that some elements of heteronomy as described by Piaget extend from Stages 1 to 4 in Kohlberg's system, whereas elements of autonomy may be found ranging from Stages 2 to 6.

The child's conception of right at Stage 2 is essentially one of stark reciprocity. An exactly equal exchange of goods or favors seems to be the guiding light of this stage. Until recently the prevalent terminology for this stage was "instrumental hedonism." Doing something for another is right because he will repay you in some way now or later. Leaving someone alone is right, because then he will leave you alone. In a religious context, Kohlberg reports one child as saying a person should be good to God because then He will be good to the person. Reciprocity at this stage does not flow from a respect for the rights or dignity of the other, but merely from a pragmatic expectation of receiving similar treatment. There appears a naive egalitarian outlook with an accompanying diminution of any sense that adults may be morally superior.

A growing awareness of the relativism of each person's own needs and perspective is now manifest. The hallmark of this stage is pursuing one's self interests and obtaining rewards, tempered only by a pragmatic concept of fairness as equal exchange. Of paramount concern is having one's own needs fulfilled. The relativism of perspectives and reciprocity of this stage are the aspects that link it with Piaget's autonomous stage. However, the full flowering of Kohlberg's stages of development will take the growing person very far from this as he constructs moral knowledge of a much higher order.

Stage 3: Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Interpersonal Conformity

The child now goes beyond strict equality to equity. Role-taking invokes taking into account the feelings and intentions of others. A conception of right is geared to meeting the expectations of friends and family. Loyalty and affiliation become of the utmost importance. The Golden Rule is now exercised as the individual will place himself in the other person's shoes to determine what is fair and desirable. Kohlberg distinguishes this type of role-taking ability as imaginative reciprocity in contrast to exchange reciprocity which is characteristic of Stage 2. A concern for others is expressed. A desire to receive praise and avoid blame will influence the judgment of what constitutes right and wrong action. Kohlberg refers to this sometimes as the "Good-boy/Nice-girl" stage. One is motivated to observe rules in order to maintain relationships. The individual's conception of right at this stage is

limited to people within his own circle and does not extend to a broad societal level, encompassing both known and unknown members of the larger social group. It is at this stage, however, that the child is aware in interpersonal relationships that the other will make a judgment about him based on his behavior. This new role-taking ability will enable him to modify his intended behavior on the basis of how he anticipates the other might respond to it. This capacity both allows the child to construct a new view of what constitutes the right and at the same time helps him to fulfill what is prescribed by it.

Stage 4: Social System and Conscience

The scope of this stage encompasses the complete network of the entire society. There is a sense of obligation to obey laws and perform duties. Laws are construed as necessary to maintain society. The allegiance to following laws now springs from a conception of a moral order which goes beyond one's own circle of friends and relatives. The level of abstraction required at this stage is greater, for the notion of justice is based upon legislation issuing from government and is expected to apply to all people in the land without exception. To maintain the social order conformity to the laws is demanded. This, of course, precludes deviation and diversity. The conservation of laws is emphasized and change is deemphasized.

Kohlberg provides an incisive comment on the main features of this stage, in stating the following:

Stage 4 positive reciprocity is exchange of reward for effort or merit, not interpersonal exchange of goods or service. Negative reciprocity is even more clearly centered on the social system: vengeance is the right of society and is conceived not as vengeance but as "paying your debt to society." The equality element of justice appears primarily in terms of the uniform and regular administration of the law, and as equity in an order of merit. Social inequality is allowed where it is reciprocal to effort, moral conformity, and talent, but unequal favoring of the "idle" and "immoral," poor, students, etc., is strongly rejected.¹

The majority of adults in most societies are at this stage. Kohlberg's description of it is not intended as a disparagement. He believes that it is a considerable advance over previous stages, that it is not merely an internalization of society's rules and taboos, and that in light of the relatively mature role-taking ability involved it is rooted cognitively in a fairly deep-structure.

Stage 5: Social Contract or Utility and Individual Rights

Discussion of this stage will open with a caveat. Although it is customary to present the traditional six stages without qualification, the fact is that since first identifying these stages a considerable amount of attention has been devoted to the transition between Stages 4 and 5. It is an especially critical juncture since comparatively few people do

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "From Is to Ought: How to Commit the Naturalistic Fallacy and Get Away with It in the Study of Moral Development," in Cognitive Development and Epistemology, ed. T. Mischel (New York: Academic Press, 1971), p. 197.

progress to the postconventional level and yet it is at this point that heteronomy is surpassed and genuinely principled moral reasoning emerges. To avoid muddying the waters, however, until familiarity with the basic stages has been acquired, I shall defer discussion of Stage 4B.

It has been observed that the Piagetian moral characteristics of intentionality, reciprocity, and relativism appear in the developmental sequence prior to the postconventional level. Therefore, the defining features of principled thinking to be found in stages 5 and 6 must go beyond these characteristics, at least beyond them as they appear in conventional level forms.

Stage 4 moral reasoning concentrates on maintaining the status quo. Stage 5 is defined by a qualitatively different conception of justice attuned to the necessity of changing unjust laws. This moral vision is possible because of the prior-to-society perspective which the person at this stage is able to adopt. A perspective from this angle informs the mind that laws do not exist to be obeyed but to protect the rights of individuals and enhance the general welfare. A law that does not embody and assist in fulfilling a human right and which, in fact, runs counter to it must be changed. A democratic society is the natural outgrowth of Stage 5 moral thinking. There exists in it a theoretically fair procedure for effecting change and it is recourse to this procedural mechanism which the Stage 5 person will advocate when confronted with an unjust law. Hence, there is a legalistic orientation

founded upon the social contract. It is not that there is any disrespect for law, but rather that the source of the respect is a knowledge of the purpose law is intended to fulfill. Therefore, when it fails to meet the standard set for it by the stage 5 person, then the grounds for changing it are clear and rational. Kohlberg formulates his view:

There is clear awareness of the relativism of personal values and opinions and a corresponding emphasis upon procedural rules for reaching consensus. Aside from what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, the right is a matter of personal values and opinion. The result is an emphasis upon the legal point of view, but with an emphasis upon the possibility of changing law in terms of rational consideration of social utility....Outside the legal realm, free agreement is the binding element of obligation.¹

Kohlberg has pointed out the fact that not all moral conflicts are those between society's rules or interests and the egoistic impulses of the individual, which must be restrained. There may exist, and often does, conflict between two valid alternatives. Kohlberg's stories are designed to accentuate this type of dilemma and it is at Stage 5 that the person becomes most acutely aware of this. Previously there is either an ignorance of the true nature of the conflict or an evasion of it. The stage 5 moral thinker recognizes it, faces it squarely, and attempts a genuinely rational resolution. The Stage 4 thinker tends to view maintaining law and order as defending against the outsiders who do not comply or show

¹Lawrence Kohlberg and Elliot Turiel, "Moral Development and Education," in Collected Papers on Moral Development and Moral Education, ed. L. Kohlberg (Cambridge: Center for Moral

proper respect for law. The Stage 5 thinker in contrast is concerned with just procedural mechanisms that will extend across the range of all citizens to encompass suspected and even convicted criminals, whose rights must also be protected. There does not exist the same dichotomy between conforming insiders and non-conforming outsiders at Stage 5 as there is at stage 4. The rights of any two citizens or of a single citizen and the general welfare may legitimately clash and the task is to seek a rational method for resolving the conflict which will be just. Kohlberg believes that a Constitutional Democracy provides the organization to achieve this. Implicit in the arrangement is contractual consent. Kohlberg's observations on this point are illuminating. He states:

The social contract which is the basis of the Stage 5 socio-moral order is a justice conception which presupposes reciprocity of the partners to the agreement and equality between them prior to the agreement, though the form of agreement takes priority over substantive justice, once agreement has been reached. Contract and due process are fundamental, and since contracts cannot be binding without the liberty of the contracted, liberty typically takes priority over the other elements of justice (reciprocity and equality) in the Stage 5 view....¹

Education, Harvard University, 1973), p. 416.

¹Kohlberg, "From Is to Ought," p. 202.

Shortly afterward he states pointedly:

Law is nonarbitrary when it accords with constitutional procedures which a rational man could accept without prior cultural values or conditioning. Particular laws are arbitrary, but still binding to a rational man in this context.¹

At Stage 5 there is a heightened awareness of the relativity of the positions held by those in a conflict situation. In the case of the Heinz story cited above, assume that Heinz carried out the theft and is now before the judge. Kohlberg reveals that someone at Stage 5 can believe that the husband was morally right in carrying out what appears to be a rational act, stealing the drug to save the life of his wife, while at the same time hold that he was legally wrong and it would be right for the judge to sentence him to jail. The judge must properly discharge his assigned and agreed upon role even though he, himself, may not think that the husband was morally wrong.

Despite the greater adequacy and universality that characterizes Stage 5 structural development in the moral domain, Kohlberg² highlights the potential inherent in it for undermining individual rights in favor of the general welfare on some occasions, because of its utilitarian foundation. He chooses as an example an issue of no less significance than that of capital punishment. Stage 5 upholds both a principle

¹Kohlberg, "From Is to Ought," p. 204.

²Lawrence Kohlberg and Donald Elfenbein, "The Development of Moral Judgments Concerning Capital Punishment," American

of welfare maximization and of individual rights existing prior to society. In general, both of these principles would be against an essentially retributive punishment. The conflict Kohlberg is leading up to is masked as long as it is believed that there is no evidence to support the deterrence theory of execution. In the absence of such evidence there is no gain to the welfare of society's members in capital punishment and, hence, in ruling it out the murderer's right to life is preserved. However, assume that compelling documentation to support the deterrence theory is submitted. It is now possible to conceive of a situation in which hundreds, perhaps thousands, of lives can be saved yearly by executing apprehended murderers and, of course, running the unavoided risk of occasionally killing an innocent person in error. Kohlberg argues that the utilitarian orientation of maximizing the general welfare would, in the light of evidence supporting deterrence, permit a decision in favor of capital punishment to be made. There is nothing in the structural dimensions of Stage 5 which allows for a resolution to this potential conflict that could deprive the convicted murderer of his right to life. It is to Stage 6 that we must turn to find the completely universalized principles that infuse the highest order of prescriptive moral vision.

Stage 6: Universal Ethical Principles

The rare person whose sociocognitive moral development

has brought him to this stage of moral reasoning is fully autonomous. He is completely decentered from society's expectations and basis his resolutions to ethical conflicts upon universal principles of justice which are prescriptively consistent without exception. Universality, consistency, and logical comprehensiveness are the central attributes that characterize the guiding principles of his conscience through which he chooses right over wrong. Conscience, in this sense, does not connote guilt, but the purely rational quality of his justice structure. Respect for the dignity of each individual, regardless of station in life, has reached a zenith.

Although there is less hard research data on this stage than on any of the preceding ones, Kohlberg devotes more time to exploring it than with all of the others combined. It is here that he may be found at his most philosophical and eloquent. It is also at Stage 5 and especially at Stage 6 where critics find him the most vulnerable. Kohlberg is adamant that some ways of resolving moral issues are better than others and it is an absolute that Stage 6 moral reasoning offers a better way than any other. It is the highest known stage of moral development and as such offers the most adequate means for arriving at ethical solutions to competing claims between individuals or between individual and the general welfare. The justice principles embraced at this stage lead to ethical resolutions which would be accepted by any rational person who is engaged in moral reasoning uninfluenced by his own existential role and personal interests. The solution itself will be seen

as intrinsically and necessarily just, which makes it even more adequate than the justice of stage 5 which comes from consenting to submit to the binding nature of social contract or democratic procedure.

Principled thinking at this stage provides the rationale for breaking the law. At Stage 5 there is an emphasis upon working through the democratic process to change an unjust law. Thus, Stage 4 appears conservative by comparison. Similarly, to the Stage 6 thinker the long change process advocated by the person at Stage 5 might seem relatively conservative. At Stage 6, an unjust law constitutes sufficient ground for civil disobedience. One's own conscience dictates that compliance with an unjust law is not morally required and that active resistance to it is ethically defensible. An excellent example of Stage 6 moral reasoning appeared in the form of a letter to the editor of a large metropolitan newspaper. It was written by Philip Berrigan, the well known radical priest, and a friend who were serving six months in prison at the time for protesting nuclear proliferation in the United States. They state that they are questioning the role of the courts and law in America. They then go on to assert, "And we will risk arrest and accept prison because the price of freedom in a society ruled by the Bomb is unconscionably great. The price of freedom is to remain good, law abiding citizens in the face of preparations for genocide on a scale

that will dwarf the holocaust of World War II."¹ Is the Stage 6 thinker an anarchist who has no respect for law? An answer comes from a letter by a man in a Birmingham jail. Martin Luther King states, "One who breaks an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly, and with a willingness to accept the penalty. An individual who breaks the law that conscience tells him is unjust, and willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice is, in reality expressing the highest respect for the law."² It is worth noting that an analysis of the public pronouncements of soldiers who followed the command of Lt. Calley in the Mai Lai Massacre of the Vietnam War reveals that their conception of justice was at Stage 4. They believed it was their duty to do as they were ordered to do in this situation. The one soldier who refused to fire has been interviewed privately and Kohlberg has found his explanation for refusing to obey the order to be at a stage 6 principled level of reasoning. This reflects the universality of principles of justice.

There occurs an enlargement across development of the range to which the inherent valuing of human life is extended. At Stage 1 we find that value of others' lives is determined by their importance, at Stage 3 friends and relatives are those

¹Philip Berrigan & John Schuchardt, Letters to the Editor, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Philadelphia, Penna., appx. 1978.

²Rolf E. Muss, "Kohlberg's Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Adolescent Morality," Adolescence 11 (1976): 46.

whose lives are essentially valued, by Stage 6, however, the inherent value of each person's life and his right to that life is universally recognized. The importance of the person or the moral agent's relationship to him are totally irrelevant as far as an application of the principle is concerned.

We have seen that at Stage 5 the morally right is conceived of as contractual and legal. Laws are consensually agreed upon as they are designed to maximize human welfare and promote individual rights. Once legislated, laws should be obeyed since the citizen has entered a contract although he may work through the democratic process to have unjust laws changed. At Stage 6 an act of civil disobedience is considered an appropriate response to unjust laws because the principles of justice underlying a conception of morality transcend the limitations of the stage 5 utility orientation of maximizing the general welfare of society's members. These principles of justice and a method for arriving at truly just solutions must now be explored.

Kohlberg¹ has offered several excellent philosophical expositions and they have served as major sources for this discussion. A prescriptive right based on principle at Stage 6 is one made by a moral agent who has decentered from both his

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "Stages of Moral Development As a Basis for Moral Education," in Moral Education, ed. C.M. Beck, B.S. Crittenden, & E.V. Sullivan (New York: Newman Press, 1971), pp. 24-92; Lawrence Kohlberg, "From Is to Ought: How to Commit the Naturalistic Fallacy and Get Away with It in the Study of Moral Development," in Cognitive Development and Epistemology, ed. T. Mischel (New York: Academic Press, 1971), pp. 151-235; Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Claim to Moral Adequacy of a Highest Stage of Moral Judgment," The Journal of Philosophy 70 (1973): 630-46.

own egoistic impulses and the pressures of others. It therefore becomes a right that is applicable to all individuals. A principle is viewed as a guide to choice which possesses a more abstract quality than a rule. A rule has a more concrete base and cannot be universalized to all people. A rule to be faithful to your spouse cannot be founded upon a universal right that encompasses all people, as clearly not everyone has a spouse. If one were to accept the rule it still could not apply to children, bachelors, and those who are divorced. A class of acts cannot be universalized according to Kohlberg, because he believes there is always the possibility that a particular situation might call for a violation of the prescription or proscription involved. Hence, while it might be generally good not to steal, it is morally defensible to steal in the case of the Heinz story because the wife's right to life takes precedent over the druggist's right to property.¹ Unlike a rule, a principle does not specify the act to be carried out or refrained from. A principle may be construed as a metarule, which is to say that it serves as a higher order rule or instrumentality for constructing and assessing first order rules. Cognitively this is rooted in formal operations where

¹The Heinz story is ideally constructed to serve Kohlberg's purpose. Should the reader think, however, that Heinz's dilemma is remote from real life, it is worth noting that at the time of this writing in 1978, the state of Pennsylvania due to a bureaucratic impasse has temporarily discontinued reimbursing druggists for services to welfare recipients. The result is that many druggists have stopped filling the prescriptions for these people and, therefore, thousands of poor people have at present gone for weeks without needed medicine.

we find the abstract ability to think in terms of second order propositions as opposed to merely first order propositions. It is paradoxical that the less abstract conventional level thinker places the welfare of the more abstract collective above the concrete individual, whereas the more abstract Stage 6 moral agent places the rights of the concrete individual in a real situation above the collective's need for order. As Kohlberg states, "From our point of view there is a logical fallacy parallel to elevating the group above its members: the fallacy of treating a principle as elevated above the individuals in the situation to which it applies....True principles guide us to the obligating elements in the situation, to the concrete human claims there."¹ A principle permits the individual to identify and organize, in any specific situation, all moral elements germane to resolving the conflict of competing claims, according to Kohlberg's view.

Kohlberg draws heavily in his formulation of Stage 6 thinking upon Kant's two basic moral tenents. One is to always act toward another human being as to treat him as an end and not merely as a means. The other is to act upon a maxim only if you would be willing to see it embodied as a universal law. By applying the second of these to the first, Kohlberg maintains the outcome is that, "...all individuals must be accorded

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "Stages of Moral Development As A Basis for Moral Education," in Moral Education, ed. C.M. Beck, B.S. Crittenden, and E.V. Sullivan (New York: Newman Press, 1971), p. 61.

fundamentally equal consideration."¹ In his analysis of Kant from which derives the justice principle enunciated in the preceding statement, Kohlberg concludes that treating another as an end and not as a means is to be interpreted with respect to rights and claims.

At this juncture in following Kohlberg's argument it is necessary to reintroduce the concept of reversibility, which is a cornerstone to Piaget's genetic epistemology. In fact, he links his particular use of the term to logical thought. There is a mobility of thought in logic which permits shifting from premise to conclusion and back again while averting distortion. Reversibility in the moral domain is isomorphic to the logical domain in relation to rights and duties. Duties and rights have a reciprocal relationship. A right by one person implies a duty by another and reciprocally, a duty by one implies a right by another. Conversely, in the absence of a right there is no correlative duty. This is an instance of reciprocal implication which is one of the causal relationships comprising the sixteen binary operational model that governs formal operational thought. Kohlberg amplified his notion of reversibility to add that in the presence of a right others are duty bound to acknowledge that right. By assuming reversible positions of key individuals in a conflict situation and exercising what Kohlberg calls a second order conception

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Development of Moral Judgments Concerning Capital Punishment," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 45 (1975): 633.

of Golden Rule role-taking it is possible for the Stage 6 moral agent to arrive at a just and equilibrated ethical solution to conflicts. There exists a state of disequilibrium when competing claims remain unresolved and it is only at Stage 6 that a solution which would be satisfactory to all rational individuals regardless of what role they may find themselves in may be arrived at. Central to his position is the following clarification by Kohlberg:

Reversibility of moral judgment is what is ultimately meant by the criterion of the fairness of a moral decision. Procedurally, fairness as impartiality means reversibility in the sense of a decision on which all interested parties could agree insofar as they can consider their own claims impartially, as the just decider would. If we have a reversible solution, we have one that could be reached as right starting from anyone's perspective in the situation, given each person's intent to put himself in the shoes of the otherIf something is fair or right to do from the conflicting points of view of all those involved in the situation, it is something we can wish all men to do in all similar situations.¹

If Heinz is reasoning at Stage 6, he will place the druggist in the situation of the dying wife and anticipate whether the druggist would, from that perspective, still hold to the claim of property rights over life. He would then reverse the imaginative drama and have the wife placed in the druggists' situation and ask whether she would continue to press her claim to life after having experienced that perspective. Kohlberg suggests

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Claim to Moral Adequacy of a Highest Stage of Moral Judgment," The Journal of Philosophy 70 (1973): 641.

that the druggist would yield his claim and the wife would not. Once Heinz has undergone this "ideal role-taking" he will see clearly in which direction justice lies. The process described here is what Kohlberg is referring to when he speaks of second order Golden Rule role-taking. Heinz does not simply put himself in the wife's position but he first imagines himself to be the druggist and then he places himself in the wife's shoes. Thus he takes the perspective of his wife as seen through the eyes of the druggist. This is more complex than the process through which the Stage 3 person applies the Golden Rule. At Stage 3 if he merely takes the perspective of his wife, then her claim will be valid; if he takes the perspective of the druggist, then his claim will seem valid. Hence, while Stage 3 moral reasoning is most assuredly an advance over the preceding stages it does not offer a fully equilibrated solution to moral conflicts, which is not arrived at until Stage 6. It is Kohlberg's conviction that the philosophical analysis he offers is a demonstration of the manner in which justice principles which are universal, consistent, and logically comprehensive are derived.

The work of John Rawls¹ has made a profound impact since its publication in 1971 and is worthy of comment in connection with Kohlberg's moral system. Rawls' book has already spawned a spate of articles and other books about his theory of justice

¹John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1971).

and it is being speculated that his contribution to political and philosophical thought will be permanent in the tradition of Plato, Kant, Mills, and Locke. Rawls' analysis of justice focuses upon a level of justice in relation to social institutions and does not have the psychological and individual emphasis which Kohlberg's does. Nevertheless, the central vision of justice as the core structure of morality inextricably links the two thinkers together. Rawls has identified two major principles of justice. The first is that each person in society has equal entitlement to maximum liberty that is congenial to a similar liberty for others. The second is related to inequalities within a society regarding social and economic areas. Rawls' contention is that existing inequalities should be only those which are of benefit to everyone. A corrolary is that positions of inequality should be affiliated with posts which are equally accessible to all. Injustice for Rawls are those inequalities which do not work to the advantage of everyone. Justice is fairness. The principles are to be applied to the entire society and the second one in particular is concerned with distributive justice, regulating wealth, income and welfare services, including health and education. The theoretical cornerstone is the idea that citizens are to enter a social contract founded upon principles of justice that all rational people would design and embrace. As a hypothetical device for arriving at justice principles he offers his notion of imaginatively entering the "original position" under a "veil of ignorance." What he is suggesting is that to design a

fair society one should rationally adopt the perspective of a person who will live in the society after it is conceived, but who at the time of conceiving it does not know anything about what his role will be in it. The nature of his work and socio-economic status he remains completely ignorant of while he is developing the blueprint. He is to exercise prudence and take into account what the possible effects would be upon him should he find himself in one role or another at a later date. He is to assume that he will, in fact, enter one or more of the roles within the society once it has been designed. In the meantime, he must decide how goods and services are to be distributed and on what basis opportunities are to be made accessible. Rawls believes that all rational people agree upon the justice principles that would be derived through the heuristic device of the original position. He further believes that his own two egalitarian principles, previously stated, may be generated in this manner and that, therefore, all rational people would find them acceptable.

Kohlberg and Elfenbein¹ have applied Rawls' device of the original position in a discussion to the question of whether capital punishment is just. They suggest that no rational person would in advance consent to enter a society that practiced such retributive punishment if there was a chance that he might be a murderer. Yet it would be rational to design some type of deterrence in the penal system since the hypothetical person

¹Kohlberg, "Capital Punishment," pp. 614-40.

might fulfill a role of a non-criminal. It would be prudent to run the risk of facing some restraint as a criminal, should he find himself in that role, to avoid finding himself confronted with criminals on the street, should he turn out to be a non-criminal. Still bearing in mind that he might assume the criminal role, he would favor that deterrence mechanism which places the least constraint upon him while effectively achieving the deterrent goal. Pursuing their analysis through the original position, Kohlberg and Elfenbein conclude that neither capital punishment nor even life imprisonment would be necessary to deter the rational person, as all that would be necessary would be a punishment, "...just severe enough to offset the gains which might be realized from the commission of the offense."¹ Their analysis is brought to a close with the following summary statement:

The judgment that capital punishment per se is unjust is ineluctable if we accept the Stage 6 proposition that the murderer is to be treated as anyone else in his position who also took the roles of others would wish to be treated (as an end rather than a means). As we have stated, the Stage 6 mode of moral reasoning is unique in that it yields a determinate and fully reversible solution. It is therefore the mode we want all men to adopt; if all men did so, they would reach unanimous agreement that the death penalty is morally wrong on grounds that all who took a moral point of view could accept as fair.²

¹Ibid., p. 637.

²Ibid., p. 637

In the context of this discussion, the authors introduce an important theme, which appears to be one about which Kohlberg has a strong conviction. He believes that a social evolution has been occurring which is reflected in a trend toward ultimately stabilizing moral progress at a higher level of development than it has been in the past. The authors express the opinion that this is being applied to retributive forms of justice, which increasingly will be deemphasized in future penal codes in favor of a greater form of justice.

Stage 7: The Cosmic Perspective

In recent work Kohlberg¹ has begun introducing the possibility of a seventh stage which assumes a cosmic perspective that goes beyond the humanistic one of the sixth stage. This is a step that moves his theory toward a life-span developmental psychology, as it would no longer confine itself to the periods of childhood, adolescence, and youth. His speculations on the possibility of this stage are appealing, although he readily acknowledges that there exists no research data to support them presently. Kohlberg suggests that Stage 6 does not answer the questions, "Why be moral?" and, by implication, "Why live?" To raise these questions is to shift from a moral plane to a religious or ontological plane. Kohlberg believes that answers to these questions cannot be derived

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "Stages and Aging in Moral Development: Some Speculations," Gerontologist 13 (1973): 497-502; Lawrence Kohlberg, "Education, Moral Development and Faith" Journal of Moral Education 4 (1974): 5-16.

from rational grounds, as with the purely moral issues, but he does feel, nevertheless, that the answers need not be incompatible with reason. Nor need the answer be essentially theistic as opposed to a cosmic one. Kohlberg speaks of experiencing despair as the beginning of movement into Stage 7. The aging person begins to construe his finite life from the infinite perspective of the cosmic, which generates despair, as doubt is cast upon life's meaning, given its temporality. The next phase, however, involves a transition from seeing the infinite perspective to identifying the self with the cosmic perspective of the infinite. A sense of unity with the cosmos imparts a new valuing of one's own life and eliminates the sense of meaninglessness that characterized the preceding phase of despair. In the absence of data, Kohlberg refrains from concluding that what he is elaborating upon signifies a structural advance that would meet the formal criteria qualifying it as a true stage in the same sense that the preceding stages do. However, whether the cosmic perspective is ultimately determined to qualify as a stage from the standpoint of a structural orientation or not, it is clear that Kohlberg believes spiritual growth is possible amongst the aging.

Bridging Conventional and Postconventional Moral Development

There are two key papers,¹ dealing with the issues of structural regression and stage transition, which merit special attention within the context of this discussion. The papers are related, as the 1973 one is a revision of the original interpretation made in the 1969 paper of what then appeared to be structural regression. Normally, one would not predict regression from a stage theory as defined by cognitive-structuralists, barring such serious developments as senility.

The 1969 paper reports the results of research conducted earlier by Kramer. The subjects were a group of those who were in Kohlberg's own original longitudinal study. They ranged in age from sixteen to twenty five. Kramers study was both longitudinal and cross-sectional. The interviewing was conducted at three year levels. A young man in the study would either be compared to his own earlier statements or to those of a boy in another age group. There were a total of 45 subjects in the study.

¹Lawrence Kohlberg and Richard Kramer, "Continuities and Discontinuities in Childhood and Adult Moral Development," Human Development 12 (1969): 93-120; Lawrence Kohlberg, "Continuities in Childhood and Adult Moral Development Revisited," in Collected Papers on Moral Development and Moral Education, ed. L. Kohlberg. (Cambridge: Center for Moral Education, Harvard University, 1973).

One of the conclusions from this study, later to be revised upward, was that Stage 5 thinking, when it appeared, was completely stabilized by the time high school had ended. However, it is not until the early twenties that stage 6 thinking, rare though its occurrence may be, is found to be fairly well along in development. On the basis of this data, one would not anticipate that any significant moral development would occur after the early twenties. The stabilization of conventional moral modes of thought after graduation from high school, for those who did not progress to the next moral level, was a significant developmental observation.

The finding that drew the most serious attention was that 20% of the middle class boys slipped from a higher stage to Stage 2. Those who did this had ranked amongst the most developed of the entire group under study. Their previous moral development had reflected a mix of Stages 4 and 5. Yet they seemed to retrogress to a stage of hedonistic relativism. Nevertheless, two important qualifications obtained. Even though they were found to be making predominantly Stage 2 statements, the content contained a degree of philosophical and political coloration not ordinarily found in Stage 2 subjects. Furthermore, when it was explored with them through the clinical interview, the retrogressors displayed an awareness that people generally preferred Stage 4 type of reasoning. Hence, although they seemed to prefer Stage 2 reasoning in this regressed condition, they retained a comprehension of Stage 4 type reasoning. This, of course, would not be true of

a person who had arrived developmentally at Stage 4 without having regressed. The regression of the subjects had occurred while they were in their senior high school year or early college career. The striking fact is that without exception, by the time they had reached age twenty-five each one had not only been restored to Stages 4 and 5 thinking, but there then appeared to be a trifle more of the principled level of moral reasoning than of the conventional, in comparison to when they had been in high school. Sifting through all the pertinent evidence, Kohlberg and Kramer concluded that their subjects had undergone a functional advance although a structural regression. Kohlberg and Kramer, based on an analysis of the subjects' statements, suggest that the regression was a way of coping with guilt from internalized parental authority. Once on the college campus, they attempted to break free of the guilt-inducing constraints. Kohlberg and Kramer comment, as follows:

In the case of our retrogressors, there is considerable use of relativism and anti-moral protest to free themselves from family induced guilt. At least half of our regressors gave conscious and clear statements of strong sensitivity to and preoccupation with guilt feelings in pre-adolescence and adolescence. In this pre-regression period, the guilt was completely accepted as the voice of higher morality, as something self-accepted and internal. At the same time, the capacity of the boy's parents to inflict this sense of guilt was also noted by the boys. After

they left home, they started to test out their capacity to be guilt free.¹

In addition to this psychological phenomenon, the youngsters were being confronted with a challenge to their conventional morality as college life exposed them to the fact that often people did not follow moral precepts or were not rewarded for doing so when they did. Their regression was seen by Kohlberg and Kramer to be partly a rebellion against this realization. The authors go on to observe, "There are, then, two developmental challenges to conventional morality to which our regressors are unhappily responding. The first is the relativity of moral expectations and opinion, the second is the gap between conventional moral expectations and actual moral behavior."²

In a liberal adaptation of Erikson's concept of psychological moratorium, Kohlberg and Kramer interpret the retrogressors' condition as a "rebellious moratorium" which frees them from their guilt so that when they are restored to higher level morality it has more of a volitional quality than a psychically determined one. Return to the higher morality from which they appear to have temporally dropped now has a quality of the "Right thing for the right reason," if I may paraphrase T. S. Elliot. The reaffirmation of the higher stages of morality

¹Lawrence Kohlberg and Richard Kramer, "Continuities and Discontinuities in Childhood and Moral Development," Human Development 12 (1969): 114.

²Ibid., p. 115.

with its rules and contracts is embraced with greater realism and commitment than prior to regression. The structural regression is also a functional advance in the service of ego development.

I have chosen to treat this issue at considerable length because any true structural regression in normal development would deliver a fatal blow to Kohlberg's invariant sequence and greater adequacy hypotheses. It is also important to pay careful attention to Kohlberg's reworking of any apparent regression for there is always the danger that he may be unwittingly straining at reinterpreting the facts merely to preserve the hypotheses rather than modifying the latter to fit the former, as Brown and Hernstein¹ incisively caution. Lastly, the subject we are focusing upon hovers around the transition from conventional to principled moral reasoning, which is a matter of decisive importance.

A span of four years passed before the second paper, which provided more opportunity to explore in-depth the developmental changes that the subjects in the longitudinal study were undergoing. Kohlberg and Kramer had claimed that no real structural development was occurring in adulthood and that most of what they observed could be explained in terms of functional stages of the psychosocial variety described by Erikson. However, given new data, a searching conceptual reanalysis of regression in relation to stage theory, and a

¹Roger Brown & Richard J. Hernstein, Psychology (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1975).

reassessment of the scoring system, a revision was seen to be in order. The change in the scoring system involved a further deemphasis of content, accompanied by a greater attentiveness to structural elements. Essentially, what Kohlberg is now asserting is that the apparent regression of the subjects we have been following is proof that none of their thinking had been morally principled, for if it had been, then it would have been stabilized and would not have yielded to regression in the face of conflict. Genuine Stage 5 and Stage 6 moral development is crystalized in the latter part of one's twenties and beyond.

Kohlberg, drawing upon a conceptual distinction made earlier by Turiel, comments, "...the apparent regression involved in stage development is a disequilibrium of transition very different than the disorganization or dedifferentiation involved in regression....our relativistic regressions to Stage 2 are in a disequilibrated transitional stage in which the breakup of conventional morality is easy to confuse with the resurgence of preconventional morality."¹ Kohlberg acknowledges having been in error when he and Kramer interpreted their subjects' as having had a structural regression,

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "Continuities in Childhood and Adult Moral Development Revisited," in Collected Papers on Moral Development and Moral Education, ed. L. Kohlberg (Cambridge: Center for Moral Education, Harvard University, 1973), p. 21.

even though a functional advance. The reinterpretation calls for the identification of a transitional stage to be referred to as Stage 4B. What is happening experientially to the subjects is that having been at Stage 4 they start the progression toward Stage 5. The movement is characterized by skepticism which leads to a questioning of the very Stage they are about to move away from. Their moral reasoning appears relativistic and egoistic, as in Stage 2, because they now seem to be holding that any one person's choice based on his own interests and desires is as morally sound as another's, as there exists no objectively validated standard against which to assess them. The qualitative difference is that Stage 2 children evaluate right and wrong strictly in accord with their personal wish. They lack any concept of a societal perspective or duty. The Stage 4 thinker in transition possesses these concepts, but is facing a crisis in that he is challenging, hence skepticism, the very grounds upon which he had been embracing his conventional morality. He is on the threshold of a breakthrough to principled moral reasoning which, although he does not yet realize it, will supply him with the new standard for which he is striving. In the meantime, he is at neither Stage 5 nor Stage 2, but has reached a more abstract level of Stage 4, which is 4B, than he had been at previously. Kohlberg emphasizes that the Stage 4B subject takes a dual relativistic perspective in which he now sees both society's and the personal "selfish" points of view people hold as morally valid.

Turiel¹ views those undergoing the passage from Stage 4 to 5 as being temporarily in a state of limbo, having rejected the stability of Stage 4 while not yet having invented for themselves the more adequate structure of the Stage 5 social contract orientation. What we find characterizing the responses of these Stage 4B transitional subjects is a constant vacillation between highly relativistic and rigidly absolutistic solutions to moral dilemmas. This vacillation greatly resembles the cognitive dynamics of a nonconserving child as he moves toward the conservation of substance, first centering upon length and then upon width, but failing to coordinate the two variables in a simultaneous decentering. Similarly, the Stage 4B subject who is in transition engages in sequential decentering, alternating between relativism and absolutism, thereby coming up with distorted and inadequate moral solutions. The subject is in transition and experiencing a necessary disequilibrium. Out of this interim phase he forges a new moral vision based upon a social contract structure. The penalty for avoiding the conflict is to remain permanently consigned to a Stage 4 version of morality. For those who do go on, Turiel suggests that at some point during the passage to Stage 5, "A critical view of Stage 4 absolutism is coupled with an awareness of the relativity of social conventions."²

Returning now to Kohlberg, on the basis of the new

¹Elliot Turiel, "Stage Transition in Moral Development," in Second Handbook of Research in Teaching, ed. R. Travers (New York: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1973), pp. 732-58.

²Ibid., p. 750.

interpretation he revised his position. Candidly noting the earlier scoring error, he formulates a summary statement, as follows:

We now claim that apparent "retrogression" and "stabilization" was really a structural stage-development, a movement from a high school conventional Stage 4 position to a transitional 4-½ ethical relativism and egoism to a principled stage 5 position. Our earlier interpretation error was due to confusing high school conventional thought with principled thought. We said the confusion was due to the fact that there is an overlap in content between developed forms of conventional concepts of the moral as social consensus and social welfare and principled concepts of the moral. While both the conventional Stage 4-B and the Stage 5 orient to socio-moral concerns and welfare, the Stage 5 subject has questioned society's norms but then reaccepted them through the social contract.¹

Kohlberg revises his comments about the appearance of structural development in adulthood, to acknowledge its actual occurrence. Stage 5 thinking is found to have emerged during the mid-twenties and there were no observed instances of Stage 6 moral reasoning in any of the subjects by age thirty. By implication this signifies that Stage 6 is a comparatively late development. When one considers that Kohlberg cites such men as Socrates, Jesus, Lincoln, and King as examples of Stage 6 morality, its rarity is not surprising, although it has been estimated that five percent of American adults reach this achievement. It only takes a moments reflection on the fate of the four men identified as examples to raise the intriguing

¹Kohlberg, "Continuities in Childhood and Adult Moral Development Revisited," pp. 30-31.

question about the possible inherent danger of being at Stage 6 in a predominantly conventional society.

Chapter Five

ACTION, HIERARCHY, AND LOGIC

In the preceding chapter the core of Kohlberg's theory of sociomoral knowledge has been presented. It is a theory embedded within a cognitive-developmental framework and built upon Piaget's early work on moral judgment. Although it offers a considerable extension and refinement of Piaget's position, it also departs from that perspective in some important respects. Since its first publication in 1963, Kohlberg's own findings have been subject to an ongoing process of elaboration and refinement. Principal amongst the participants in this process have been Kohlberg himself, as well as Turiel, Rest, Kuhn, Langer, and Haan, all of whose contributions will be examined below. I have organized this chapter around three major themes each of which deals with an essential question pertaining to Kohlberg's theory. The first is the relationship between moral development and human action. In Kohlberg's theory, the unit analyzed to determine moral stage is the verbal judgment of the individual, which reflects his conception of justice. However valuable that may be as knowledge for its own sake, many will want to know whether that judgment has any impact in the real world where people's lives are affected by the way fairness and justice are implemented in interpersonal relationships, bureaucratic organizations, law-making, and sometimes in acts of civil disobedience.

The second question has to do with the hierarchical nature of stages and the mechanism which facilitates passage through those stages. What is the relationship of a given stage to those both adjacent and remote from it in the hierarchy? How does the theory account for passage from one stage to the next? To what practical advantage may the answers to these questions be put?

The third and final question to be explored in this chapter is the relationship between logico-mathematical structures as conceived by Piaget and moral development in the Kohlbergian stage theory. Is pure cognitive development sufficient to produce corresponding stages in the moral sphere? If not, is it necessary at all? If it is necessary, but not sufficient, then what might be some of the other variables which perhaps mediate between logico-mathematical mental structures and the justice mental structures?

These questions have been introduced as a preliminary in order to sharpen the focus of the discussion which follows.

Moral Judgment and Action

Perhaps the single most important question spurred by the cognitive-developmental approach to sociomoral knowledge is the relationship between type of stage reasoning and behavior. The clear position adopted by proponents of this approach is that stage structure does definitely influence behavior choice. It is acknowledged that variables other than one's stage of moral development will come to bear in determining action.

These would certainly include personality attributes, situational conditions, affective arousal, and degree of personal risk or loss involved. Although the cognitive-developmental stage of an individual is, by definition, based on his mode of moral reasoning, which reveals his structural attainment, one could argue that the acid test is the extent to which there is a correspondence between that reasoning and behavior.

Certainly we know people are capable of combining lofty pronouncements with base actions. In The Moral Judgment of the Child, Piaget pointed to the paradox that sometimes children espouse fidelity to the rule, while breaking it at every turn, whereas it may also be observed that their behavior is in advance of their moral judgments at times.

Kohlberg¹ believes that confronted with a conflict choice, there is a tendency for a given stage to favor one specific alternative over another, even though it happens that those at different stages may sometimes make the same choice. He holds that individuals at Stages 4, 5, and 6 are more likely to be consistent in their behavioral patterns than those in the lower stages. The reason for this is that those at the higher stages are governed by stable considerations based on an objective standard or principle, while those at Stages 1, 2, and 3 are

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "From Is to Ought: How to Commit the Naturalistic Fallacy and Get Away with It in the Study of Moral Development," in Cognitive Development and Epistemology, ed. T. Mischel (New York: Academic Press, 1971), pp. 151-235.

governed by more personalized and situational factors, which are more readily subject to change. Principled moral reasoning in particular implies a set of values that have been differentiated and integrated into a hierarchy that is universally shared by people at that level. Therefore, Kohlberg's theory would predict greater consistency and reliability of action amongst those at the higher level. Behavior itself, however, is not a criterion of the actor's moral developmental level, as it is necessary to know his conception from which the action follows to determine that. For example, one person may march on Washington in a protest against an unjust war. Another may join in the same march because he feels his friends expect it and he would be wrong to go against their wishes. The first is action out of Stage 6 principles involving the value of life; the second is behaving out of a conception of right based on group loyalty. The overt behavior of these two people during the day of the march is not demonstrably different even though their moral conceptions vary vastly and can only be discovered by exploring the meaning the experience has to them. The focus in this section, however, will be upon different behaviors which, from the evidence, seem to be largely influenced by structural development. Kohlberg has pointed out that two individuals at the same stage could very well generate opposite action choices even though the form of their reasoning is the same. For example, one person may compliantly go off to fight a war upon being drafted, on the basis of his Stage 4 moral reasoning that the social order can be maintained only if he

and all others obey the law of the land and do as they are told by legitimate authority. A second person may become a draft resister based upon the religious dogma of his faith which inveighs against any act of aggression. If his action is predicated upon obedience to religious authority and not a higher principle then it is as much a form of Stage 4 moral reasoning as is the case of one who chooses to go off and fight the war. Nevertheless, as indicated previously, the higher one moves up the developmental scale, the greater the likelihood that the behavioral choice will favor one side of a two-choice conflict and the lower one moves down the scale, the greater the likelihood that behavioral choice will favor the other side. Kohlberg believes that stage structure imparts a "cognitive disposition" which is the critical element exercised in determining moral action and not the affective element so often emphasized in traditional psychology. Affect itself is neutral with regard to the moral realm. It may or may not be applied to a moral field. When it is, then it may be referred to as moral, but it takes on this character because it has been channeled in that direction by the cognitive disposition which interprets the situation.

The classic study by Hartshorne and May¹ (1928-30), which provided support for the position that honesty is situation

¹H. Hartshorne and M. A. May Studies in the Nature of Character: Vol. 1, Studies in Deceit, 1928; Vol. 2 Studies in Service and Self-Control, 1929; Vol. 3, Studies in the Organization of Character, 1930, (with F. K. Shuttleworth). (New York: Macmillan, 1928-1930).

specific has served as a point of departure for many discussions on the subject over the years. Anticipation of being caught at cheating or not is cited as being a greater determinant of behavior than any hypothetical internal trait of honesty or a unitary notion of conscience. Other factors such as group pressure and willingness to take a risk were more significant than a consistent trait of honesty. Kohlberg, himself, has repeatedly criticized the "bag of virtues" notion of morality as being incorrect. He rejects the idea that there are discrete attributes or virtues, such as honesty, which one either has or does not. A view of morality based on single isolated virtues is incompatible with a cognitive-developmental position. To that extent, Kohlberg may be said to find the conclusion of Hartshorne and May congenial. However, their research is based on a content analysis of their subjects rather than upon a structural analysis. Burton¹ presents a searching exposition of their early work within the context of a discussion on honesty and dishonesty. He highlights that the researchers defined the behaviors studied (i.e. cheating, lying, and stealing) as an active effort at deception. They defined traits as some type of internal disposition which would function independently of the situation. Since they found gross inconsistency in the studied behaviors across situations they were led to reject the trait theory. Burton argues that

¹Roger V. Burton, "Honesty and Dishonesty," in Moral Development and Behavior: Theory, Research, and Social Issues, ed. T. Lickona (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), pp. 173-97.

Hartshorne and May, however, had some glimmerings of an underlying generality of behavior and that in his own attempts at reanalyzing their original data he found grounds for concluding that, in fact, there was a pattern of resistance to temptations that cut across situations.

Kohlberg and Krebs¹ have reported research substantiating the view that certain internal variables are predictive of moral behavior and, contrary to Hartshorne's and May's conclusion, that moral behavior is not essentially determined by situationally related dynamics. This may be qualified by indicating that the degree to which situational determinants are paramount is a function of moral level. Kohlberg and Krebs hold that the forces operating within a situation are most likely to effect the person at a preconventional level. At the conventional level there exists more of a dual pull or battle between the forces in the situation and a person's moral stage development. The struggle is mediated by the "moral will," which in this study is construed as ego controls constituted by attentional stability. The person at the principled level is not influenced by situational forces and does not undergo a struggle of conscience, as his course is determined by rational considerations derived from principles. Before presenting some of the pertinent data and discussion, it is necessary to make one further qualifying comment. Kohlberg and Krebs are applying their analysis to

¹Richard Krebs & Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral Judgment and Ego Controls as Determinants of Resistance to Cheating" (Unpublished paper, Cambridge: Center for Moral Education, Harvard University, 1973).

what is referred to as minor moral decision making. It is the absence of intense sacrifice that defines that task as minor. In the event that intense sacrifice is a variable, then even for adults at the principled level, it may be necessary to reintroduce ego controls to steadfastly hold to the correct moral action as dictated by rational reflection at the principled level. Although this is a vital distinction, it does not mitigate the value of the material presented below, when its limitations are understood.

The study reported by Kohlberg and Krebs had a population of 123 sixth-grade subjects ranging from lower-class to upper middle-class. Sex and social class variables were balanced. Mean I.Q. was always above 107 whether viewed by sex or social class. Children in the study were tested for resistance to temptation, cheating behavior, attentional stability, and moral stage.

The results clearly indicated that moral judgment was predictive of the subjects' actual behavior in situations designed to tempt them to engage in cheating. It was found that amongst Stage 5 subjects 80 percent resisted cheating and amongst Stage 4 subjects 45 percent resisted cheating. In sharp contrast, from a combined count of those in Stages 1, 2, and 3 only 25 percent resisted cheating. Taking Stage 1 separately, only 19 percent resisted. A factor of further interest to the researchers was whether attentional ability was related to resistance and how this variable interacted with moral stage. They equated attentional processes with the notion

of William James, the American philosopher, that the capacity to attend an object through an act of volitional effort constitutes moral will. However, attentional stability is not intrinsically a moral factor in the Kohlbergian sense as clearly it is applicable to both moral and non-moral tasks alike. The major discovery was that the variable of attentional stability, construed as ego control, had a differential effect related to moral stage. Attention was found to have a significant effect upon Stage 4 thinkers, increasing the likelihood that subjects at that stage would resist temptation to cheat. The data revealed that of high attending Stage 4 subjects 56 percent refrained from cheating, whereas of low attending Stage 4 subjects only 33 percent did so. In contrast, it was found that high attention was associated at the pre-conventional level with increased cheating. This was especially true at Stage 2, where the data reflect that while 75 percent of the low attending refrained from cheating, the high attending subjects who resisted came to 20 percent only. Hence, we find a reversal of effect of high attention when we go from Stage 4 to Stage 2. Kohlberg and Krebs point out that lower stage morality by its very nature is more situation specific. In explaining the ostensibly surprising effect of high ego control being associated with low resistance to cheating at lower moral stages, they state:

The pre-conventional child is determined in his moral reasoning by the immediate situation. Ego factors, then, support the child's reasoning and choice, but this reasoning and choice is not consistently moral. For the lower stage child moral judgment is not a

force independent of, or opposed to, the situation. Accordingly ego factors do not oppose situational pressures or temptations for the lower stage child. For the lower stage child, ego factors of attention and brightness aid the child to "do well" in a task as "doing well" is defined by social situational forces. "Doing well" for a lower stage child, however, is more likely to mean cheating to gain a reward or a "good score" than it is to mean displaying "moral strength".¹

It follows, Kohlberg and Krebs reason, that when the low attending preconventional subjects abandon their task from distractibility, the task they are abandoning is cheating, which their structural level of moral development permits them to engage in as right in certain situations. Consider the following observation by Kohlberg and Krebs, which contains a comparative statement, as follows:

The lower stage subject is just as likely as the higher stage subject to judge cheating as bad or wrong on attitude scales. The "wrongness" of cheating for lower stage subjects, however, is interpreted in terms of, or in contingency upon, situational forces of punishment, reward, authority, and group status which can, under certain conditions, predispose toward cheating as much as predisposing against it. At higher stages, the "wrongness" of cheating is defined in terms of considerations of trust and equity which predispose against cheating regardless of most situational forces.²

It is reported that five principled subjects (80%) resisted the temptation. These were all at Stage 5 and interestingly they measured as low attending. Because of the felicitous separation between the variables of attentional ability and moral stage, it is clear that high moral stage in itself is sufficient

¹Ibid, p. 33

²Ibid, p. 32

to produce moral behavior based on principle. As for pre-conventional children who do not cheat, Kohlberg and Krebs do not view them as having faced an internal struggle of conscience, mediated by ego controls with a victory for moral behavior. They are simply not tempted to cheat because of their definition of the situation. For example, a Stage 1 child who anticipates a decisive penalty for violating a rule is simply less likely to be tempted to cheat. In the final analysis, it is the Stage 4 subject who faces the internal struggle in the face of genuine temptation. It is at this stage that ego controls as a mediating variable play a most crucial role in assisting the youngster toward the choice to resist temptation. The Stage 4 person is committed to a conception of right that entails following the rules promulgated by society as a general abstraction. Hence, in a situation designed to tempt him to cheat he enters a state of conflict between situational pressures and moral stage dictates. The exceptional situation had been set up in such a way that the immediate pressure was toward cheating because of the opportunity afforded to do so. Lacking a set of universally consistent principles, the Stage 4 person becomes conflicted. It is at this Stage that moral will power, construed in terms of high level attentional processes, becomes decisive in assisting the subject to resist temptation.

Elsewhere, Kohlberg¹ cites similar research conducted

¹Kohlberg, "From Is to Ought," pp. 151-235.

by Brown et. al.¹ who carried out their work with undergraduates. Half of the conventional level subjects cheated, while out of nine postconventional students only one cheated. Kohlberg concludes:

A Stage 5 or 6 person defines the issue as one of maintaining an implicit social contract with the tester and others taking the test. The more unsupervised, the more trusting the experimenter, the more contractually obligated this principled person is. Also, the principled person defines the issue of cheating as one of inequality, of taking advantage of others, of deceptively obtaining unequal opportunity, that is, in terms of justice. ...This interpretation implies that moral judgment determines action by way of concrete definitions of rights and duties in a situation.²

It would seem that while Hartshorne and May were perhaps on solid ground in rejecting a simplistic notion of an all-or-none honesty trait that imparts consistency across all situations, they were incorrect to give little credence to an internal disposition that influences moral behavior independently of situational forces. Although possessed by few, principled cognitive-structural reasoning would seem to qualify as just such an internal variable. Furthermore, ego control, defined as volitional-attention, when exercised by the Stage 4 person also qualifies as an internal variable that influences the actor toward a moral choice of honesty. These developmental

¹Michael E. Brown et. al., "Some Correlates of Conflict in Two Situations of Moral Conduct," Journal Of Personality 37 (1969): 803.

²Kohlberg, p. 229.

phenomena are obviously more complex than the single-trait theory, but there is evidence to support Kohlberg's interpretation of their role in moral behavior.

While the above research of Krebs and Kohlberg focuses upon young children in minor decision making, the classic findings of Haan, Smith, and Block¹ shift our attention to young adults in a critical situation. Whereas subjects in the former were acting under contrived laboratory conditions, those in the latter acted spontaneously in their natural environment. The subjects consisted of students from the University of California at Berkeley and San Francisco State College, and a group of Peace Corps volunteers in training. There was a total of 957 respondents chosen at random from the registration files, who responded by completing five of the moral dilemma stories devised by Kohlberg. A total of 54 percent of that group were used in the study and their selection was based on the fact that upon scoring their responses while utilizing very stringent criteria they were the ones who could be scored as being in a pure stage without ambiguity. Assignment to a pure type signified that they had at least twice the score at that stage than at any other stage, across all five stories as assessed by two judges. The subjects also filled out an extensive question-

¹Norma Haan, M. Brewster Smith, & Jeanne Black, "Moral Reasoning of Young Adults: Political Social Behavior, Family Background, and Personality Correlates, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 10 (1968): 183-201.

naire providing biographical information, and took some additional tests regarding child rearing and self-concepts. The self concepts identified pertained to both perceived self and ideal self. Students in the study were enrolled in their educational activities in 1964 at the time of the famous Berkeley Student Revolt which revolved around the Free Speech Movement. Administrative officials restricted political activity by students on the Berkeley campus and many students, as well as other activists, protested on campus by acting in violation of the prohibitions. A major sit-in occurring in December, 1964 led to many arrests by the police. A subsection of the present research analyzes by moral types those student activists who were arrested. We shall return to the smaller sample of those students arrested at Berkeley in 1964 after noting some distinctive features of the larger sample of students from both universities including the Peace Corps Volunteers.

Subjects at the principled level of morality were more radical politically and tended to strongly favor the Free Speech Movement. There was a greater incidence amongst them of having interrupted their college career and of living apart from the campus in apartments or houses. They described themselves more frequently as being atheistic, agnostic, or areligious. Their parents were seen by them as liberal in politics. The principled subjects had been comparatively more active in sociopolitical affairs and had a background of involvement in organizations and protest activities. It was

found that the ideal self of principled men was a perceptive, empathic, and altruistic one. They specifically disavowed the trait of stubbornness and emphasized the value of self-expressiveness. The researchers observe that this configuration of attributes implicitly espouses role taking virtues, which are essential to high moral development in the Kohlbergian scale. The principled women described themselves as being altruistic, but with dissatisfaction over having feelings of guilt and doubt and being both restless and impulsive. In general, the principled young adults rejected conventional mores and seemed more autonomous than the others. They appeared to place a high value on interpersonal sensitivity and responsibility, as well as self-expressiveness and candor. Based upon their data, the researchers, two of whom are women, suggest that women might have a more difficult time achieving moral and ego autonomy by the time of young adulthood than do men. They indicate further that this may be because there is a clash between autonomous attributes and the stereotyped feminine roles that women had been locked into. In this connection, it is noteworthy that Gilligan¹ has recently advanced a revised and differentiated construction of moral development specifically based upon women's experiences.

The conventional subjects were the most conservative of the three moral levels, as was true of their parents. They had few instances of interruption in their college careers, tended

¹Carol Gilligan, "In a Different Voice: Women's Conceptions of Self and Morality," Harvard Educational Review 47 (1977): 481-517.

with greater frequency to live on campus, and had the most religious affiliations and background. The idealized self-concept they cited embodied an emphasis upon social skills and self-control. The men in particular valued order, competitiveness, and ambition, and appeared to shun the very attributes embraced in the idealized self-concept of their principled counterparts. Hence, they devalued self-expressiveness and interpersonal responsiveness. The women held to a similar conception of the ideal, although of especial interest is that their version of an ideal self-concept included the apparent contradictory traits of competitiveness and self-denial. Attributes of sensitivity and rebelliousness were not highly regarded by them, just as they were not by conventional men. In general, the conventional subjects were raised in families and communities in which they were exposed to greater harmony and clearer expectations of traditional rules to be followed. They were exposed to less skepticism and conflict than the principled subjects had been. They seemed to have followed the examples of their conservative parents, whereas the principled subjects appeared to possess greater freedom to diverge from the thinking and ideologies of their liberal parents.

The preconventional group contained no Stage 1 subjects. The Stage 2 subjects comprising it were referred to as Instrumental Relativists. These young people had a comparatively high incidence of interrupted college careers, greater than the

case with either principled or conventional youth. The men viewed themselves as radicals or liberals and the women had a perception of themselves as moderate liberals. The men, although not the women, had the highest incidence of off-campus living. Political differences between the male youth and their fathers were greatest in this class. In striking contrast the females within this group shared complete congruence with their mothers on political issues. The women belonged to many organizations, but were relatively inactive compared to the men who joined fewer organizations, but engaged more intensely in the activities involved. In general, the men were extremely active in political protest and assumed a strongly radical posture. They evidenced greater paternal conflict and anger than any of the other subjects. Although they embraced a self-concept of being reserved and not particularly responsive interpersonally they saw themselves as highly individualistic and also creative. Amongst all other subjects they devalued altruism. Their ideal self-concept possessed attributes of stubbornness, detachment, and unyieldingness to compromise solutions and yet it also included spontaneity and artistic ability. Women in this group did not seem to value personal expressiveness to the extent that the men did, but instead emphasized pursuing and attaining personal goals. They idealized practicality and stubbornness. At the same time they placed a high value on becoming idealistic and sensitive. The general picture for both young men and women at this preconventional level reflected an

absence of a sense of interpersonal responsibility and a strong commitment to achieving self-fulfillment. They seemed to have had an upbringing characterized by parental indulgence based upon the parents' own convenience and interest. Haan et al. suggest that such rearing fosters unpredictability and mitigated mature moral development because it fails to introduce clear communications about reciprocal rights and duties.

Haan et al. see a striking contrast between the Instrumental Relativists, Stage 2, and the Individual Principled subjects, Stage 6. The comparative evaluation made by the researchers is worth citing, as follows:

The two groups differ in their relationship to society and to authority. The IPs are independent and critical, but also involved, giving and responsive to others. The IRs are angry, also critical, but disjointed, uncommitted to others, and potentially narcissistic. It should not be surprising to find moral heterogeneity among protestees. Protest which opts for change and accommodation in the social order should draw support from individuals who question the justice of the status quo and are committed to improving it, as well as from those who want to win an issue simply because it is theirs.¹

The moral stage development of subjects from the University of California has been fruitfully examined in relation to whether they were arrested while participating in the Free Speech movement on the Berkeley campus in 1964. Through such an examination it is possible to derive information on the relationship between behavior and conceptions of morality.

¹Haan, Smith, and Block, p. 197.

It is important to take cognizance of the emphasis by Haan et al. upon the fact that the actual sit-in protest during which the students were arrested was preceded by months of public debate amongst the students and conflict with the administration. Therefore, participation in the protest is not likely to have been impulsive or the result of a bandwagon effect, but more probably the outcome of a carefully considered decision.

Inspection of the findings support Kohlberg's contention that moral stage of development bears a relationship to human action. Stages 3 and 4, the conventional level, account for the lowest number of arrests. Of the total population of University of California male students at Stage 4, only 6 percent were arrested and of those at Stage 3 only 18 percent. Contrasted to this, it was found that 75 percent of the Stage 6 and 41 percent of the Stage 5 male students were arrested. The difference is striking. What is of especial significance beyond this, however, is that 60 percent of the male students at Stage 2 were also arrested. The importance of being arrested in this study is, of course, that only those who were engaged in prominent activist roles were likely to have been picked up by the police. On the basis of the moral conceptions undergirding each stage one would predict low involvement for conventional thinkers and high involvement for principled ones. This is exactly what the survey reflects. However, it might be instructive to ask why any of the conventional level subjects participated at all. Haan et al. had added a story

situation revolving around the Free Speech Movement to the five Kohlberg stories and that additional story had been specifically administered to the Berkeley students. The responses of the Stage 4 arrested students revealed their belief that the authorities had not maintained proper legal procedures in inhibiting the right of free speech. The Stage 3 students who were arrested also believed that the authorities had defaulted in their role, but the emphasis for these students was upon the authorities failing to be "good" people. The Stage 2 students expressed concern about the repression of their own rights and construed the situation as a power conflict. Lastly, the principled subjects were primarily concerned with the breach of community and citizens' rights represented by the conflict. Thus, an analysis in each case reveals that although those arrested cut across the spectrum of stages, the meaning to the individual actor was determined by the stage of moral development he had reached. The Stage 4 subjects who were protesting did not behave, for example, as would be predicted, but an understanding of their moral reasoning reveals a structural conception of justice consistent with Stage 4 thinking. This serves to highlight the strong phenomenological cast to Kohlberg's model of moral stages. It also emphasizes that behavior alone is not sufficient for a judgment on the morality of the actor. It is necessary to know the underlying conception of right and wrong that generates the behavior. As long as conventional level moral reasoners believe that authorities are acting properly, they are not likely to challenge the prevailing

status quo, but will embrace it and exhibit compliance. Regarding the Stage 2 thinker, Haan et al. point out that since he does not engage in mature role-taking skills, he is likely to protest merely on the basis of frustration of his own wishes. The principled thinker, in contrast has differentiated self from subjective wish and the social perspective, having become free to engage in moral reasoning that is universal, consistent, and objective. He engages in a form of role-taking which entails placing himself at the other person's perspective to understand that viewpoint and reciprocally inquiring how he might want the other to act on his behalf when he is deprived of his own rights. The inference is that the subject should act on another's behalf as he would want the other to act for him. Approximately only 20 percent of the total subjects at Stage 6 did not get arrested, whereas about 50 percent of the Stage 5 subjects did and 50 percent did not. Brown and Hernstein¹ offer a cogent explanation of this even split by underscoring the social contract nature of the moral reasoning involved at this stage, which lends itself to a more probable even split than in the case of the more fully principled subjects at Stage 6 or the egoistic ones at Stage 2. Clearly, sitting-in could be justified on the grounds that although it violates the law that had been laid down, there were transcendent principles involved. These subjects were already adjacent to a more fully

¹Roger Brown & Richard J. Hernstein, Psychology (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1975).

principled level of ethical thinking in their present stage and so it is not surprising that they would move in that direction. However, the structure of their present stage reasoning calls for full utilization of available legal change mechanisms. The University did provide such procedures for instituting change of existing policies and, therefore, it would be expected that many Stage 5 students would opt to use them rather than engage in civil disobedience. Of significance in our analysis is the fact that Stage 5 students who did not sit-in and both Stage 5 and Stage 6 students who did sit in, shared a more common value base than did Stage 5 and 6 protestors in comparison to Stage 2 protestors.

Haan¹ compared the stage reasoning of the Berkeley students as scored from hypothetical Kohlbergian moral dilemmas and the stage of moral reasoning used by them in explaining their own actual behavior in relation to the Free Speech Movement sit-in which resulted in so many arrests. Her formulation, as well as the empirical findings, encompassed three categories. Altogether two-thirds of the students explained their actions using a stage different from the moral stage score they had received for reasoning in hypothetical situations. It was found that 46 percent invoked a higher stage and 20 percent a lower stage. Hence, moral reasoning used to explain behavior in an

¹Norma Haan, "Hypothetical and Actual Moral Reasoning in a Situation of Civil Disobedience," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 32 (1975): 255-70.

actual situation was either higher, lower, or the same in relation to that utilized in hypothetical situations. Haan's view was that the same reasoning could be accounted for by a subject having fully stabilized his moral development stage. Students who had already begun to show evidence of reasoning at the next stage, hence already moving in that direction, were likely to be those who would show a gain in stage reasoning. She points out that the leaders of the Free Speech Movement were presenting arguments publicly, over a period of time, which were at higher stages than the majority of the students. This could produce the conflict and disequilibrium necessary for stage transition. Finally, personal factors in the pressured situation which the Berkeley Student Revolt certainly induced could account for loss in stage reasoning in actual behavior for some students due to disorganization. This need not be viewed as moral regression because of the complex nature of the situation. It may be analogous to a child performing non-egocentrically at a simple task, but egocentrically at a complex task. The underlying structure or competence has not been altered in such a situation, but performance is influenced by task or situational complexity. The Stage 4 students tended not to show any marked split between reasoning pertaining to the actual situation and that applied to the hypothetical stories. In other words, they essentially reasoned the same in both situations. Those at the principled level demonstrated a fairly even division between students who maintained their stage of reasoning and those who fell below their stage when going from

----- reasoning and those who fell below their stage when going from -----

hypothetical to actual circumstances. The tendency on the part of those at Stages 2 and 3 was toward moving from a lower to higher stage. Haan has addressed specifically those students who favored the Free Speech Movement, but did not participate in the sit-in and who lost a stage in going from reasoning in the hypothetical situation to the actual one. She suggests that these students suffered a sense of inconsistency and diminished integrity because they did not sit-in. As a result, in reflecting upon their actual behavior there occurred some disorganization as they attempted to justify or rationalize the apparent incongruity between not participating in the protest while favoring the cause. The evidence from this study supported the contention that gains were most frequently found amongst the developmentally ready. One sign of this readiness was the fact that those who gained had already exhibited a greater frequency of use of reasoning at one stage above their scored stage than those who did not gain. This would make them more susceptible to influence by leaders speaking at a higher level, as research to be examined later will testify. There was also biographical data indicating that the gain group was more challenging and skeptical in relation to authority by comparison to the loss group whose members were more interpersonally bound to their parents. Haan chooses to place emphasis upon action itself as the critical factor, in experientially profound situations, accounting for stage growth. In contemplating the statement below, bear in mind that the Berkeley subjects, while reasoning about their own actions, had done so after

the actions had been engaged in; in order to provide data for the study. We do not know what their thoughts were prior to their actions. Haan comments:

We see then that the theory's normative, genetic description of gain is approximately correct, that mere confrontation with moral conflict is sufficient to enable most university students of lower stages to use higher stage forms, and that action that is consistent with ideology apparently energizes moral thought. When the action is non trivial, it may well be the first, rather than the last manifestation of an evolving comprehension of more sufficient moral structuring than can yet be articulated in a cognitive-hypothetical way. Nevertheless, it can readily be observed in moral interviews that hypothetical decision is not a pallid experience, since people struggle with the elegance of their suppositional resolutions. Still, moral action is not required, and therein lies the rub: Action actualizes, while thoughts can always be taken back. Moral situations of less consequence and duration probably produce more equivalence and less change.¹

The above statement by Haan has been quoted at length because of the central role it endows action with, as being instrumental in inducing moral stage growth when the subject is in a state of readiness. This is a crucial and different emphasis than the customary one of action flowing from the present stage.

Sameness or equality of reasoning between hypothetical and actual conditions was generally typified by those whose moral stage structure and ideological commitment were consistent with one another and with the behavior they engaged in.

¹Ibid., p. 268.

For example, a Stage 6 thinker who interpreted the situation as one obliging him to act out of principle to protect individual rights, favored the Free Speech Movement, and participated in the sit-in, had no impetus to shift in going from reasoning about the hypothetical to actual conditions. This is in contrast to the Stage 6 person mentioned previously who favored the Free Speech Movement, but did not actively protest; an inconsistency which could lead to rationalization.

The loss groups were, in fact, comprised mainly of those who did not sit-in. They were largely Stage 5 and a few Stage 6 students. Also included in this group were ideologically uncommitted Stage 4 students. Haan believes that the cause of their going from a higher to lower form of reasoning is less likely to be found in the moral realm than the socio-affective arena. This is largely based on the biographical data reflecting conflict with authority around obedience and disobedience.

Haan's research and speculation perhaps make their greatest contribution by alerting the moral cognitive-developmental student to the complexity and diversity of considerations to be taken into account when thinking about the relationship between moral stage and human action.

Because of the potentially devastating implications, one of the most significant findings in the field of moral development and behavior is a spin-off of research originally conducted

by Milgram.¹ The experiment was ostensibly an attempt to observe the effect of punishment upon learning by a person who was given tasks to perform and who was to receive shocks from the volunteer subjects whenever he made a mistake. The intensity of the shock was modulated and beyond 75 volts the learner, who in actuality was a collaborator of the experimenter, would convincingly pretend to be in great pain. The deceived volunteers did not know that real shocks were not, in fact, being administered. Subject to encouragement and pressure from the experimenter to continue increasing the intensity of the shocks, despite escalating cries of agony from the learner, the volunteers could be observed undergoing unmistakably great stress. However, when volunteers would hesitate, the experimenter would escalate the commanding quality of his pressure to continue, going so far as to say, "You have no choice, you must go on." The experiment has been replicated in a variety of ways. The essential finding that has impressed Milgram is the extreme length that otherwise perfectly decent people will go upon the command of an accepted authority even at the expense of inflicting great pain upon another, as the volunteer subjects truly thought they were doing. It was clear that they believed that they were acting wrongly and that they, too, were suffering as they increased the voltage along the scale from 15 to 450. In the original experiment, which had been conducted

¹Stanley Milgram, Obedience to Authority, (New York: Harper & Row, 1975).

at Yale University, the full voltage was administered by 65 percent of the volunteer subjects. Kohlberg¹ scored the moral stage of one group of undergraduates who participated in this experiment. The results have not been published in detail, but Kohlberg reports in passing that 75 percent of Stage 6 subjects terminated the experiment rather than persist, despite the commands, in causing pain to another. All volunteers below Stage 6 continued with the shocks to an extensive degree except for 13 percent which terminated early in the experiment. This group included the Stage 5 moral reasoners which might appear surprising to some. Kohlberg suggests that Stage 5 social contract thinking does not provide adequate principles for resolving the dilemma. The individual has entered into an agreement with the experimenter and the learner has also consented to participate. There exists an obligation to meet one's commitments. It is only the autonomous Stage 6 thinker whose principled reasoning transcends the bonds of the social contract to reject the experimenter's authority to command him. As Milgram agrees, the implications are frightening. One has only to recall the

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "Indoctrination Versus Relativity in Value Education" Paper presented at Harvard University at the eighteenth summer conference of the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, Star Island, New Hampshire, July 31-August 6, 1971.

Nazi era or the Mai Lai incident to be reminded of the cruelty and destruction that can come through obedience to authority. A point to be reemphasized is that the total group of people who participated in the set of Milgram experiments were decent individuals from all walks of life. Many were dismayed afterward at their own conduct and had to be debriefed to alleviate some of the distressed feelings they were experiencing.

Observing that the research has tended to highlight the behavior of moral reasoners at the principled level as compared to the conventional, Krebs and Rosenwald¹ deliberately executed research that focused exclusively upon examining the relationship between behavior and moral structural development of the average person at Stages 3 and 4. The subjects were volunteers who answered a newspaper ad offering them three dollars to participate in a psychological testing experiment. There were 31 of them from diversified backgrounds. Ages ranged from 17-54, with 23 being the mean. It is especially important to explicate the procedure in this experiment for full appreciation of what took place and the results. The subjects assembled in a lecture hall. They were told that the time desired for the testing was an hour and a half, but that as it turned out they would only have one hour for the hall, unexpectedly. The person leading the group identified herself

¹Dennis Krebs and Ali Rosenwald, "Moral Reasoning and Moral Behavior in Conventional Adults," Merrill Palmer Quarterly 23 (1977): 77-87.

as an undergraduate student who was conducting the present project for data needed to complete requirements for a course. It would be necessary for her to have the test and personality questionnaire in her hands within seven days or her grade for the course would be endangered. In view of the shortened time allotted them, she explained that they would be asked to do only part of the required tasks in the lecture hall and that they would be issued the necessary materials involved in the balance of the tasks. Armed with a self-addressed stamped envelope and the questionnaire to take home they were strongly urged to return the completed form and mail it back within a week. Before leaving they were paid the three dollars, the leader emphasizing that she would trust that they would not let her down. During the one hour in the lecture hall they took the Kohlberg moral development test and supplied biographical data.

An analysis of the scores on the Kohlberg test indicated that 83 percent of the subjects were at the conventional level. Altogether, despite the great emphasis on the importance of having the questionnaire back on time to avoid jeopardizing the leader's grade, 39 percent of the participants did not return them within the week. Of that group, 23 percent never returned the questionnaires and 16 percent managed to get them in, but after the deadline. The completed forms of all Stage 4 and 5 participants were promptly returned and in the hands of the leader within the time frame requested, with one exception. Amongst Stage 3 subjects 40 percent were on time, 33 percent

were late, and 27 percent did not return their questionnaires at all. There were only 3 Stage 2 subjects in the population. One of them returned the questionnaire on time and the other two did not return them at all. All of those questionnaires that were returned late came from Stage 3 subjects. In brief, the higher the stage, the more likely the questionnaires would be returned; the lower the stage, the less likely they would be returned.

Utilizing the biographical data that had been obtained on the day the subjects were all present in the lecture hall, Krebs and Rosenwald were able to rule out such variables as education, sex, and social class as having any significant bearing. Engaging in what they refer to as a clinical analysis, Krebs and Rosenwald concluded that, in fact, it is the moral reasoning, as tested by Kohlberg's dilemmas, which governed the behavior of the subjects. Their clinical analysis is essentially that of noting the logic of correspondence between a subject's moral stage and his behavior in the experiment. Once having received the three dollars and terminating the relationship, there was nothing to be gained by bothering to return the completed questionnaires, just as there was nothing to be lost by not returning them. Since there was no reward for sending the forms back and no punishment for failing to do so, two of the three instrumental hedonists of Stage 2 did not fulfill the contract. There exists the possibility that the one who did return the questionnaires might have been at Stage 4B actually; in the light of Kohlberg's revised scoring system.

However, this is not known.

Krebs and Rosenwald compare the moral reasoning of their Stage 3 subjects to those in Stage 4 in order to account for the observed differences in behavior. The central distinguishing factor seemed to be that Stage 3 subjects conceived of interpersonal commitments as depending upon knowing someone as a friend, whereas they did not acknowledge moral obligations to strangers. In contrast, the responses in the Kohlberg test revealed that the Stage 4 subjects recognized a binding commitment in terms of social rules. Adhering to social norms is necessary amongst all people if order is to be maintained. Although there is reason to believe that Stage 3 subjects are susceptible to group pressure, once having left the experimental setting they were no longer exposed to any external influences toward conformity. Hence, it is consistent with this analysis to discover that out of 15 Stage 3 subjects, a total of 9 did not return their questionnaires on time. Of those 9, there were 5 who eventually turned them in late, while the remaining four never turned them in at all. Krebs and Rosenwald interpret the fact that 5 of the 9 did turn the questionnaires in late and that no other stage group was in the late category, as suggestive of the indecision characterizing this population when the structural stage of its members is translated into behavior. The researchers assume these subjects knew it was right to meet the obligations inherent in the informal agreement that they had made, yet they had not reached a plane of consistently integrating structure and action.

Their emphasis upon personal familiarity and the lack of external group pressure mitigate fulfilling obligations that they had contracted into. In the absence of such mitigating factors and in the presence of structural reasoning that honors rules and the maintaining of social order, it is not at all surprising to find that out of 11 Stage 4 subjects, 10 returned their questionnaires on time. There was 1 subject out of the 11 who never returned his questionnaire. None of the 11 returned the questionnaire late. Of course, the fact that the 2 Stage 5 subjects returned their questionnaires and did so on time hardly needs commenting upon at this point, given the greater adequacy of the principled reasoning which characterizes the quality of their moral structure.

Krebs and Rosenwald believe that it is precisely the type of low-pressured situation, with opportunity for reflection, which they simulated, that affords the soundest predictive grounds from Kohlberg's stages. They caution that crisis situations entailing impulsive, non-reflective behavior would not lend themselves as readily to predictions of high reliability. The relationship between moral stage and action depends upon time for cognitive-structural mediation. The type of situation for which they believe Kohlberg's test has the most predictive power is of a more commonplace everyday variety than those involving emergencies and heroics.

Hierarchy and Transition in Moral Growth

Piaget, with a smile passing over his lips, has frequently called the question of whether cognitive development can be hastened, "The American Question." He does so because whenever he lectures in the United States the inquiry is invariably made. The position he has adopted is that given a normal amount of environmental opportunity, the child will properly interact with his milieu and construct the necessary structures for adaptation. Piaget points out that cats reach the significant stage 4 in object permanence more quickly than the human infant, but unlike the latter it does not continue past that stage in the cognitive hierarchy to representational thought and the acquisition of language. Therefore, the pace of growth may not be nearly as important as the process and outcome. The fact remains that only about 50 percent of the population appears to acquire fully developed formal operations. Even more conservatively, it has been estimated that only from 10 percent to 20 percent of the population reach the principled level of moral reasoning. Although Stage 4 of the conventional level is where most people seem to be, it is still a limited form of morality from the standpoint of justice. Once accepting justice as the core of morality, as Kohlberg does, then the issue of facilitating movement in the individual through the hierarchy of moral stages can hardly be seen as a trivial matter. Indeed, Kohlberg has engaged in extensive programs designed to accelerate moral growth amongst those in such diverse institutional settings as public schools and

prisons.

Anyone who has followed this dissertation from the beginning will surely realize that Kohlberg's approach to stimulating advance toward moral maturity will not consist of attempting to inculcate character traits such as honesty, courage, or cooperation. This would be tantamount to the Aristotelian "bag of virtues" method which Kohlberg dismisses as antithetical to cognitive-structural theory. Nor would it be anticipated that the trainer would simply attempt to teach a higher stage to the subject in any mechanistic or content oriented fashion. First of all, we know that the individual cannot leap over a stage, so clearly the focus is relative in that it must be upon the stage one step beyond his present predominant stage. Equally significant, is that the individual, interacting with the environment, must construct for himself the qualitative advance inherent in what is for him the next stage. He cannot be taught the stage by someone simply transmitting information about it to him. The equilibration model proffered by Piaget to explain cognitive development generally, also has great utility when applied to explaining moral stage advance. The dynamic of the model may be harnessed and consciously channeled into a social or experimental setting to facilitate moral growth. Turiel, in an excellent resource on stage transition, has stated succinctly:

There are two interrelated aspects to the principle of equilibration. The first refers to equilibrium

within structures that form coherent wholes: stages are defined as organized ways of thinking and relating to events. The second refers to equilibrium in the interaction of the individual with the environment. Stages in a developmental sequence are, then, successive levels of equilibrium in two respects. First, each stage is a more equilibrated form than the previous ones (e. g. there is more internal consistency). Second, each stage represents a more equilibrated means of interacting with the environment. That is, each new stage is a more adequate way of understanding moral problems and resolving conflicts encountered.¹

Central to moving from one stage to the next is the experiencing of conflict induced by encountering events that one's present stage of development cannot adequately encompass or resolve. The very organization of the milieu one is in may be more or less conducive to inducing the disequilibrium necessary for growth. For example, a youth who moves away from home to attend college, may be leaving behind an orderly and stable intellectual existence which he had been experiencing in a community of rarely challenged homogenous values. Upon stepping onto the college campus he finds himself surrounded by a diversity of viewpoints and backgrounds. Challenge and skepticism become the order of the day. Only the most rigid and insulated of students could escape the inevitable conflict and accompanying development. It is perhaps too often overlooked that the primary contribution of college is not the imparting

¹Elliot Turiel, "Stage Transition in Moral Development," in Second Handbook of Research in Teaching, ed. R. Travers (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1973), p. 737.

of information, but the promotion of an equilibrating process that cuts across all disciplines bringing the student forward to a new perspective for understanding and functioning within his sociomoral world. It is in this sense, of undergoing genuine development, that one truly cannot go home again, to borrow a phrase from Thomas Wolfe. In one of his frequent and more philosophical moods, Kohlberg has commented upon the role of conflict thusly:

The first stage in teaching virtue, then, is the Socratic step of creating dissatisfaction in the student about his present knowledge of the good. This we do experimentally by exposing the student to moral conflict situations for which his principles have no ready solution. Second, we expose him to disagreement and argument about these situations with his peers. Our Platonic view holds that if we inspire cognitive conflict in the student and point the way to the next step up the divided line, he will tend to see things previously invisible to him.¹

Turiel² has taken the lead in explicating and researching the area of stage transition through cognitive conflict in the field of sociomoral knowledge. Based upon cognitive-developmental theory, Turiel tested two hypotheses. The first was that subjects would manifest greater change in stage status upon having been exposed to reasoning that is one stage above their dominant stage than would other subjects who had been exposed

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "Education for Justice: A Modern Statement of the Platonic View," in Moral Education, ed. T. Sizer (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1970), p. 82.

²Elliot Turiel, "An Experiment Test of the Sequentiality of Developmental Stages in the Child's Moral Judgements,"

to reasoning that was two stages above their dominant stage. The rationale was that, given the invariant sequence hypothesis of Kohlberg, the assimilation of new moral concepts would be limited by the subjects' present stage. The second hypothesis tested by Turiel was that subjects exposed to one stage above their present one would exhibit more stage gain than those exposed to stage reasoning that was one below their present stage. Turiel assumed that since a stage displaces the preceding ones by reorganizing them into a more complex structure, it would be likely that the individual exposed to reasoning at one stage below his present stage would reject the lower mode of reasoning. The design of the experiment conducted to test these hypotheses involved a population of 44 seventh grade boys, ages 12 and 13, chosen randomly from school files. They were divided into four groups. One was exposed to stage reasoning one above (+1) their current dominant stage, a second to reasoning two above (+2) their dominant stage, and a third to reasoning one stage below (-1) their dominant stage. A fourth group served as the control. Kohlberg's moral judgment interview was the instrument used to determine dominant stage in a pretest and in a posttest to assess what gains, if any, had been made.

The method entailed a role playing procedure which required the subject to assume the role of the main character in the story. He was asked to approach two friends in search

of advice on how to resolve the moral dilemma he was faced with. The experimenter simulated the role of both friends. He presented the subject with two opposing solutions each at the same level of reasoning and at the relative stage appropriate to the particular subject in the experiment. For example, a Stage 2 subject playing the role of Heinz would seek advice whether to steal the drug to save his wife's life or not. If he had been assigned to the +1 group, then the experimenter would present two arguments, one in favor of stealing the drug at Stage 3 and one against stealing at Stage 3. The subjects who were chosen to participate in the experiment were at Stages 2, 3, and 4. The experimental design permitted deriving two sets of results, one was direct and the other indirect. The former used the same test material in the posttest as had been used in the experiment itself. The latter used the same material in the posttest as had been used in the pretest, but had not been used in the experiment. Turiel's hypotheses were confirmed. Results pertaining to the direct influence were most compelling. Those subjects exposed to +2 showed no influence. Subjects exposed to +1 demonstrated a significant increase in their use of the stage one above what had been their dominant stage. Subjects exposed to -1 did exhibit some influence from this exposure, but their posttest use of one stage below what had been identified as their dominant stage was not nearly as significant as exposure to +1 had been for those in that group. Analysis of indirect influence revealed trends in the same direction, but the weight of the

evidence was not as significant as in the analysis of direct influence. Turiel concludes that the results call for a rejection of the notion that the gains could be accounted for merely by the subjects having memorized the advice offered them at a different stage, as this explanation would not account for the differential aspect of the findings. The indirect influence, although weaker than the direct, does suggest some generalization. The fact that exposure to +2 had no effect, whereas exposure to +1 had a significant effect, is taken as evidence in support of Kohlberg's theory of the invariant sequence followed in progressing through moral stages. The ease of assimilating concepts one stage above one's dominant stage and the inability to comprehend reasoning two stages above is exactly what one would predict. The insignificant, but apparent, use of some -1 reasoning by the group exposed to one stage below the dominant stage indicates that lower stages are comprehended, but not especially influential.

Turiel goes on to suggest that cognitive conflict may be the dynamic which produces transition to a significant use of reasoning at one stage above the dominant stage. The structural shift occurs as a result of the conflict inducing disequilibrium, which sets in motion an equilibrating process that eventuates in a new and more adequate equilibrium. The subjects in the experiment, he comments, were not supplied univocal answers to resolve the moral dilemmas. Instead they were offered two contradictory alternatives, both at the same level of moral reasoning, however. The task of resolution remained with the

subjects. Turiel suggests that when confronted with the contradictory options the subjects may have entered a state of cognitive conflict upon contemplating them. The ensuing disequilibrium then resulted in structural development that integrated preceding stages and achieved a higher level of equilibrium. Because +2 arguments could not be comprehended they did not stimulate conflict. Arguments at -1 did not precipitate conflict because their comparative simplicity was recognized as less adequate than the stage the subject was at currently. It was for those subjects presented with arguments one stage above their dominant stage that the procedure held the most meaning, hence producing conflict as they grappled with the concepts involved. This observation highlights, once again, the significant phenomenological aspect of Kohlberg's work.

Turiel¹ raises the question of how it is that a child can grasp the contradiction inherent in opposing arguments that are even only one stage above his own. If, by definition, he is not yet at the next stage then why is reasoning at that stage not also incomprehensible, just as is the case for stages two or more above the present stage. Cognitive-developmental psychology is rescued from this problem by the reality of stage mixture. Turiel rejects the notion of discrete homogeneous

¹Elliot Turiel, "Developmental Processes in the Child's Moral Thinking," in Trends and Issues in Developmental Psychology, ed. P. H. Mussen, J. Langer, and M. Covington (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), pp. 92-133.

stages sharply demarcated from adjacent stages with development consisting of a sudden leap out of one stage and into the next. Functioning exclusively at one stage would preclude the possibility of apprehending the contradictions inherent in incompatible arrangements one stage above. It follows that where there is a relatively low mixture of the dominant stage and some amount of the next stage, development will be slow. The presence of a higher mixture facilitates development as those elements that are already present from the next stage will facilitate the child's capacity to perceive the contradiction in opposing solutions one stage above his dominant stage. The recognition of the conflict then energizes the equilibrating process toward structural reorganization. Bearing in mind the crucial role of stage mixture, it is worth noting Turiel's incisive comment that, "Change occurs when perceived conceptual contradictions energize attempts to restructure by exploring the organizational properties of the higher mode of thought."¹ Following this we find the key to perceiving the contradiction in Turiel's statement:

A child who functioned at only one stage would experience relatively little conflict, as it would be difficult for him to perceive contradictions in the external environment. The child whose functioning is mainly on one stage, but who uses other stages as well, will more readily perceive contradictions and thus experience conflict more frequently....Stage mixture serves to facilitate the perception of

¹Ibid., p. 127

contradictions, making the individual more susceptible to disequilibrium and consequently more likely to progress developmentally.¹

A deepening appreciation of moral stages and their transitions may be acquired through familiarity with the work of Rest, Turiel, and Kohlberg² and the subsequent contribution of Rest,³ which builds upon the former. The first of these two studies was an attempt to duplicate, through a different design, the findings of Turiel cited above and to further seek explanatory factors.

The essential difference in the design and the experiment conducted by Rest, Turiel, and Kohlberg was that after being presented with a moral dilemma the subjects were provided with six statements giving advice for resolution. The advice was one stage below, one above, and two above the subjects' own dominant stage. At each of the three stages there were two opposing pieces of advice. The subjects were initially scored at a given stage ranging one through four. Subjects at Stage one were given advice at their own stage in lieu of advice one

¹Ibid., pp. 129-30.

²James Rest, Elliot Turiel, & Lawrence Kohlberg, "Level of Moral Development As a Determinant of Preference and Comprehension of Moral Judgments Made by Others," Journal of Personality 37 (1969); 225-252.

³James Rest, "The Hierarchical Nature of Moral Judgment: A Study of Patterns of Comprehension and Preference of Moral Stages," (Unpublished paper, Cambridge: Center for Moral Education, Harvard University).

stage below, which would not have been possible. The subjects ranged in age from 10 to 14 with an average I.Q. score of 119, the lowest being 95 and the highest 150. Rather than being exposed to opposing arguments at only one stage, these subjects were exposed to the full gamut of advice covering three stages. The advice was contained in a booklet and was hypothetically being offered by a variety of friends. The subjects were then asked a series of questions such as who gave the best advice and who gave the worst. Other inquiries sought to determine which of the friends was thought to be the "smartest" and which the "most good" on the basis of the advice. Each response was probed to elicit the reasons behind it, which generally brought forth a restatement of the advice that could be scored by degree of comprehension. The subjects were also asked to formulate a version of their own advice.

The findings reflected a consistently significant trend toward selecting statements at higher stages as containing preferred modes of thought and a correspondingly significant tendency to prefer least the advice at the lower stage. Comprehension of the stages decreased, however, in going from lower to higher. Subjects were asked, in effect, to recapitulate the stage of their preference. Those who selected one stage below their own comprehended it most frequently. Subjects voicing a preference for one stage above exhibited a moderate frequency of comprehension by comparison. Lastly, those who preferred advice at two stages above their own were the least frequently correct in their comprehension of the advice. There

was a marked tendency, when incorrectly recapitulating the advice, to assimilate it at the subjects' own stage or one stage below. In instances where the advice was disliked, the tendency was to distort it by assimilation specifically to one stage below the subjects' own stage. Further analysis compared the subjects' own construction of advice to their pre-test scores, after exposure to the friends' advice. The result confirmed Turiel's finding that there is a significant increase in correct usage of responses at one stage above the subjects' dominant stage, whereas two stages above had no influence and one stage below only slight influence. The explanation offered suggests that +1 over -1 is based on preference, since -1 is well comprehended, but not preferred. Regarding +1 over +2, it is speculated that comprehension is the critical factor, since +2 is not well comprehended, but both +1 and +2 are preferred. Rest et al. emphasize that lower level stage reasoning is rejected on structural grounds in that the rejecting subjects' comprehend its qualitative character, but still do not prefer it. Contrary to this whenever higher-level advice is rejected the grounds are not structural. In other words, there was never evidence that a subject genuinely comprehended higher stage advice and then rejected it. When higher advice was rejected, an examination always revealed an other than structural basis. For example, the subjects rejecting +2 advice very frequently had distorted it to the point that they had understood it as being -1, which interpretation served as the basis for the rejection. It was also found that

liking +2 was often based upon misinterpreting it at the subjects' own stage level or one above, especially when the content agreed with what the child's own belief dictated. In such a case, for example, a Stage 2 child who believed the drug should not be stolen (content), might have a tendency to prefer Stage 4 advice not to steal the drug. However, it is revealed upon examination that this child does not comprehend the Stage 4 reasoning, but instead interprets (distorts) it as being at Stage 2 or 3 reasoning. There are aspects of the rhetoric of Stage 4 that promote preference for it, but the actual limitations of the Stage 2 child's development simply does not permit true structural comprehension.

Rest¹ in elaborating further upon findings on the hierarchical nature of stage development, maintains that a subject providing evidence of comprehending a stage generally manifests a comprehension of previous stages. Significantly, about half of all subjects studied exhibit comprehension of a stage that is one stage above their own predominant stage as revealed in a pretest. The best predictor of understanding a stage beyond one's predominant stage is the amount of spontaneous usage of a stage beyond the predominant one that the subject is observed expressing. In other words, when scoring a subject for moral stage, it was recognized that in addition to the spontaneous products of the predominant stage to which they were assigned,

¹Ibid.

approximately half of the subjects displayed 20 percent spontaneous usage of higher stages. Of that group, as many as 84 percent understood those stages above their predominant one, which they had used spontaneously. There was a marked difference of only 30 percent, who did not show any spontaneous stage use above the predominant one, providing evidence of comprehending any stages higher than the predominant stage. Reflecting upon the distinction between spontaneous usage of a stage and comprehension of a stage based on advice presented to a subject, Rest points out that the former involves a more mature skill. In spontaneous usage the subject does not merely respond to a formulation that already embodies moral reasoning, but instead he must construct and organize the reasoning on his own. Therefore, subjects showing substantial usage of a higher stage than their predominant one may well be expected to comprehend all stages that they are capable of utilizing spontaneously. Rest's empirical observations lend credence to Turiel's advocacy of stage mixture as critical to undergoing transition in the stage hierarchy. The spontaneous usage of a stage other than the assigned one is generally that of one higher than that which predominates. Hence, when a subject comprehends a stage higher than his predominant one, it will usually be the stage one above. Furthermore, it is those subjects who demonstrate comprehension of one stage above their predominant one who are the most likely to show a decisive shift in the posttest toward increased thinking at one stage higher. Thus, spontaneous usage is predictive of com-

prehension, which is predictive of assimilation. Rest uses the term assimilation in this context to refer to accurate increase in thinking at the next higher stage above the predominant one upon being exposed to the experimental condition. Lastly, the highest stage comprehended is most likely to be the one preferred from amongst all those stages that are comprehended. Genuine understanding of the structural components of a stage is likely to compel the subject to embrace it as preferable. There was not a tendency to prefer one's own predominant stage. However, Rest maintains that his findings indicate that irrespective of comprehension and spontaneous production of a stage, subjects tended to prefer the higher stages. Stage 6 is preferred the most, Stage 5 next and so on in that order. While it is clear that subjects would prefer the highest stage comprehended over all lower stages, which are also comprehended, it is not clear why subjects would prefer higher stages not comprehended and to do so with a diminishing degree of preference in order, starting with Stage 6 as most preferred. Rest speculates upon this phenomenon, offering several possible explanations, but seems to favor a Platonic doctrine of intuitive recognition of the truly just, despite an absence of ability to either spontaneously articulate or comprehend it. As Kohlberg has stated elsewhere in reflecting Plato's ideas:

The kind of knowledge of the good which is virtue is philosophical knowledge or intuition of the ideal form of the good, not correct opinion or acceptance of conventional beliefs.

(A paragraph omitted here)

The reason the good can be taught is because we know it all along dimly or at a low level and its teaching is more a calling out than an instruction.

The reason we think the good cannot be taught is because the same good is known differently at different levels and direct instruction cannot take place across levels.

Then the teaching of virtue is the asking of questions and the pointing of the way, not the giving of answers. Moral education is the leading of men upward, not the putting into the mind of knowledge that was not there before.¹

The preceding statements provide a smooth transition into a discussion of Kohlberg's considerable efforts at utilizing the findings on hierarchical stage development in the field of moral education. Kohlberg has frequently acknowledged a great debt to John Dewey, the American philosopher of pragmatism or instrumentalism, for influencing his thoughts on moral development and education. Before proceeding further, a brief sketch of Dewey's influence would be appropriate. Dewey (1859-1952) was profoundly interested in the connection between science and values. He rejected the bifurcation proposed by those who held that values had no place in the matrix of scientific beliefs. He has stated, in thoughts that may reveal some of his strong appeal for Kohlberg, the following:

The problem of restoring integration and cooperation between man's beliefs about the world in which he lives and his beliefs about values

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "Education for Justice: A Modern Statement of the Platonic View," in Moral Education, ed. T. Sizer (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1970), p. 58.

and purposes that should direct his conduct is the deepest problem of modern life. It is the problem of any philosophy that is not isolated from life.¹

In another incisive comment, alluding to the concern between thought and action, Dewey formulates the following:

A moral situation is one in which judgment and choice are required antecedently to overt action. The practical meaning of the situation-- that is to say the action needed to satisfy it-- is not self-evident. It has to be searched for. There are conflicting desires and alternative apparent goods. What is needed is to find the right course of action, the right good. Hence inquiry is exacted...This inquiry is intelligence...²

Dewey placed great faith in the educational system as the avenue through which moral education should take place. He advocated a democratic milieu with emphasis upon persuasion, reason, interaction, and in brief, the process as the essential ingredient for growth, a desirable end in itself. For Dewey, moral principles were not etherial and inert abstractions that existed in a realm remote from everyday life. Although real, they had meaning for him only insofar as they infused the lives of individuals embracing them in a community context. Applied to the school curriculum, geography, for example, was not to be taught simply as a body of facts about the earth, but in a way that organized and related those facts to human, value-laden concerns. Dewey's view, echoed in Kohlberg's position

¹John Dewey, The Quest for Certainty (New York: Minton, Balch & Co., 1930), p. 255.

²John Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy (New York: Minton Books, 1950), p. 163-64.

today, is that if the school is to prepare one for properly living in a democratic, social, and moral manner upon graduation, then it must recreate the conditions necessary for such a life. It cannot reasonably expect to subject children and adolescents to twelve years of authoritarian rule in a morally sterile context and then set them free to lead their lives as committed adults participating in the democratic process. Dewey sees education as development and Kohlberg seizes upon this to assert with some congruency that, therefore, once one knows what development actually is, he then has a loadstone to help construct a definition of what it ought to be. For Dewey and Kohlberg experience is intrinsic to development. It is the responsibility of the schools to provide those experiences which will stimulate development upward through the stages in the hierarchy toward more adequate functioning. Kohlberg is adamant in rejecting any suggestion that the schools should teach children conformity to conventional rules and authoritative pronouncements, as their primary goal of moral education. He is equally assertive in challenging the prevalent philosophical posture of engendering an acceptance of ethical relativity amongst children. He has taken pains to expose the "hidden curriculum" in schools, making it clear that if not explicit, then values will be implicit in the child's school experience. Lastly, as has been alluded to previously, the "bag of virtues" approach, still popular today and promulgated by no less an ancient sage than Aristotle, is roundly rejected by Kohlberg. The proper role of the school is to create that

milieu which will stimulate cognitive and moral development as far along the universal stage hierarchy as possible for each student. It is not simply because later stages come after earlier stages that Kohlberg pronounces them better. They constitute a proper aim for moral education because:

What is most properly called development is a movement toward greater adaptation, differentiation, and integration. Each stage is a more differentiated, comprehensive, and integrated or equilibrated structure than its predecessor, and the fundamental cause of movement from one stage to the next is that a later stage is better, more adequate in some universal sense, than an earlier stage...My psychological theory for explaining why children move from one moral stage to the next is built upon a philosophic or ethical theory in which each higher stage is morally and logically more adequate than the one below.¹

The above statement by Kohlberg is the most direct and succinct formulation that one will find in his voluminous writings to support, on theoretical grounds, his position on why higher stages are better and why, therefore, their attainment should be the aim of education. He is unrelenting in his conviction that moral education as he conceives it is not, even remotely, to be equated with indoctrination. The emphasis is

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Concepts of Developmental Psychology As the Central Guide to Education: Examples from Cognitive, Moral, and Psychological Education" in Proceedings of the Conference on Psychology and the Process of Schooling in the Next Decade: Alternative Conceptions, ed. M. C. Reynolds (Leadership Training Institute, sponsored by Bureau for Educational Personnel Development, U. S. Office of Education.), p. 14.

upon the form of moral reasoning and not upon content or telling the child what to believe. The mode of education he is advocating does not single out any particular religious or sociopolitical ideology.

Kohlberg has been engaged in direct intervention within school systems on an experimental basis. On a micro level he has been instrumental in activities involving classroom discussions designed to facilitate development of the discussants. The method is to present hypothetical moral dilemmas with the leader introducing arguments one stage above the stage of the students whose stage is lowest in the class. The premise is that for those students the discussion induces dissatisfaction with their own resolutions. An ensuing cognitive dissonance promotes the disequilibrium that engenders a reorganization and restructuring at the next highest stage. As the discussions proceed and lower stage students move upward, the leader increases the stage level of his arguments. On a macro level, Kohlberg has designed alternative schools which have heightened the engagement of students in participatory democracy, increasing role-taking opportunities in the process. Emphasis is upon discussions and decision-making around issues vital to the students, such as drugs, from the standpoint of morality and fairness. Kohlberg has been critical of the schools' moral climate, which he contests too often is based upon Stage 1, obedience and punishment orientation, and Stage 4, law and order orientation.

Logic and Moral Judgment

Kohlberg has made it clear that he does not view moral judgment as merely the application of logic to the moral domain. The justice structure that is constructed and reconstructed throughout development has an essential nature of its own that makes it separable from the purely logical. However, moral judgment at any given stage has a structural quality parallel to and dependent upon the structure of cognition at corresponding periods of development. Cognitive development, therefore, places constraints upon the range of one's moral judgment and is considered to be a necessary, but not sufficient condition for it. There appear to be two major critical points in the influence brought to bear by cognitive transformations upon moral development. The first is the presence of concrete operations which promotes moral judgment at Stage 2. Prior to the emergence of the concrete operational period, the child's moral judgment is not likely to exceed the punishment and obedience orientation of Stage 1. The second critical development is the emergence of formal operations necessary for the social contract orientation of Stage 5. Kuhn, Langer, Kohlberg, Haan¹ maintain that subjects who display some principled moral reasoning, but are at an incipient phase of emerging formal operations, are still found to be predominantly at Stage 4. The early emergence of formal

¹Deanna Kuhn et al., "The Development of Formal Operations in Logical and Moral Judgment," Genetic Psychology Monographs 95 (1977): 97-188. (The research reported by Kuhn et al. in this article was completed in 1971.)

operational thought, they have found, is necessary for the consolidation of a pure Stage 4 development. However, some conventional moral reasoning exists without the presence of formal operations. Concrete operational subjects never demonstrate moral judgment responses that exceeded Stage 4. Most subjects at the concrete operational period or lower exhibit moral reasoning that is predominantly Stage 3 or below. Completely or predominantly moral thinking at the principled level does not become consolidated until the later stages of formal operations have appeared. Kuhn et al. believe that paramount to their findings was the observed decalage between purely cognitive and moral spheres. In one sample only 21 percent evidenced some principled thought out of 85 percent who showed some formal operational thought. In a second group there was evidence of 9 percent demonstrating some principled thought out of a total of 80 percent who demonstrated some formal operations. In general, substantial moral growth occurred during the earlier stages of development. Once subjects reach the conventional level, advance in moral judgment is found with diminished frequency. Thus, it seems that logical structural development progresses further than does moral maturity in most cases. Keasey¹ in a review of studies on the subject under discussion, reached the conclusion that the evidence supports

¹Charles B. Keasey, "Implications of Cognitive Development for Moral Reasoning," in Moral Development: Current Theory and Research, ed. D. J. DePalma & J. M. Foley (New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1975), pp. 39-56.

adopting the position on cognitive development as a necessary condition for moral development and that the former facilitates the emergence of the latter, although is not sufficient to fully account for it.

Kuhn et al.¹ attempted to fill in the gap between formal operations and principled moral judgment. To accomplish this they focused upon those of their adult and adolescent subjects who were predominantly formal operational, with the aim of comparing those who had achieved principled moral judgment to those who had not. Their strategy was to identify the presence or absence of two additional variables. These were social order concepts and moral comprehension. In a commentary upon the former, they state:

We are interested...in when an S makes the transition from a conception of the social order in which societal regulation is maintained for its own sake, to a conception of the social order in which societal regulation has as its purpose the protection of individual welfare and rights. Our purpose...was to investigate this transition in conception of the social order itself, as distinguished from the transition in moral judgment we think it generates.²

The critical transition being referred to, of course, is from Stage 4 to Stage 5. Social order concepts are viewed as being more immediately linked to logical operations. Moral comprehension is seen as more directly connected to moral judgment.

¹Kuhn, pp. 97-188.

²Ibid., p. 170.

Since moral judgments presented to subjects can be comprehended before the subjects can spontaneously express them, it is assumed that competence at comprehension would be a necessary element in a continuum of elements, which would precede spontaneous moral judgment. The proposed order of elements in the continuum is as follows: logical operations, social order concepts, moral comprehension, spontaneous moral judgment. The expectation in this formulation is that whenever the presence of a later element is identified, the preceding elements would also always be present. However, identification of a given element, would not automatically assure that those which follow are present. Kuhn et al. conclude from this portion of their study that the evidence is suggestive of such a continuum, but urge that further research is necessary for elaboration and confirmation. At the risk of confusion, but in the hope of avoiding oversimplification, it must not be thought that the influence of one mental structure upon another is always unidirectional. Kuhn et al. point out that each mental structure functions within two domains. It interacts with the structure of the environment, but also it interacts internally with other mental structures. As has been commented upon in previous sections, when interaction produces feedback that is discrepant with the initiating mental structure, then a disequilibrium is induced and is resolved by structures reorganizing at a higher level. Reflecting the reverberating complexities that can occur in the course of development, Kuhn et al. explicate the following:

An interaction between a given mental structure and the environment...may stimulate a reorgani-

zation in the internal relationship or coordination of this structure and other related structures. This reorganization in turn may generate internal disequilibrium which leads to further interactions with the environment, involving both the original and related structures.

...Mental operations, in the purely logical domain should influence operations in more peripheral domains more so than the reverse. This influence, however, is not strictly unilateral; cognitive operations are only adequately described as a network of interactive and coregulative structures.¹

Thus, Kuhn et al. suggest that despite the ordered sequence they tentatively put forth to explain the development of moral judgment, there probably occurs a bidirectional interplay amongst the various domains of the mental structures.

The study by Kuhn et al. is a most ambitious one. They utilized two samples, one comprised of 265 adults and adolescents, the other of 75 youngsters from 10 to 12 years of age. The pre-adolescents were involved in a short term longitudinal study spanning a nine month period. Cognitive development was assessed through testing with three Piagetian tasks. These were the pendulum problem, a correlation situation involving a set of cards, and the chemicals problem requiring combinatorial analysis. Moral judgment was determined by use of the Kohlberg interview. It is worth noting that amongst adults in the sample 15 percent failed to demonstrate any formal operational thought. There were 30 percent who had crystalized their

¹Ibid., p. 178.

cognitive competence at the formal operational period. The majority, 55 percent, were in a transitional state between concrete and formal operations.

Emphasis in the Kahn et al. study was upon the qualitative correspondence between logical and moral domains and not upon mere correlational discoveries. They explored the increasing differentiation between what "is" and what "ought" to be, the full blooming of which becomes possible upon the consolidation of the formal operational thought structures. The Stage 4 moral reasoner in emphasizing the maintenance of laws is fusing the factual character of laws with what ought to be. He has not yet achieved the formal operational thinkers recognition that what is, is merely one subset of a range covering the gamut of what is possible. He is more advanced, however, than those at earlier stages for at least in the face of law violations, the law does stand as that which ought to have been followed rather than the fact of the transgressors behavior. Once formal operations become firmly established there is an essential reversal in that the thinker grasps that reality is one possibility amongst many. The law need not be maintained as it is and new laws may be formed guided by one's vision of what ought to be. The capacity for second order operations of the final period of cognitive development facilitates the individual's progression in his judgment making capacity. As Kuhn et al. state:

Initially the S only makes judgments of fact, what is. He then becomes capable of making judgments about the fact: i.e. norms or rules

applying to fact. Only at the most advanced level does he become capable of second-order operations: operations on operations, or judgments about judgments.¹

In other words, there is a structural isomorphism between the secondary-order logical operations which constitute a central feature of the formal operational period and the principled level individual's new found competence at making second-order moral judgments. A final differentiation must occur at the principled level. Even though the Stage 5 moral reasoner has shifted from a law maintaining to a law creating creature, Kuhn et al. stress that the moral oughts are still not fully universalized as they are locked into the procedural mechanism which is the hallmark of the social contract orientation. When this final differentiation is made, then the individual is completely autonomous in choosing a priori universal oughts based upon natural rights. These are rights which, Kuhn et al. assert:

...can be phrased in terms of liberty, equality, and reciprocity or simply in terms of the concept of the equal worth of all human beings as ends in themselves, rather than means.²

The Kohlbergian autonomous individual is rare, but he does exist. To achieve that autonomy, however, he must first undergo a cognitive transformation. Grounded in the power of formal operational thought, he soars to the highest moral principles.

¹Ibid., p. 141.

²Ibid., p. 142.

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CHAPTER SIX

METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL CRITIQUE

The work of Kohlberg has been criticized by both enemies who seek to deliver mortal blows and by friends who aim to effect improvement. In the case of the former, attack is usually leveled against the heart of the theory. Propositions bearing upon the invariance of stage sequence, the hierarchical nature of the stages, and their universality are challenged. In more friendly quarters, methodological shortcomings are cited and accompanied by recommendations. The limitations of the theory with its deemphasis upon affect and habit, traditional components of moral psychology, are highlighted as the congenial critic generally urges movement in the direction of integrating cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements. Inquiries are made about the extent to which Kohlberg has abandoned the scientific foundation of his work in favor of philosophical speculations which have led him to advocate an impossible ideal that may be more an expression of his own bias than the objective truth he claims it to be. Although published articles by Kohlberg and his collaborators are voluminous, a published volume by him devoted exclusively to his theory and research findings has not yet been made available. Nevertheless, over the last several years he has been listing two forthcoming books¹ in his

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, ed. Recent Research in Moral Develop-

bibliographies. In personal communication with the Harvard Center for Moral Education, I have been informed over the summer of 1978 that a three volume work edited by Kohlberg is expected to be published within approximately one year. In view of the impact and scope of Kohlberg's achievement, the lack of such a publication has represented a serious deficiency. Hopefully the remediation of it will put an end to the prolonged practice by Kohlberg of constantly suggesting that the publication of books, which never materializes, is imminent.

An extensive theoretical exposition encompassing the sophistication and complexity of Kohlberg's work, as well as abundant citation of its empirical moorings, appears in the preceding chapters. Therefore, I shall not attempt here to marshal a defense of his unquestionably significant and far-reaching efforts. Instead, an endeavor will be made to maintain fidelity to the critical sources which have attempted to cast a spotlight upon possible weaknesses in Kohlberg's system.

Peters¹ has taken issue with Kohlberg for staunchly maintaining a monolithic position to the exclusion of other schools of thought which have traditionally contributed to moral

ment (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, in preparation); Lawrence Kohlberg and Elliot Turiel, Moralization: A Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Socialization (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, in preparation).

¹R. S. Peters, "Moral Development: A Plea for Pluralism," in Cognitive Development and Epistemology, ed. T. Misihel (New York: Academic Press, 1971), pp. 237-67.

psychology. The form of justice, so narrowly constricting Kohlberg's conception of morality, implies other values which are never considered within the system. To determine what is just on a substantive issue necessitates introducing other criteria which in themselves could assume greater priority in an alternate moral system. Peters speaks specifically of attempting to determine what might be a just wage, which entails considering factors such as need, contribution to community, and risk involved. These veer in the direction of content over form, Peters suggests, and to that extent, Kohlberg's system must move toward being prescriptive. Remaining with an emphasis upon form over content and avoiding this horn of the dilemma places Kohlberg on the other horn of being too formal to guide moral educators or ethical agents in everyday life. In extending further his comments on the distinction between form and content, Peters agrees that Kohlberg is correct in maintaining that a form of cognitive stimulation or Socratic dialectic is necessary for generating principles in the learner. However, he goes on to emphasize that there is a place for teaching in the area of content, as well, and this would rely upon the direct showing and telling of the teacher, which Kohlberg seems to belittle.

Peters insists that certain essential trait-like characteristics must be accounted for in a fashion that is different than how the development of justice principles are accounted for. Concern for others is vital to moral character and yet this precedes conceptions of justice in very young children,

even though this concern may later be ordered along the lines of justice. He distinguishes a category of traits which, unlike honesty, is content free and necessary if the will to abide by one's principles is to be present. This category encompasses such traits as courage, integrity, determination, consistency, and persistence. Devoid of these elements of will, the most principled moral thinker would be sterile as an ethical agent in his encounter within the real world.

Peters outlines a hierarchy of traits ranging from those that are rooted to specific acts, such as punctuality, to the higher order traits identified above, which are not linked to specific acts. Implied in all of them, however, are principles.

Punctuality may be a mechanically learned trait, but implied by it as an objectively desirable act, it could be argued, is a consideration for the rights and feelings of other people.

Peters is of the opinion that in maintaining a sharp dichotomy between principles and traits, Kohlberg has exaggerated the difference and created an artificial distinction. In any event, Kohlberg's criticism of character traits, in Peters view, is limited to those that are most concretely involved with specific acts, such as honesty, and overlooks others along the scale, such as compassion.

The central thrust of Peters' criticism concentrates upon Kohlberg's relegation of habit formation to a role of minor importance in moral development. The virtuous traits, which Kohlberg slights, are cultivated by habit formation. Aristotle long ago underscored the need to practice virtue in order to

develop and bring it to maturity. Virtuous actions, to be sure, will not be appreciated for what they are by the very young. External rewards and punishments certainly will play an instrumental role in training the very young. However, this is necessary if the correct behaviors are to be carried out. In time, the inner understanding and motives to do the right thing for the right reason will hopefully appear. In Peters' view habit formation constitutes the early pole of a continuum leading to a mature virtuous morality that is informed by reason. Acquired initially through external incentives provided by the caretakers, the child will eventually appreciate the reason in ethical terms for maintaining that which is virtuous. In this formulation, reason supports what has had its origin in habit, but does not substitute for it. Intelligence can be applied to habit in the sense of thinking about one's actions that derive from habits. In brief, one can acquire the habit of honest behavior to avoid punishment and later, even in the absence of possible punitive consequences, maintain honest behavior with a full appreciation of its desirability in interpersonal terms, as one reflects upon it. Reason then reenforces the early acquired honest behaviors and, hence, habit and reason work in tandem. Children when very young cannot comprehend a principle so abstract as justice, nor even recognize that certain rules derive their *raison d'etre* from principles. This is where habituation enters. Through exposure and repetition one may acquire certain action patterns. Habituation may occur as the result of associative learning or through intentional

design. In habituating the very young to certain virtuous acts, such as honesty, there must be some attempt to explain to the child what the relevant acts and contexts are. Habituation in the moral sphere must be accompanied by understanding at the appropriate level for moral education to occur. The point Peters seeks to make is that habit in children need not be acquired by a process of drill, but through one in which the connections between rules, as well as their consequences, are consistently brought to their attention. In a brief summary of this aspect of his position, Peters states, "My argument is that learning habits in an intelligent way can be regarded as providing an appropriate basis, in the moral case, for the later stage when rules are followed or rejected because of the justification that they are seen to have or lack."¹

Peters further develops his argument by suggesting that Kohlberg has been so preoccupied with the abstract virtue of justice that he has ignored an important but somewhat less abstract virtue. Much more meaningful for young children at their stage of development than the concept of justice is concern for others. Peters suggests, "The plight of others is much easier to grasp, and concern for it develops much earlier in children. If such concern is encouraged early in children, it can come to function later as one of the fundamental principles of morality, when the child reaches the stage

¹Ibid., p. 258.

of being able to grasp the connection between many rules and their effect on other people."¹ Principled morality is barren without the proper sensitivity to people's suffering which might move one to action. Young children can be trained to decenter from their own concerns and to also take into account the needs of others. An habituation to doing so may generate a compassionate disposition, which in turn may produce appropriately relevant moral actions in response to human suffering.

Virtues of self-control, which Kohlberg fails to consider, are for Peters those of the highest order. They have already been identified as courage, determination, persistence, integrity, and consistency. If one is to possess the moral courage to act upon principle, then there must be experienced some training in acquiring such courage to face rebuke and ostracism from the social milieu, in the course of growing up. It is precisely this type of character training that will sustain the autonomous principled thinker when confronted with the inevitability of social resistance and confrontation. There can be very little autonomy for the principled thinker who does not possess moral courage. In fact, to reason at a principled level without the courage to sustain one's convictions may induce great stress and guilt.

In conclusion, there is something of a paradox contained in the observations made by Peters. He has insisted that the

¹Ibid., p. 259.

basic concepts of habit and trait be accorded their proper place in moral psychology, despite Kohlberg's almost contemptuous dismissal of what he calls a "bag of virtues." In doing so, Peters has restored to moral psychology some of the grand traditional notions, such as moral courage and integrity, which Kohlberg's exclusive emphasis on justice has eliminated. There is one final component omitted from Kohlberg's work, which Peters comments upon with almost chilling simplicity. It is one thing to know the difference between right and wrong. It is quite another, to care.

Alston¹ has also commented upon Kohlberg's neglect of the concept of habit, as well as his deemphasis of affect in the moral system. That both habit and affect have been consigned to roles of secondary importance is viewed as an artifact of the moral dilemmas, used in the interview, which are designed in a fashion that assures channeling the subject's responses in a cognitive direction. Alston takes Kohlberg to task for having asserted that conflict between physical desires and conscience pose no real moral crisis in contrast to the view that moral crisis derives from uncertainty in social situations when one experiences a distintegration of moral expectations. Alston's point is simply that only a biased ideological commitment could lead to this sort of one-sided position, when

¹William P. Alston, "Comments on Kohlberg's 'From Is to Ought'" in Cognitive Development and Epistemology, ed. T. Mischel (New York: Academic Press, 1971), pp. 269-84.

clearly a moral crisis could be precipitated in the individual faced with either condition.

Alston construes being at a moral stage as evidencing an "habitual style of moral" reasoning. He concedes that the child who moralizes at a certain stage must have acquired the concept commensurate with that stage. However, he challenges that this provides adequate grounds for inferring anything about concept development. The frequent use of concepts at a certain level is not proof that concepts at higher levels not being used are necessarily absent. A concept may be present in a behavioral repertoire, but dormant. Citing Kohlberg's own acknowledgment that about 50 percent of one's concepts in moral reasoning derives from stages adjacent to the predominant stage, Alston chips away at how meaningful it really is to say that someone is at a certain stage. An individual may very well have the higher concepts, but find it more natural to reason at lower stages. Hence, the reason for that individual being assigned to the lower stage is different from what is ordinarily assumed by Kohlbergians. Alston is not adverse to accepting the invariant stage theory of moral development, but is urging that a more rigorous test to determine what concepts one truly does and does not possess be designed, with less emphasis upon concept tendencies expressed in overt verbal reasoning. Current adversaries of the cognitive-developmental field consistently make the argument that performance at a certain level in a cognitive task does not rule out the possibility of competence existing, but unutilized, at a higher level. Conversely, the

lack of performance at a given level is not sufficient proof that the competence is not possessed, only that it has not been displayed in a particular task.

Kohlberg has claimed that there is a logical necessity to the order of stage sequences, as increasing differentiation and integration occurs with each stage transition and attainment. Alston is clear, however, that even though this may be so, it offers no support to the position that later stages are morally superior to earlier stages. A concept may be logically contingent for its emergence upon a preceding concept, but it would be a gratuitous leap to assume its moral superiority on that account. Believing it to be a serious challenge to Kohlberg's theory, Alston argues that many philosophers enjoy as much sophistication on a conceptual plane as the Stage 6 thinker, yet adopt philosophical and theological positions that correspond to Stages 4 and 5. The prescriptive "ought" of Kohlberg's Stage is not self-evident, but reflects the built in bias that has led him in the direction he has pursued. It is incumbent upon him, as with any philosopher, to marshal proof of the superiority of his construal of what is truly moral in the highest sense. Somewhat trenchantly, Alston drives his point home, as follows:

It is notorious that moral philosophers agree no more about what is distinctive of the moral than about anything else; and a large number of distinct accounts of what makes a judgment, a reason, an attitude, a rule, or a principle, moral have been put forth. Kohlberg chooses one of these...but fails to do anything by way of showing that this is more than a choice

of what seems most congenial or interesting to him.... If these pronouncements are to carry any weight, he will have to show that this sense of "moral" which is functioning as his standard has itself some recommendation other than congeniality to his predilections.

What Kohlberg really wants most to recommend to our acceptance is the principle of justice (in his interpretation) as a supreme moral principle. But stages of prescriptivity will not advance that cause. A judgment based on a principle of racial destiny, or no principle at all, can be just as prescriptive as a judgment based on an application of Kohlberg's principle of justice.¹

Despite Alston's almost unrelenting commentary on Kohlberg's claims, he does temper his remarks by conveying a belief that Kohlberg has contributed to enhancing the field of moral psychology generally and has personally provided Alston with new ways of viewing the field.

In a systematic and searching critique, Simpson² has pursued further some of Alston's earlier references to Kohlberg's subjectivity. She views him as both culture-bound and personally influenced by certain thinkers of his time. A well aimed arrow strikes directly at the heart of his claim to having established the universality of principled moral reasoning on a scientific basis. Simpson contends that throughout the prodigious body of work produced by Kohlberg, he is fuzzy on the distinction

¹Ibid., pp. 276-77.

²Elizabeth Léone Simpson, "Moral Development Research: A Case Study of Scientific Cultural Bias," Human Development 17 (1974): 81-105.

between valid empirical evidence and his own purely normative pronouncements on what he thinks ought to prevail in the moral realm. In other words, it begins to look as if Kohlberg is the least scientific when he is the most prescriptive. Despite his insistence on the commonality of peoples across all cultures, Simpson is equally insistent that Kohlberg has received his intellectual nourishment from the following heroes of Western Philosophy: Kant, Mill, Hare, Ross, Dewey, and Rawls. However, the intellectual heritage of Eastern philosophies is essentially different from these sources and Kohlberg fails to take it into consideration in his description of normative ethics. Assuming that it is a logical possibility, a universal normative morality would have to be derived from a synthesis of both Eastern and Western philosophies.

In a pointed commentary on the individualistic and far from universal outlook of Kohlberg, Simpson states the following:

Like each of us, Kohlberg himself, his interest in cognitive development and moral reasoning, his choice of a Kantian or Deweyian infrastructure for this theory and his predilection for abstractions of such principles as justice, equality, and reciprocity are all, in a sense, accidents of time and place and the interaction of his personality with a specifiable social environment and the norms of the sub-groups within that environment. His rebuttal of Brandt and others who emphasize cultural differences...is more a statement of faith than an evidence-based conclusion.¹

Simpson has argued that despite having research data on

¹Ibid., p. 85-86.

at least twelve different cultures, at the time of her remarks, Kohlberg's treatment of his material lacks a sufficient sense of differentiation in comparing these cultures. Furthermore, some of his most dogmatic statements about the universality of post conventional morality are laden with sermonizing type phrases rather than scientific ones. In suggesting that under the proper conditions all people, not only the few who have been discovered, would develop to the highest sociomoral level, Kohlberg employs such phrases as "I prefer to think" and "I believe all should." Simpson notes that in so doing Kohlberg clearly reveals the source of his version of normative ethics as personal. He has gone, in Simpson's opinion, from the scientist, to the philosopher, to the preacher. The indictment is a serious and harsh one, considering the articulated premises from which Kohlberg claims to be building upon.

In his emphasis upon universality and invariant sequence of stages, Simpson contends that Kohlberg has minimized the very real and profound impact of sociocultural forces. She illustrates this persuasively by an example citing the shift from 4-5 year olds who do not appear to verbalize that copying other peoples work is bad to 6 year olds who state that it is wrong to do so. Her point is that it is unwarranted to interpret this shift as a natural progression, when the children are going from a preschool orientation of cooperation into a school milieu of competitiveness that honors individual effort over team work. Introducing the variable of competitiveness confounds the findings and demands further research to achieve

more certain conclusions. She suggests, further, that the experiential reality of living in a ghetto will rivet the Stage 2 child to an orientation of instrumental relativism. An orientation of this type has functional survival value which will preempt the influence of any natural developmental process. To assume that there exists an autonomous person who is guided by self-chosen universal principles which entirely transcend his sociocultural anchoring is unwarranted. Simpson reasons that the social base of the conventional thinker is apparent because he shares the dominant value system of the society in which he lives. However, the so-called autonomous person may be no freer than those planted in the conventional soil from which he is said to have grown. Observe Simpson's comments on the subject, as follows:

At the post-conventional level the principles displayed may simply be the learned values of a different and smaller reference group so well internalized that its members believe themselves to be functioning autonomously... In some groups, internality—in the sense of autonomy in respect to the dominant culture—is learned as a norm, and admission and continued membership are contingent upon that knowledge.¹

A few passages beyond this, she crisply concludes:

Kohlberg's stage 6s are not functioning independently of their socialization; they have been very thoroughly socialized into the company of intellectual elites who value and practice analytic, abstract, and logical reasoning.²

¹Ibid., p. 94.

²Ibid., p. 95.

Simpson is doubtful that there exists a level of moral achievement beyond the conventional mode of thought. At least, she contends that the case for Kohlberg's morally autonomous man remains unproven.

In addition to all of the above, Simpson has also found cause to rebuke Kohlberg for what she judges to be his rather discursive method of reporting his own findings. He has failed to follow adequately the canons of explicit and parsimonious reporting of the research he has conducted. Allusions to cross-cultural research, although frequent, do not include appropriate details on samples and methodology. Especially painful is the omission of comments on how the moral dilemma stories are adapted to the various cultures studied. It is essential that the manner in which responses are scored to take into account cultural variations be conveyed. Simpson laments the fact that information in this area has not been made available.¹ It is her opinion that Kohlberg has drawn generalizations from his work that are premature. Replications and methodical research ranging across a greater diversity of the world's cultures must be awaited.

Kurtines and Grief² have also questioned that Kohlberg has established the empirical validity of his basic premises.

¹Although it does not stress cross cultural scoring, a scoring manual is available through the Harvard Center for Moral Education. It is revised periodically, the most recent revision having occurred the summer of 1978.

²William Kurtines and Esther Blank Grief, "The Develop-

Their critique is a highly technical one which is essentially an assault upon various aspects of the measuring instrument, the Moral Judgment Scale. They allow that refinement of the means for measurement and greater consistency in its application may ultimately confirm Kohlberg's theory, but hold that this is an achievement not yet attained. A restriction placed upon wide use of the instrument is the complexity of administration and scoring it entails. Since the scoring requires an analysis of the subject's responses and is not immediately evident from the responses themselves, special training is necessary and this is provided by Kohlberg himself. Training is offered at summer workshops mounted at the Harvard Center for Moral Education.

The nine moral dilemmas constituting the Moral Judgment Scale are usually not all employed in a given research project and often published reports do not communicate which of the several have been utilized. In addition, since there occurs a clinical probing to subjects' responses during the interviewing, the questions asked will frequently vary from subject to subject. Kurtines and Grief see this lack of standardization in administering the tests as a serious impediment to sound comparisons of research reports. It also raises questions about the validity of generalizations from even a single project.

ment of Moral Thought: Review and Evaluation of Kohlberg's work," Psychological Bulletin 81 (1974): 453-70.

Clearly this does not impose an unsurmountable problem, for at least there can be standardization with regard to which stories would be administered across studies. Kurtines and Grief believe that the chances for rater bias are high because of the judgmental component necessary for scoring and they further suggest that independent research is inhibited due to the scoring difficulties involved. There are also content oriented problems cited in the Moral Judgment Scale. For example, the fact that most of the characters in the dilemma are male may yield specific moral judgments that are based on a cultural understanding of a differential in sex roles. The reliability of the instrument has not been satisfactorily demonstrated, in the opinion of Kurtines and Grief. Kohlberg has reported interrater reliability for the Moral Judgment Scale. However, a good many of subsequent research projects rely on his former account of this and do not attempt independent efforts to demonstrate such reliability. It is suggested by Kurtines and Grief that it would further understanding and appreciation of each new study, if independent interrater reliability measurements bearing on the current research were to be reported. A significant flaw found in all published studies based upon the Moral Judgment Scale, according to Kurtines and Grief, has been the omission of reports on the temporal stability of subjects' responses. It is crucial to Kohlberg's theory that there be accuracy in assigning a subject to a particular stage. Yet there is no evidence that stability of moral judgments by subjects is maintained over brief periods from time x to time y.

Further, there have been no attempts reported to establish internal consistency across dilemmas, which might provide some assurance that there is a fundamental similarity in what is being measured (i.e. moral reasoning) by them. Kurtines and Grief assert that if they measure basically different domains, then a combined score of virtually unique areas does not add up to meaningful information. Lastly, despite its utility for the Moral Judgment Scale, omitted from the literature are estimates of the standard error of measurement. The authors have pointed out that this would be a particular asset in the field of moral development since a moral stage may reflect only 45 percent judgments at that stage, with the balance being at adjacent stages, the lower stage generally comprising more responses than the higher one.

Another aspect that comes under fire in the Kohlbergian system is what Kurtines and Grief view as its relatively low predictive validity. They recognize that theoretically two people at the same stage may choose alternate courses of action, as well as that six individuals, each at a different stage may all choose the same course of action. Nevertheless, it is true that Kohlberg maintains that there exists a probable relationship between moral stage and action. A survey of the literature led Kurtines and Grief to conclude that the predictive validity of the theory in this regard is moderate at best, when comparing grossly between high-level mature moral reasoning and relatively low-level reasoning. A clear correspondence, however, between a specific stage and a predictable

action has not been established. They found it particularly difficult to discriminate amongst the last three stages when it comes to predictive ability, as reflected in the extant literature. Lastly, upon surveying the various types of evidence bearing upon the invariant sequence hypothesis and the hypothesis of qualitatively different structural modes of reasoning, Kurtines and Grief conclude that there does not exist unequivocal support for these hypotheses. Kuhn¹ has responded to this allegation with some counter-evidence and the following observation:

...it is probably fair to say that Kurtines and Grief...have recognized neither the complexity of the task nor the uniqueness of Kohlberg's theoretical sequence.... To obtain the appropriate longitudinal data is a formidable task, especially in the case of the more advanced portion of the sequence, where progress, Kohlberg claims, is slow and not all individuals complete the progression. But the theoretical model should not be rejected until these data have been obtained.²

The dialectical process in search of truth will most likely continue for some time to come. In fact, Broughton³ has already offered a thorough negation of the negation by Kurtines and Grief.

¹Deanna Kuhn, "Short-Term Longitudinal Evidence for the Sequentiality of Kohlberg's Early Stages of Moral Judgment," Developmental Psychology 12 (1976): 162-66.

²Ibid., p. 166.

³John Broughton, "The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Morality," Journal of Moral Education 7 (January, 1978): 81-96.

An arresting reformulation of Kohlberg's stage theory has been recently advanced by Gibbs.¹ He first cites two criteria, previously identified by Piaget, for qualification as a naturalistic stage theory. One of them is simply that stages should be found commonly amongst all peoples. The other is that behavior emanating from the stages derive from processes which the individual is not conscious of. It is Gibbs contention that these criteria applied to the first four stages of Kohlberg's theory qualify them as candidates for constituting a naturalistic stage theory. He sets apart the last two stages, however, as distinctly different. They are referred to as existential themes, lacking in universality, and characterized by "meta-ethical reflection." Upon reviewing the literature which mostly focuses upon the first four stages, Gibbs firmly concludes that these stages do, indeed, meet all of the Piagetian stage criteria. Gibbs further suggests that Kohlberg's theory embraces holism, constructivism, and interactionism. Each of these is a major characterization of Piaget's cognitive-structural developmental theory. Naturalism, also a Piagetian characteristic, is not entirely applied by Kohlberg to his theory. Naturalism stresses continuity between species and the biological roots of human functioning. According to Gibbs this also implies a cognitive unconscious which, in-

¹John C. Gibbs, "Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Judgment: A Constructive Critique," Harvard Educational Review 47 (1977): 43-59.

deed, Piaget has cited.¹

The principled level of morality is one in which the member takes a stand or perspective outside of society and reflectively questions conventional morality. The rarity of principled thinking raises doubts about whether it is comprised of what may be said to meet the Piagetian stage criteria, as do the first four stages of Kohlberg's theory. In addition to being found with reasonable frequency, naturalistic stages should have a tendency to move upward through sequences and they should respond to enrichment in the social milieu with increased progress. Doubt is also raised because the reflective nature of principled morality imparts a dimension of self-consciousness not present in naturalistic stages, as interpreted by Gibbs. He states, "Post-conventionality is the existential experience of disembedding oneself from an implicit worldview and adopting a detached and questioning posture."² At the principled level there is an attempt to consciously formalize philosophies which are implicit in earlier stages. Gibbs does not construe Stages 5 and 6 as integrating and replacing previous stages in the same way that, for example, Stage 3 reorganizes and subsumes Stage 2. At the same time he fully affirms that, confronted with an unjust situation, principled thinking may govern behavior and in so doing preempt the earlier

¹Jean Piaget, "Affective Unconscious and Cognitive Unconscious," in The Child and Reality (New York: Grossman, 1973), pp. 31-48.

²Gibbs, pp. 55-56.

naturalistic stages. Moral thinkers at the principled level confronted with injustice, "...have experienced a dissonance between ethical presuppositions and the demands of their social situations. This conflict may provoke considerable meta-ethical reflection in the effort to formulate a defensible ethic."¹ Gibbs speculation that a sharp break be recognized between the first four Kohlbergian stages, comprising a naturalistic developmental stage theory, and the last two stages, comprising existential themes, is both abstruse and intriguing. It holds some promise for resolving the issue of accounting for the uncommon appearance of Stages 5 and 6 in a theory that purports to validate the universality of stages.

Hall and Davis,² like Gibbs, are constructive and congenial critics, who find Kohlberg's theory largely impressive, compelling, and therefore, acceptable. In general, however, they find more clarity and persuasiveness in the three basic levels of egocentricity, heteronomy, and autonomy equivalent to the preconventional, conventional, and postconventional levels respectively, than in the descriptions of the six discrete stages. Despite their adoption of his moral developmental theory for their purposes of moral education, they distinguish sharply between his philosophy and psychology, rejecting the

¹Gibbs, p.57.

²Robert T. Hall and John V. Davis, Moral Education in Theory and Practice (Buffalo, New York: Prometheus, 1975).

former and embracing the latter. Considering the extent to which Kohlberg interweaves, sometimes almost imperceptibly, between philosophy and psychology this is an important point of difference. Acknowledging the pragmatic value of Kohlberg's theory and believing that it is the best that cognitive-developmental psychology has to offer thus far, Hall and Davis caution against prematurely accepting it with finality. As with many other critics, they are impressed with research validating the invariance of developmental sequences up to Stage 4.

Hall and Davis appear to find an inconsistency between Kohlberg's description of a stage as a world view which interprets all experiences through its characteristics mode of thought and the notion of its being inadequate to incorporate some experiences, thereby precipitating the conflict that leads to stage transition. For some reason, which I do not think is made clear, Hall and Davis believe that if it is true that a stage cannot incorporate a particular experience and this precipitates a stage transition, then a social learning model can be invoked to explain the change. The equilibration model is dismissed summarily.

Regarding the issue of generality and specificity, Hall and Davis suggest the interesting notion that one stage may be brought to bear upon specific kinds of issues, whereas another stage within the same individual, might be brought to bear upon other kinds of issues. The research problem would be to determine what variables influence such a differential functioning of stages. The phenomenon of stage mixture lends some credence

to the plausibility of this idea.

Hall and Davis believe that Kohlberg has been less than precise in conveying exactly what he means by Stage 6 as the embodiment of a general concept of justice. They note that he has used at least three definitions, which they cite as follows: "1.) the preservation of the rights of individuals, 2.) a universal mode of choosing, and 3.) respect for persons."¹ Regardless of how justice is to be defined, Hall and Davis think that Kohlberg is wrong to view it as the exclusive core of morality. They are not the only ones, of course, who have taken this position. There are other principles which could be identified as possessing universal scope, such as liberty, which could serve as the loadstone for autonomous Stage 6 moral reasoning. Even if one were to confine the Stage 6 moral vision to justice, there is a remarkably small amount of cross-cultural agreement on its meaning, which Simpson² has pointed out. Diverse cultures conceive of justice differently, which places its universal status in jeopardy. Hall and Davis do not agree with Kohlberg that "respect for persons" is a pure principle constituting only the form of a mode of thought. It has a distinctively substantive character which can be compared, for

¹Ibid., p. 104.

²Elizabeth L. Simpson, "Moral Development Research: A Case of Scientific Cultural Bias," Human Development 17 (1974): 81-105.

example, to respect for law. While they reject justice as the core and exclusive principle of morality, they do adopt a version of an autonomous Stage 6 individual who is principled in his moral reasoning.

The value of life has been given a position of supremacy over all other values in the Kohlbergian scheme. This is repeatedly brought out in most of Kohlberg's writings. The vehicle for highlighting this supreme value is the classic Heinz story in which a husband is tempted to steal a drug from the local pharmacist to save his wife from dying of cancer. The pharmacist, who has discovered the drug, is asking an exorbitant amount, which the husband, Heinz, cannot possibly afford. In each context that Kohlberg discusses this dilemma he makes it abundantly clear that the moral thing to do is for Heinz to steal the drug in order to save the life of his wife. The rationale is the sovereignty of life over all other values, certainly including property. Simpson has leveled a serious challenge to Kohlberg's claim to the universality and priority of this principle. She explores diverse cultural attitudes about this matter and concludes that the issue is not one of valuing life over all other values, but rather "...that it is valued situationally in highly culturally-specific ways."¹ In one culture a traitor will be killed; in another a person

¹Ibid., p. 97.

may be killed to protect him or her from what others might do; and in another the elderly are left to die. The Congress of the United States has sent millions off to war, knowing that hordes of them would die; the wars were not always just. Patrick Henry has said, "Give me liberty, or give me death." Simpson reminds us that after losing property in the Great depression men jumped off of buildings and put bullets through their head. She states:

History is full of examples of men and women who have freely given of their lives for the preservation of their own property or the property of others. The point is that the relative value of property and life is decided situationally and culturally and is not a¹ matter of natural and universal knowledge.¹

Returning to the Heinz dilemma itself, one may wonder about its particular construction and the implication of Kohlberg's position. Kohlberg has designed the story in such a way that the pharmacist is a villain. A greedy capitalist, we might say. But why has he done this? The fact that the druggist is charging a grossly excessive amount is actually a contaminate in the situation which is entirely unnecessary if the principle is a valid guide to action. Kohlberg could have had the druggist asking only what it might reasonably cost under the circumstances. He did invent the drug, after all, and it might well be a scarce commodity. It is entirely conceivable that

¹Ibid, p. 98.

Heinz may still not be able to afford the drug. However, we all know that it is much easier to steal from a bad guy than a good guy. Hence, the story calls for the druggist insisting upon the exorbitant cost. If there is any conflict for our moral reasoner between advocating that Heinz break the law and save his wife versus maintaining the law and allowing his wife to die, Kohlberg's story construction will help to tip the scale for him. Furthermore, an elaboration of the story can certainly bring to light situational variables that might modify the response. If the drug is scarce, does stealing it mean that another person in need will die because of the theft? At what cost to himself has the druggist invented the drug? He may hypothetically have isolated himself for many years and worked arduously to discover this drug, at great personal sacrifice. If so, how is a just price to be placed upon it? Under these conditions, the mere theft of the drug is actually depriving the druggist of more than a piece of property. Has the druggist worked hard to discover the drug in order to sell it for a large sum so that he would then have the money that he needs to order an operation for his own debilitated wife? If so, is it right for Heinz to steal the drug? True, these are all hypothetical possibilities, but they are conceivable and they do have a bearing on the morality of the judgment. Furthermore, how does Heinz know whether any of these possibilities obtain? Most likely he does not; but he can know, if he pauses to think about it, that they might possibly obtain.

How is this meta-reflection to modify the judgment one is to make about the dilemma?

Kohlberg further suggests two significant ideas regarding morality in the Heinz situation. One is that Heinz should steal the drug even if the woman is a stranger to him and the other is that it is not only right for Heinz if he does steal, but it is wrong if he does not. The first of these is consistent with the universality of the principle upon which the action is to be predicated. The second has to do with reciprocal rights and obligations. If Heinz has the right to expect that someone should steal to save his life, should the tables be turned, then he has the obligation to steal for another in the same situation. The paradox, however, is that if our moral reasoner is at Stage 6, he will surely find his intellect taking him far beyond the concrete situation to the many possibilities of human suffering and life-endangering situations throughout the world. He knows that dying people can use his physical and financial aide. There is no justification for being rooted in the present situation. There are literally millions of strangers in the world whom Heinz can be sacrificing for. He may even actually save the lives of one or two. Interpreting the valuing of life as Kohlberg does, it is difficult to see how any fully principled Stage 6 moral reasoner can justify his own existence as long as his possessions are in excess of a subsistence level allowing mere survival. Any excess beyond what is needed for survival may be defined as property which can be used to save the lives of others. If the value of life is to

be interpreted as a pure universal principle, superordinate over all other values regardless of circumstances, then the moral obligation is to yield what one owns in excess of what he must have to survive.

Looking at the problem from a different perspective, suppose a family has three children. One is in the second year of college and another is about to start. A third, tragically, is dying. The family physician and two outside consultants, both experts in the field of the child's disease, insist that at best the child can be kept alive in the hospital for six more months through the use of extraordinary means. By hypothesis, maintaining him there would completely wipe out the family savings, accumulated over many hardworking years. The savings were intended to be used for the children's college. At Stage 6 would it be moral to choose not to prolong the life of the child after weighing the six months gain against the probable total loss of the money and what it would purchase in terms of humanistic values for the two remaining children? Consistency with Kohlberg's principle as a superordinate absolute would dictate keeping the child alive. Yet I believe that while doing so is a perfectly viable Stage 6 choice, so is the alternative, even though the choice would not be to maintain life at any cost. Death is inevitable. To seek to maintain it at all costs, despite circumstances, can be compulsively destructive. Imagine that death never occurs and there is no technology allowing escape to other planets. Overpopulation would eventually reach the point of so diminishing

the quality of life that existence would become insufferable. I believe that a rational person would design a world in which life would be time-limited, hence, permitting all to enjoy a higher quality of it during the finite period of living. Thus it follows, that given the imaginative possibility to enshrine life as a sovereign principle that will endure everlastingly, the rational person will reject the opportunity and opt for a society in which each member will eventually experience death; himself included, as that would only be fair. It would appear that this choice must imply values other than and higher than the mere sustainment of life. I would argue that those values are based on a "respect for persons" every bit as much as the Kohlbergian interpretation of the "value of life." When death is occurring naturally and the ordinary resources for preventing it, which at best in all cases can only mean forestalling it, are not available, then it is not unethical to allow it to occur. Further, one is not obliged at great personal loss to attempt to prevent it. Undoubtedly, if the third child in the dilemma above could be not simply saved for six months, but could recover at the expense of the family savings, then there would be no dilemma, for the course of action would be obvious. Supposing, however, the dying child lives next door and belongs to another family. Would the first family be morally obliged to give up all of its savings for the sake of helping the child next door to recover? The universal principle would dictate that it would be so obliged, just as it would be if the child were a stranger from across the world whose parents suddenly knocked at the

door. Theoretically implicit in Kohlberg's position is the premise that an individual must virtually be enslaved to another, as long as that other is in need of the first person's income to keep alive. To concede otherwise is to acknowledge that the sanctity of one person's life does not always take precedent over the property of another person. However, this is exactly what Kohlberg does not seem to acknowledge in his many philosophical tracts. I cannot help wondering if Kohlberg has thought through all of the ramifications of the microcosmic Heinz story and if he has, whether he is willing to claim them. In my opinion, however, the truly autonomous Stage 6 person would not give a narrowly confined response, whatever his ultimate recommendation, to the Heinz dilemma. Precisely because of his sociocognitive moral maturity he would be compelled to entertain alternate possibilities that might obtain in the situation and to anticipate the reverberating implications of his decision from many perspectives. To the extent that Kohlberg maintains a purity and singularity of definition, viewing justice as a mode of choosing, there is no disagreement. It is clear, however, that Kohlberg sees a converging of form and content at Stage 6 and that he seeks to impose his own ideological content at that point. The distinction between form and content in moral reasoning is compromised by its own maker.

Now let us move a step beyond Kohlberg. I have tried to show that it is not necessarily just to view an individual as obliged to offer up all of his property and continuing income, in excess of his survival needs, to save other people from a

natural death, which is inevitable at some time, in any event. But what if an individual volitionally chooses to do so? Supposing the family members living next door to the dying child confer and all agree to sacrifice their savings and forgo college, at least in the present, for the children. Have they not made a moral choice that goes beyond justice into the realm of love. Certainly they value the life of the dying child, but their choice is not made out of a cognitive sense of correlative rights and duties, instead it is generated by a mature form of brotherhood and love. It moves away from egocentricity and toward universality since the child is not in their own family. If they were to make the same sacrifice for a child who is a stranger to them, then their choice would be based on love that has become completely universalized. It is an irony of the world's religions that many of them have impeded the universalization of love. Contrary to their own doctrines, many churches throughout history have created amongst their membership a divisive feeling between themselves as insiders and others as outsiders. Love is reserved for the insiders and withheld from the outsiders. Of course, love as morality is not what Kohlberg is talking about. The question, however, is whether justice as morality is not an arbitrary and unnecessarily delimiting conception.

Puka¹ repudiates justice as the core of morality entirely, reconstruing it as a political concept. Morality itself encompasses a broader framework, within which justice orients us to what we cannot eliminate doing and must refrain from doing, in order that we not fall into the class of immoral. Because of this emphasis, it is seen as the negative side of morality. The positive side of morality places the concept of "better" at its center. It functions not to resolve conflicts, but to promote the growth of individuals. Puka sees the goal as becoming better people so that we evolve to a moral consciousness that brings us to "...the transcendence of judgmentalism, obligation, duty, rights, blame, guilt, censure, and even justifiable resentment."² In a deontological theory, one does the right thing because duty commands it. The Stage 6 person anticipates that if he doesn't act upon what he knows to be right then he will have violated his self-ideal and will experience self inflicted negative sanctions. In a positive morality, people have developed socially so that they genuinely want to do what they perceive as what they ought to do. Ideals and self-interests coincide.

¹Bill Puka, "Moral Education and Its Cure," in Reflections on Values Education, ed. J. R. Meyer (Ontario, Canada: Wilfried Laurier University Press, 1976), pp. 47-86.

²Ibid., p. 57.

Although a just decision-making procedure may satisfy the demands of Kohlberg's concept of morality, it is entirely conceivable that a fair compromise solution to a conflict may not satisfy the actual participants themselves. Puka questions whether, in fact, it is justice and satisfaction they should be in pursuit of. He introduces the intriguing notion that a positive morality utilizing a love ethic may neutralize a conflict and offer a resolution that transcends justice. As an example he cites the famous lifeboat dilemma in which several survivors of a shipwreck stand a chance to survive only if two people leave the raft to face certain death. The rational Stage 6 just solution calls for drawing straws to determine who shall go overboard. However, he conveys that at a conference on moral development which he attended, the discussants simulating being in this dilemma agreed not to draw straws, but to take their chances with one another instead. The likelihood of survival with all aboard would be slim. Puka urges that the choice made reflects a love ethic which is higher and nobler than a morality of justice. There was, however, one dissenting participant who argued that the decision of the others was unfair and might be responsible for his possible death. Puka agrees that when considered in the abstract the dissenter was justified, even though all of the others made an opposite choice when role-playing the situation with great feeling. The name of the dissenter, incidentally, was Lawrence Kohlberg.

The lifeboat dilemma could be complicated by first assuming that there are four survivors all of whom agree to draw straws. Once the straws have been drawn, the two who lose refuse to jump overboard. We may further assume hypothetically that had the other two lost, they would have kept the contract. That would, of course, have been unfair to them because, although they would not have known it, they stood to lose to some extent either way. However, they now do know where they stand and are faced with the two who have reneged on the bargain. Is it just for them to overpower the losers and throw them overboard? Does it involve a higher morality to see the losers' behavior as based upon fear of certain death, rather than viciousness, and to embrace them as brothers without resentment?

A final perspective in this chapter exploring criticisms of Kohlberg is drawn from the work of Gilligan¹ who refutes the tendency in developmental moral psychology to view women as in some way deficient. No longer willing to accept the males independence and commitment to the work world with its emphasis upon responsible decision-making as superior to the contextual, caring, interpersonal focus of women, Gilligan speaks for the distinctively female voice. The alleged deficiency in women's

¹Carol Gilligan, "In a Different Voice: Women's Conceptions of Self and Morality," Harvard Educational Review 47 (1977): 481-517.

moral development is reinterpreted as actually representative of an equal type of social and moral concern. Both Freud and Kohlberg are noted as viewing women's morality as lower on the developmental scale than that of men. In particular, Kohlberg found that women, given their strong interpersonal orientation, favored Stage 3 in development, a stage he claims to be both functional and adequate for them. Gilligan comments incisively in a way that commands one to reflect seriously upon the matter, as she states:

And yet, herein lies the paradox, for the very traits that have traditionally defined the "goodness" of women, their care for and sensitivity to the needs of others, are those that mark them as deficient in moral development. The infusion of feeling into their judgments keep them from developing a more independent and abstract ethical conception in which concern for others derives from principles of justice rather than from compassion and care.¹

Gilligan, joins Haan² and Holstein,³ in suggesting that Kohlberg's scoring system may be based on a standard that is biased against women. It is not the varying qualitative structures that is brought into question, but the subordination of the

¹Ibid., p. 484.

²Norma Haan, "Activism As Moral Protest: Moral Judgments of Hypothetical Dilemmas and an Actual Situation of Civil Disobedience," (Unpublished paper, Harvard University, 1973).

³C. Holstein, "Development of Moral Judgment: A Longitudinal Study of Males and Females," Child Development 47 (1976): 51-61.

interpersonal orientation to that of the conventional definition of good that is maintained by the society. She stresses the disproportionate number of males and adolescents to be found in research samples and the fact that the underlying developmental theories tend to be formulated by males. This results in a departure from the male standard being viewed as inferior. The research of Haan and Holstein points up divergences between men and women. The women appear to express greater concern for dilemmas reflecting real situations that one is more likely to encounter. Empathy and compassion are more typical of them than the men, who lean in the direction of being more concerned with that which deals with the hypothetical. The central dilemma for women developmentally, as seen by Gilligan derives from the traditional feminine notion of the good as self-sacrifice. The females problem in attaining adulthood without losing what is valued in her femininity is to resolve the struggle between self and other. As Gilligan puts it, "It is precisely this dilemma—the conflict between compassion and autonomy, between virtue and power—which the feminine voice struggles to resolve in its effect to reclaim the self and to solve the moral problem in such a way that no one is hurt."¹ To sharpen the true and genuinely female developmental moral process, Gilligan selected to do research with women engaged in choosing a course of action revolving around the possibility of abortion. It is a problem exquisitely

¹Gilligan, p. 491.

suited for her purposes. The women are in a condition which is specifically feminine and there is no alternative to their making an active choice, one which they must assume responsibility for, regardless of what it is. The tendency of so many women in society to be passive and not actively choose would not be possible in this situation. Although her own self interests must be taken into account, the choice will impact upon others. Therefore, the typical female motive to avoid hurting others may come into conflict with pursuing the interests of her own self.

In listening to the women exploring their feelings and concerns, Gilligan identified a distinctively "femine voice," a language focusing upon the need to evidence care for others and to avoid hurting them. The latter is based on a commitment not to be selfish and the former is conceived of as expressing responsibility. To hurt another is to be immoral; to demonstrate caring is to be moral. The mature adult, male or female, must integrate into his moral vision both care and compassion for others. Certainly these "feminine" characteristics are as worthy of universalization in a fully developed moral system as the independent, decision-making, autonomous self of Kohlberg's male-oriented scheme. Gilligan suggests that the emphasis upon separation and independent judgment so prevalent in some of Kohlberg's more mature subjects is actually a reflection of their adolescent struggles. To become fully mature, those qualities must be integrated with the feminine voice.

It is only upon the advent of a successful synthesis that true adulthood is reached for either male or female. The self must become capable of both separation and connection with others.

The women Gilligan found to be at the highest level identified a principle of responsibility for self and others as distinguished from Kohlberg's emphasis upon rights and duties. She is critical of his moral dilemma stories because they are designed in a fashion that removes them from the real-live social context. When reconstructed and embedded in that context, the causes and consequences of the moral decision-making are manifest. The Kohlberg stories work to the disadvantage of the female, whose special moral strengths are accentuated by the type of reconstructed story design Gilligan refers to. She notes that the women in her research, who were given three of Kohlberg's moral dilemmas, had a tendency to embellish and restructure the stories so that they did not respond in the abstract in terms of rights and duties. Instead they sought more information about the circumstances and explored the stories from the standpoint of who would be hurt and what would the consequences be to the participants of alternate choices. Gilligan finds that many of the responses given by her subjects do not fit the Kohlbergian stages and, therefore, are not readily scoreable. She believes that the male-biased research sample from which the stages have emerged account specifically for a frame of reference which is different from that which women bring to the moral dilemmas. Viewing the Heinz dilemma from the perspective of not wanting to hurt, one

woman began to recast the dilemma in terms of societal institutions that permit exploitation. Another stressed how regardless of the choice Heinz might make he would suffer guilt and his life would be sundered from his wife's. She would either die or he would most likely wind up going to jail. Gilligan pinpoints women's characteristic ways of responding to the dilemma in the following remark: "When women begin to make direct moral statements, the issues they repeatedly address are those of exploitation and hurt."¹ At the principled level, they adopt a moral world view that is based upon a structural comprehension of non-violence, which facilitates their attempt at establishing justice when encountering moral conflicts. This is markedly different from the male proclivity to respond by searching for abstract principles pivoting around rights and obligations. Gilligan points out the potential danger in a formalized ethical system which unyieldingly seeks to impose sovereign principles upon the real world at the cost of suffering to people.

Summing up her critical stance on Kohlberg, she comments, as follows, "Kohlberg's research on moral development has confounded the variables of age, sex, type of decision, and type of dilemma by presenting a single configuration (the responses of adolescent males to hypothetical dilemmas of conflicting rights) as the basis for a universal stage sequence."²

¹Ibid., p. 514.

²Ibid., p. 515.

Gilligan has opened up new vistas in understanding feminine moral development. Beyond that, however, she has discovered the missing piece which Kohlberg's autonomous man must integrate if he is to progress to adult moral maturity.

As with any significant philosophical thought or scientific endeavor, Kohlberg's cognitive-structural theory of moral development has been the target of a considerable body of critical commentary. It has been sternly criticized on both methodological and theoretical grounds. There are those who argue that despite Kohlberg's claims to the contrary, the invariant sequence and cross-cultural universality of the theory have not been proven. Others have criticized the selection of justice as the central concept of morality for being arbitrary and unduly restrictive. Still others would seek to reinstate affect, habit, trait, and a concern for others to their proper place in a comprehensive system of moral psychology. The charge of sex-bias in the methodology has been leveled from some quarters, while the soundness of the research technology utilized by Kohlberg and his collaborators has been questioned elsewhere.

I have been purposefully unsparing in presenting the criticism that Kohlberg's work has drawn. To avoid diluting its impact, I have not attempted a point by point rebuttal. In a very real sense, except for this chapter and the one that follows, the dissertation is itself a response to much of the criticism. As time goes on, some of the criticism becomes

outdated. Some of it is entirely valid and must be answered by Kohlberg¹ if he is to continue to develop his theory toward the highest stage of theoretical adequacy that is possible in the field of sociomoral knowledge.

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Cognitive-Developmental Approach: New Developments and a Response to Criticisms." Paper presented in the Symposium on Moral Development and Behavior, biannual convention of the Society for Research in Child Development, Denver, April, 1975.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF ALTERNATE MODELS

Two major theories of moral psychology which differ profoundly from Kohlberg's formulations are to be found in the psychoanalytic and social learning models. Each will be presented in this chapter with emphasis upon essentials as they relate to this dissertation. An exhaustive attempt to provide an exposition of each school of thought in its entirety would be beyond the scope of the present undertaking. Both psychoanalysis and social learning theory have been treated comprehensively in a variety of ways in the literature throughout the years. Their relevance to moral development will be concentrated upon in this context. This parsimonious, but salient approach to these two models should enrich one's appreciation of the cognitive-structural developmental school of sociomoral knowledge.

Both of the schools under discussion are similar in respect to one essential theme and dissimilar in relation to another. Psychoanalytic and social learning theories are alike in their considerable emphasis upon parents as the socializing agents which induct their children into the cultural and moral mores of the society. In the view of Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, this is accomplished in the course of psychosexual development, particularly during the phallic stage when

the formation of a superego occurs. For Bandura, a leading social learning theorist, the achievement takes place largely through the process of modeling or observational learning. Parents, of course, serve as the models and children the observers.

The theme of generality versus specificity is one in which the two schools of thought diverge. Introjection of moral commands and prohibitions, as posited by psychoanalytic theory, results in a relatively stable psychic structure, the superego, which would predict consistency of behavior across diverse situations involving moral temptations and demands. On the other hand, the influence of reinforcement contingencies and powerful models in the environment, cited by social learning theory, predicts less generality and greater variation of behavior across situations. The variation is influenced by the large number of variables that converge in any given situation. As the child's capacity for invoking cognitive mediational skills increases, he makes finer discriminations amongst the many factors involved, which in turn will influence his judgment and behavior.

Psychoanalytic Theory

Psychoanalysis has undergone diverse permutations since its inception in the mind of its founder, Sigmund Freud. Modifications have led to the emergence of both left and right wing schools of thought, with other viewpoints situated somewhere along the continuum bounded by the two extremes. It is Freud's own views which shall receive attention here. An understanding

of moral development in Freudian psychology must be based upon the conceptual cornerstone of identification, a process in which the parent serves as the primary socializing agent. First, however, for a deeper understanding of Freud's meaning it is necessary to comprehend the core tendency of his personality theory. Maddi classifies Freud's theory as a psychosocial conflict model with a core tendency described thusly: "It is the tendency to maximize instinctual gratification, while minimizing punishment and guilt."¹ The child at birth is dominated by instinctual impulses which seek satisfaction without knowledge or consideration of constraints in the real world. The psychological wish which embodies the instincts reign supreme in the infant's psychic apparatus. In elaborating further, Maddi points out: "The wishes and emotions of the id are deeply self-centered, indeed selfish, in nature."² Seeking fulfillment on the basis of wish alone is designated primary process. The resistance of the real world and the inevitable frustration that must come from failure to completely gratify the wish leads to the emergence of a psychic structure called the ego, which functions as the instrument responsible for thinking, perceiving, and executing realistic action designed to successfully gratify instinctual impulses. The strategies of the ego are governed by what is termed secondary process.

¹Salvatore Maddi, Personality Theories: A Comparative Analysis, 3 ed. (Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1976), p. 22.

²Maddi, p. 30.

The ego's functions are by no means entirely conscious, as they include defensive maneuvers operating unconsciously to shield the individual from facing directly the crudity of his instincts. Sex and aggression are the two instinctual elements that have the most meaning for the human condition in Freud's view. Although the individual seeks his own unbridled pleasure, society seeks the common good. Maddi points out that this inherent antagonism is the basis for viewing Freud's personality theory as representative of a psychosocial conflict model. There is an inescapable opposition between two great forces; one has its locus within the individual and the other in society. Maximization of instinctual gratification can only be achieved within the context of compromise. Seeking tension reduction from one's own instincts without taking into account the needs and impulses of others would inevitably produce punishment from society. The source of punishment for young children is usually parents. The pursuance of one's own pleasure must be tempered to avoid punishment. A series of punishments provides the child some basis for abstracting general rules to guide his conduct. This, coupled with verbal social transmission of prohibitions and commands, supplies information about parental and societal expectations which become internalized. Once internalization has begun, the child can feel guilt and is no longer dependent upon the external sanctions of authority. The anticipation of a transgression may even be sufficient for him to experience guilt. As Maddi points out, guilt, like the fear of punishment, serves as a brake upon the

unbridled expression of instinctual impulses. The instincts must be transmuted into socially acceptable modes of behavioral expression. Although it will not receive further comment here, the ego functions unconsciously to institute defense mechanisms to aid in the transmutation process, while functioning consciously to design and monitor plans of action.

Implicit in the description of Freud's personality theory appearing above is the basis for the formation of the superego, which gradually evolves from the ego. It crystalizes out of the famed oedipal conflict and is generally believed to be formed by the end of the phallic phase of development at approximately five to six years of age. The superego has two components. One is the conscience which places prohibitions upon the individual's behavior and it is the source of guilt feelings produced by anticipated or actual transgression of rules. The other is the ego-ideal and it points the way toward desirable behavior, which produces good feelings. Punishment and praise from the parents, who embody social standards, lead to the formation of the superego through a process known in psychoanalysis as introjection.

Proceeding with this description, it is now appropriate to reintroduce the concept of identification. Hall and Lindzey provide an especially lucid exposition of Freud's theory. In a particular reference to identification, they inform as follows:

The child learns to identify, that is, to match his behavior with the sanctions and prohibitions

laid down by the parents. He introjects the moral imperatives of his parents by virtue of the original cathexes he has for them as need satisfying agents. He cathects their ideals and these become his ego-ideal; he cathects their prohibitions and these become his conscience.¹

Hall and Lindzey indicate that although the parents are the major figures upon which identification is founded, our personalities are formed over a period of time through identification with a number of people. Identification need not be total, as selected aspects of another may be incorporated on the basis of their appeal, which usually rests upon the extent to which they effect tension reduction. Identification, although central to moral development in psychoanalytic theory, also leads to personality development in non-moral areas, such as in assuming sex role identity.² In any event, it is not a superficial and conscious emulation of behaviors, but a complex, profound, and subtle unconscious process.

Bronfenbrenner,³ upon reviewing Freud's use of the term, observed that it has been employed variously. Regardless of

¹Calvin S. Hall and Gardner Lindzey, Theories of Personality, 2nd ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1970), p. 42.

²Martin L. Hoffman, "Moral Development" in Carmichael's Manual of Child Psychology, ed. P. Mussen, Vol. 1 (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1970), pp. 261-359.

³Urie Bronfenbrenner, "Freudian Theories of Identification and Their Derivatives," Child Development 31 (1960): 15-40.

this diversity of meaning, however, identification in all cases appears to be predicated upon an affective link to a human being in the real world. In contemporary psychoanalytic terminology it is based upon object relations. Freud sometimes uses the term in reference to the result or product that eventuates from a process. At other times he used it to refer to the psychodynamic process itself. The product usage is inclusive of three elements. These are the overt behavior of the parent, an internalization of the parent's motive, and the parent's aspirations. The last of these is characteristic of Freud's later writings. It comprises the child's ego-ideal and is based not upon the parent's actual self, but what the child discerns at some level as the parent's own superego, "...his idealized standards for feeling and action."¹

As a process, Bronfenbrenner finds two distinct usages, less clearly separable in Freud's early writings, but emerging as vividly distinguishable in the later writings. The two processes are anaclitic identification and aggressive identification. Freud suggests that the process of identification for the male has its roots in the latter, whereas in the female the roots of identification are in the former. The key to understanding his position resides in the oedipal complex. Between the ages of three to six the boy experiences a sexual cathexis toward the mother and recognizes the father as an obstacle to be eliminated, if he is to achieve his goal of possessing the mother. The

¹ Ibid, p. 22.

child fears retaliation from the father because of his own sexual wishes for the mother and murderous impulses toward the father. He anticipates that he will be castrated. To avoid this fate he relinquishes the wish and identifies with his father, the "aggressor." This leads to tension reduction and ushers in the latency period with its repressed sexuality. However, the forbidden impulses are likely to continue at the repressed unconscious level. Although there are precursors to superego formation, its substantive origin is the prohibition against incest and murder that leads, through identification, to the resolution of the oedipal complex. The same dynamics cannot apply to the little girl for she has no fear of castration and, hence, no motive for identifying with the father. She has already been castrated, in effect, given her lack of a penis. Freud resorted to anaclitic identification to explain the females identification with the mother. The notion of anaclitic, appearing fairly early in his writings, pertains to a dependency which the very young develop upon the nurturing person in their environment, usually the mother. Freud emphasizes that the young girl experiences a fear that the mother's love will be lost and personal needs will not be met. To avoid that loss, the female identifies with the mother, thereby incorporating some of the mother's qualities into herself. By becoming more like the mother, the chances of rejection by her are diminished. Further, in the absence or event of actual loss of the love object, qualities of the mother will be retained since they have been incorporated into the self.

Bronfenbrenner notes that although Freud stressed aggressive identification for males, he acknowledged the possibility that identification with the father by the boy could have a foundation of affection also. As alluded to in the previous chapter, Freud believed that the female's process of superego formation leads to an incomplete and inferior moral stance. Her sense of morality remains forever bound to emotionality, with its emphasis upon affection and hostility, never achieving the objective and impersonal sense of justice which men become capable of. In light of both Freud's and Kohlberg's position on female morality, Gilligan's exposition assumes crucial significance.

In the actual disciplining of children, they may be subject to either overtly punitive behaviors or the passive withholding of love. The predominance of one type of discipline over another could influence the type of identification process the child is more likely to initiate. Hoffman¹ has stated that contemporary thought places less emphasis on aggressive identification as a process leading to the internalization of moral standards than Freud had. In fact, he indicates that it is a process more likely to lead to a hostile orientation toward the world than a behavioral repertoire based upon a conscience that guides toward accepted behavior. This is likely to occur when the child, more often the male, is subjected to harsh, punitive discipline. The boy identifies with the aggressor, who is usually the father, and manifests the same

¹Hoffman, pp. 261-359.

overtly aggressive behaviors toward others. Behavior of this type has been reported in individuals held in concentration camps, who were completely dependent upon their captors for survival. It is important to distinguish, however, between the actually punitive behavior that children in some circumstances might receive and the universal fantasy amongst males, postulated by Freud, pertaining to fear of retaliation and castration anxiety derived from incestuous and murderous impulses. Be that as it may, Hoffman observes:

The other type referred to as developmental or anaclitic identification, is based on the child's anxiety over the loss of the parents' love. To get rid of this anxiety and assure himself of the parents continued love, the child strives to become like the parent--- to incorporate everything about him including his moral standards and values. This type of identification, originally seen by Freud as especially characteristic of females, is assumed by most current writers to underlie the development of inner conscience in both sexes.¹

In this discussion the formation of the superego is seen to be an outgrowth of the oedipal conflict and its resolution. Precursors to the superego antedate the phallic phase of development. Similarly, modifications of it will occur in subsequent developmental phases, although in Freud's view it will not undergo any essential changes once the child enters the latency period. Identification is the central process which produces the internalization of parental and social moral standards. As the child grows older identification with those other than

¹Hoffman, p. 306.

the parent may occur. Freud's theory of personality is essentially different from the social learning theory about to be examined. It is the psychodynamic interplay of forces serving a causal role in the identification process that distinguishes psychoanalysis. Social learning theory postulates neither instincts nor an unconscious. It is not psychodynamic. Yet in some sense Freud's description of moral development involves social learning, with the parents as the socializing agents.

Despite the presence of the ego-ideal as a constituent part of the superego, the total internalized moral structure in Freud's psychology emphasizes the negative aspects of morality. The superego, more often than not, is described as a prohibiting agency that is severe and unrealistic. One goal of psychoanalysis, in fact, is to lessen the superego's harshness and bring the necessary restraining force under the more realistic control of the ego. An important aim is to eliminate or diminish the role of irrational guilt, which has its historical and developmental roots in the formative period of the superego at the time of the oedipal conflict. It is generally recognized that following latency there occurs a resurgence and intensification of biological drives confronting the adolescent with renewed sexual struggles and a heightened role for the superego. In most cases, maturation into adulthood does bring with it a lessening of the self-critical superego. The positive side of an internalized moral agent is neglected in Freud's writings, although subsequent psycho-

analytic theorists have attempted to correct for this without, however, coming up with any radical departures or innovations. Hoffman¹ has reviewed some of their efforts. He suggests that the emphasis upon the negative aspects of the superego probably can be accounted for by the fact that the theories of classical psychoanalysis were formulated through contact with neurotic patients. It is his recommendation that psychoanalytic theory make a concentrated effort to develop a theoretical foundation for positive morality which springs from motives other than the repression of impulses.

Social Learning Theory

There are two major distinguishing characteristics of social learning theory which stand in sharp contrast to the theories of Freud and Kohlberg. Social learning theory is not based upon a premise of developmental stages through which the child passes in an invariant sequence. This rejection of stage theory is particularly pertinent to cognitive-developmental psychology since Kohlberg's entire position on the acquisition of moral structures is built upon the premise of invariant stages. A further distinction is the fact that moral motives, values, and behavior are derived from principles that are identical to learning in all other areas for the social learning theorist. The same mechanisms that may enable one to learn how to become an automobile repairman may lead to the moral attitude and behavior which one adopts. Only a moments reflection will

¹Hoffman, pp. 261-359.

reveal how essentially different this is from the way which Kohlberg conceives of moral development as involving a series of transformations of justice structures. The very concept of structure, itself, implies greater stability and directionality than the notion of learning theory, which implies greater change and malleability.

Social learning theory dismisses psychodynamic motivational systems as accounting for development and behavior. It focuses largely on situational determinants rather than fixed characteristics or personal dispositions. It has its roots in behavioral learning theories, which it subsumes, but its enlarged scope includes a mode of learning that appears to be distinctively human and social. This is in contradistinction to radical behaviorism which maintains a theoretical policy of utilizing the same principles to explain all learning of behaving organisms with no allowance for differentiating between the human species and other animals. Furthermore, social learning theory focuses predominantly upon mediating cognitive variables, a practice which radical behaviorism with its strong environmentalist position completely eschews. In this sense, social learning theory is a cognitive psychology utilizing an information processing model to explain behavior. As previously observed, however, this model utilizes neither stage nor structure concepts. Social learning theory accords a role to rewards and punishment of maintaining behavior, but does not view them as essential to new learning. The well known learning paradigms of classical conditioning and operant

conditioning, while integrated into social learning theory, do not play a paramount role.

As a backdrop to the discussion that will follow, I would like to introduce here Kohlberg's identification of five major assumptions made by social learning theorists about moral development.

1. Moral development is growth of behavioral and affective conformity to moral rules rather than cognitive-structural change.
2. The basic motivation for morality at every point of moral development is rooted in biological needs or the pursuit of social reward and avoidance of social punishment.
3. Moral development or morality is culturally relative.
4. Basic moral norms are the internalization of external cultural rules.
5. Environmental influences on normal moral development are defined by quantitative variations in strength of reward, punishment, and modeling of conforming behavior by parents and other socializing agents.¹

The major proponents of contemporary social learning theory are Bandura² and Mischel³. Bandura advances the view

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral Stages and Moralization: The Cognitive Developmental Approach," in Moral Development and Behavior: Theory, Research and Social Issues, ed. T. Lickona (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), p. 48.

²Albert Bandura, Social Learning Theory (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1977).

³Walter Mischel, "Toward a Cognitive Social Learning Re-conceptualization of Personality," Psychological Review 80 (1973): 252-83.

that most human learning is acquired through an observational process in which the observing child will later imitate the behavior of a model. It is both possible and common for novel behaviors to be acquired in this vicarious fashion without personally receiving positive reinforcement while performing the behaviors. Performance by the observer, however, is not automatic. There occurs cognitive mediation between the time the behavior is observed and the time it may be reenacted. There is also the significant variable of incentive. Research by Bandura¹ has demonstrated that observation or modeling can lead to the acquisition of novel behavior which the observer may refrain from performing in the absence of a promised reward, but readily perform when a reward is promised. This experiment makes a clear distinction between learning the behavior in the absence of reward, but requiring the expectation of reward as an incentive to actually performing what had been learned. Three groups were exposed to a film of a model engaging in a highly aggressive behavior. In one trial the model was rewarded, in another punished, and in a third there was neither reward nor punishment. Each group witnessed only one of the three trials. Subsequently it was recorded that when given the opportunity, the group that exhibited the most spontaneous imitative behavior had viewed the model being rewarded. The group that demonstrated the least spontaneous imitative behavior had viewed the model being punished. Finally, the group that had observed a model who had

¹Albert Bandura, Principles of Behavior Modification, (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969).

been neither punished nor rewarded proved to display an intermediary frequency of imitative behavior. Following this, all members of the three groups were promised attractive rewards if they would perform the behaviors they had observed. This time there were no group differentials amongst the members as each group displayed the same frequency of imitative behavior. It appears that reenforcement is not necessary for learning behavior, but the anticipation of it is instrumental in promoting performance of behavior that has been learned. Bandura concludes:

Findings of the foregoing experiment, and others reviewed later suggest that the behavior analysis advocated by proponents of the Skinnerian approach might further advance understanding of modeling processes if it were separated into a learning analysis and a performance analysis. The learning analysis is concerned with the manner in which variables operating at the time of exposure to modeling stimuli determine the degree to which the modeled behavior is learned. The performance analysis, on the other hand, is concerned with factors governing persons' willingness to perform what they have learned.¹

In the experiment that has been described it is apparent that pure observation of the aggressive behavior did not influence the children's frequency of spontaneous behavior. Cognitive mediation occurred in which information concerning the reward and punishment system was processed. For example, observing a model being punished was processed in such a way as to inhibit imitation of the aggressive behavior, even though it was

¹Bandura, Principles of Behavior Modification, p. 129.

subsequently discovered that the behavior had been acquired. Later, when the expectancy of reward or incentive was introduced, this verbal information was processed internally with a resulting increase in performance of the previously observed behavior. Hence, in social learning theory, reinforcement is seen largely as playing an antecedent role, in terms of expectancy of reward, as opposed to emphasis upon its consequent function. Upon the observance of modeling, symbolic representation is generated which then guides performance. Learning by modeling is analyzed into four elements by Bandura. They are as follows: attentional processes, retention processes, motor reproduction processes, and motivational processes. Attentional processes bear on what specifically is attended to and selected out for information processing from the total scene being observed. As a prior consideration, one can only attend what is available so that the behaviors of the people in the environment will both supply and delimit what will be observed. Retentional processes call into play facets of memory which entail symbolic representation. Imagery and verbal symbols are essential to promoting retention, which will later facilitate performance. Also included in this dimension is mental rehearsal which serves as a prelude to efficient behavior. The preceding skills are organized first cognitively and then translated motorically into a spatio-temporal matrix as performance is executed. An incongruity between symbolic representation and behavioral features is the basis for feedback which sets in motion a self-corrective

process aiming to eliminate the discrepancy. A motivational component is necessary to account for the fact that not all acquired learning is carried out behaviorally. Bandura notes that when observed models enact behavior leading to results valued by the observer, then the observer is more likely to imitate the behavior than if it clearly leads to undesirable results. Effective outcomes by modeled behavior is predictive of the observers likelihood of imitating it. Information processing is a rational procedure and, although, it utilizes a motivational component, this version should not be confused with the unconscious determinants of behavior postulated by psychoanalytic theory. In summary, Bandura comments: "The failure of an observer to match the behavior of a model may result from any of the follow: not observing the relevant activities, inadequately coding modeled events for memory representation, failing to retain what was learned, physical inability to perform, or experiencing insufficient incentives."¹ A significant variable bearing on whether imitation will follow observation bears upon the attributes of the model. Those models perceived as nurturant, powerful, and in control of the reward system are more likely to be imitated than those models lacking such attributes. The potential impact of parents as prevalent models in the natural environment is evident from these observations.

¹Bandura, Social Learning Theory, p. 29.

A crucial question deals with what actually is learned through vicarious observational experience. According to Mischel and Mischel¹, modeling does not simply lead to atomistic responses, but to the construction of rules and skills which enable the observer to behave in related situations in a novel and competent manner. The learning derived from observation includes symbolic mentation such as concepts and abstract principles. In addition, the observer learns through modeling what to anticipate from performing certain kinds of behavior. A knowledge of the probable outcome of particular behaviors will significantly influence whether the observer is likely to carry out such behaviors as he has seen the model perform. Armed with newly acquired rule-governing behavior and informed expectancies about outcomes, the observer's learning through observation does not result in mere slavish imitation of the model. The link to the environment is never lost by social learning theorists, despite the emphasis upon cognitive mediational variables. Rosenthal and Zimmerman comment upon this, as follows: "...cognitive coding is treated as a learned skill or rule that can be cued by environmental stimuli. Thus, although there is hypothesis-formation during learning, the rules permitting hypotheses to be generated and tested can be

¹Walter Mischel and Harriet Mischel, Essentials of Psychology, (New York: Random House, 1977).

traced to previous environmental experiences and usage norms."¹

Learning through observation is a highly efficient and economical way to acquire new behaviors. It is quite adaptive in contrast to the successive approximation model of Skinnerian psychology. In that model it is necessary to await the organism's spontaneous emanation of a behavior that moves it toward the ultimate behavioral goal. Each time a behavior of the desired type is made it is then reenforced, increasing the likelihood that it will be repeated rather than behavior that is further from the goal. There is a continuous process of shaping the organism's behavior in this fashion with the result that the behavior increasingly approaches the goal and eventually reaches it. In Bandura's modeling paradigm, novel behavior is acquired without any such prolonged and arduous process as successive approximation being necessary. It is not even required that the new behavior be moderately novel, as postulated in the Piagetian paradigm, since there is no stage or structure to which it must be assimilated. The cognitive mediating variable, which is analyzed by Bandura in meticulous detail, is what accounts for these leaps in learning. In general, his model is a powerful one. Applying it specifically to the moral area, it can be readily appreciated that

¹Ted L. Rosenthal and Barry J. Zimmerman, Social Learning and Cognition (New York: Academic Press, 1978), p. 30

learning both prosocial and anti-social behaviors will be largely contingent upon modeling.

Bandura escapes the strict environmental determinism of traditional behaviorism by introducing the notion of reciprocal determinism. In this context, reciprocal refers to the mutuality of action that takes place between events in the milieu and does not have the connotation it carries in Piaget's epistemology. Bandura points out the paradox, perhaps inconsistency, in Skinnerian psychology which adopts a position of environmental determinism, but proceeds to advocate that individuals rearrange their own reenforcing contingencies so as to create the type of society they prefer. Bandura, with greater consistency, asserts that individuals both are shaped by their environment and through self-generating behaviors also shape their environment. The newly modified environment will in turn partly determine their behavior further, to which individuals will again respond by modifying the environment further. In a succinct formulation, Bandura stresses: "Contrary to the unidirectional view, human accomplishments result from reciprocal interaction of external circumstances with a host of personal determinants, including endowed potentialities, acquired competencies, reflective thought, and a high level of self-initiative."¹ Thus an individual is both shaped by his environment and contributes to shaping that very

¹Bandura, Social Learning Theory, p. 207.

environment which shapes him. By avoiding a rigid unidirectional version of environmental determinism, Bandura imparts a measure of freedom as a creator to the individual in his paradigm without sacrificing scientific respectability. Both Bandura and Mischel, as prototypical cognitive social learning theorists, stress the self-regulating capacity of the individual. They focus upon self-control in long range planned behavior as opposed only to a grasp of principled judgment. Mischel¹ correctly states that ultimately morality will have no impact in the real world if the individual lacks the ability to regulate his behavior in order to achieve principled goals. Each person generates, based on early and recent experiences, his own internal standards. He can be self-critical and set goals that he expects his own behavior to achieve. Furthermore, contributing to self-regulation is the individual's anticipation of the consequences and rewards of contemplated behavior. Hence, even in the absence of current external reinforcement, the individual may exercise self-reinforcement. Sometimes the internal reinforcing mechanism may oppose and take priority over a present external reinforcement. Children do not always yield to impulse and are capable of placing restraint upon immediately gratifying behavior. This is especially likely to occur after observing models who use high

¹Walter Mischel and Harriet N. Mischel, "A Cognitive Social-Learning Approach to Morality and Self-Regulation," in Moral Development and Behavior: Theory, Research, and Social Issues, ed. T. Lickona (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), pp. 84-107.

standards of self-evaluation and place similarly high standards upon the children. Once having set a goal, covert symbolic mentation is instrumental in reaching it through periodically supplying praise to one's own self and offering internal instructions. Upon achieving the goal one may further reinforce the efforts expended through self-acknowledgement of a job well done. Clearly the cognitive social learning theorists expound a humanized paradigm which, although encompassing environmental stimuli, avoids the mechanistic model of those who rely exclusively upon classical and operant conditioning.

Mischel¹ has been especially critical of trait and psychodynamic theories which assume that there are broad internalized dispositions accounting for behavior across a wide diversity of situations. In the case of trait theory the approach is more direct. For example, honesty is construed as a personality trait which will be manifest in all situations even though the circumstances may be very different. In psychodynamic theory, the approach is indirect. Recognizing an apparent variation of behaviors across different situations, many clinicians will infer an underlying motivational disposition which has produced defensive maneuvers accounting for the superficial diversity. The real meaning of the symptomatic behavior has been disguised. Neither trait nor psychodynamic interpretations of personality are acceptable to social learning theorists, who maintain

¹Walter Mischel, "Toward a Cognitive Learning Reconceptualization of Personality," Psychological Review 80 (1973): 252-83.

that both correlation and experimental research fail to confirm them. At the same time, Mischel argues strongly that social learning theory has been misrepresented as maintaining that the situation is the main determinant of behavior and that there is no consistency within the individual. For Mischel, the question of whether the individual or the situation is more important is not a fruitful one. He suggests, instead that:

...what a person does tends to be relatively specific to a host of variables, and that behavior is multiply determined by all of them rather than being the product of widely generalized dispositions...To say that what a person thinks, and does, and feels--and hence what he is at any moment--depends on many subject and condition variables is also to underline the complexity and uniqueness of his behavior.¹

Applying the above generic commentary on internalized dispositions to the familiar moral issue of honesty versus cheating, Mischel elaborates specifically:

When the probable reinforcing consequences to the person for cheating, waiting, or working differ widely across situations depending on the particular task or circumstances, the behavior of others, the likelihood of detection, the probable consequences of being caught, the frustration induced, the value of success etc., impressive generality will not be found.²

Mischel's plea in behavioral assessment is for a much more highly individualized approach to understanding the interface between

¹Ibid., p. 256.

²Ibid., p. 259.

person and situation. A more finely grained analysis of specific classes of situations must be made and the idiosyncratic meanings of stimuli to individuals under the circumstances experienced should be sought. The explanatory and predictive value of generalized internal dispositions is low in comparison to the type of assessment recommended by Mischel. It is evident that social learning theory as delineated here does not favor a concept of an internalized conscience that provides moral commands and prohibitions leading to consistency across a diversified range of situations. Similarly, it does not accept a stage-structure theory to account for consistency of moral judgment and predictability of behavior.

Although psychoanalytic theory and cognitive-developmental psychology do not share a common motivational foundation, the tendency is toward effecting a rapprochement based upon an integration of their affective and cognitive foci respectively. To the contrary, social learning theorists have mounted a frontal assault upon the work of both Piaget and Kohlberg. Rosenthal and Zimmerman¹ are in the forefront of this attack, devoting considerable attention in their recent volume to criticizing structuralism. They begin by disregarding the structuralists' insistence that their view of development is interactionist, constructivist, and auto-regulative. Rosenthal and Zimmerman summarily dismiss this characterization, contending instead that

¹Ted L. Rosenthal and Barry J. Zimmerman, Social Learning Theory and Cognition (New York: Academic Press, 1978).

Piaget's and Kohlberg's theories are nativistic, following fixed internal patterns that rely only minimally on experience. They even go so far as to quote Furth, unquestionably a superb Piagetian scholar, as asserting that structures are at no time external and later internalized. What they ignore, however, is the crucial role of overt action upon things in the environment by the epistemic subject, first during the sensorimotor period and later during the following periods. These overt actions are, in fact, interiorized and lead to increasingly more complex developmental levels of knowledge about reality. The structures that promote a knowledge of reality and are constructed by the child's own activity, both internal and upon the environment, do not appear *de novo*. They are not innate as suggested by a nativistic label. Neither do they appear on a maturational basis, a common misconception, following a preset time-table. The pace of growth may be either retarded or accelerated depending upon environmental opportunities. There may be significant differences in the rates of growth amongst children exposed to the same general environment. Social transmission and physical experience play important roles in cognitive-developmental psychology, as does the auto-regulation of these activities. Maturation is a necessary, but not sufficient condition. The very mechanism through which stage transition is said to occur relies heavily upon feedback from the environment to produce cognitive conflict leading to the reorganization of structures. Of course, Rosenthal and Zimmerman are aware of this, but prefer to minimize its significance, maintaining that

Piaget and Kohlberg have inaccurately characterized their own positions. It is interesting that they fuse Chomsky, the famed psycholinguist, together with Piaget in their critique of structuralism, which they call nativistic. While it is true that both are structuralists, the innate baseline of linguistic structures marks Chomsky's approach as significantly different from the constructivist philosophy that is central to Piaget's genetic epistemology. This unwillingness to make appropriate discriminations between two elements which are alike, admittedly, in some major respect, but essentially different in another major respect, is unbecoming theorists whose own adopted paradigm calls for such precision like distinctions. Rosenthal and Zimmerman seem to suggest further that Piaget's theory must be nativistic because of its biological origins. However, Freudian psychology also has biological origins and the plasticity of instincts, perhaps more appropriately referred to as drives, is well known. None of this is to deny the truth that the influence of experience in Piaget's theory is delimited by the structural level of development to which it is assimilated. In their discussion on structuralism, Rosenthal and Zimmerman introduce the Piagetian task of conservation. They point out that the Geneva School exercises stringent criteria to determine a genuine conservation judgment. For example, one criteria is that the competence at conservation must be durable and not subject to abandonment upon counter-suggestion. Therefore, if a child is trained experimentally to make conservation judgments which, however, are easily relin-

quished upon countersuggestion so that the child goes back to making nonconservation judgments, Piaget would deny that he had truly acquired the structures undergirding conservation. It can be demonstrated that natural conservers are, in fact, resistant to any such countersuggestion and will persist in making conservation judgments even when an experimenter attempts to trick them. In their effort to discredit Piaget's theory, Rosenthal and Zimmerman dismiss this distinction, along with other essential criteria, as inconsequential. In general, social learning theory maintains that the acquisition of new learning is much more influenced by experience than cognitive-developmental psychology would allow. There is no necessity to gradually proceed through a locked step sequence of stages and it is posited, therefore, that radically new learning can take place in a very brief span of time. The Geneva School does make a distinction between narrow learning and structural development, however, and it is one which those favoring other schools often fail to appreciate. Rosenthal and Zimmerman assert:

From a social learning standpoint, neither moral nor conservation judgments enjoy a privileged status. Both involve decision making in some context and are expected to respond to social influence, as are language and other classes of rule-governed behavior. In many cases, governing rules can often be abstracted from information conveyed by social exemplars. The cognitive gains will hinge on the observer's prior level of skill related task's, on the clarity of the teaching procedures, and on the learner's inferences about the value and relevance

of the new guidelines modeled.¹

Rosenthal and Zimmerman emphasize the multiplicity of variables that converge in any given situation to influence the ethical conduct of an individual. It is their position that the homogeneity of behavior that an internalized stable conscience or moral structure would predict simply overlooks the highly intricate and discriminating balance that enters into ethical decision-making in any given situation. They advocate a view which emphasizes greater heterogeneity and discrimination in the exercise of moral rules with the passage of age for children rather than a fixed typology. They believe that the acquisition of morality and the capacity to generalize across situations, to the extent that this occurs, is based more upon learning cognitive skills which form a foundation for subsequent skills. In a sense, their interpretation is a highly pragmatic one, in that the efficiency of a moral rule will determine whether the child will revert back to use of a former one or continue with the present one. It is asserted that social learning theory is exceptional amongst theories in its explanatory power linking moral judgment and behavior. The social matrix within which the moral agent acts will exercise a great influence upon the ethical character of his conduct. For example, a student who forthrightly states he failed a final examination because he had not studied, is likely to elicit little sympathy and would probably fail the course. In contrast,

¹Ibid., p. 151.

the circumstances readily allow him to communicate that he had tried to study, but became ill and was in pain throughout the evening before the final. He might readily predict that from doing this he will not be found out and may well be offered a reexamination. On the other hand, if he is observed breaking into another person's locker and walking off with the other student's books, knowing that there are several witnesses, he may be more likely to tell the truth and place himself in contrite fashion at the mercy of the authorities.

There exists a series of three articles in which dialogue takes place around an experiment conducted by Bandura and McDonald¹ who sought to modify the Piagetian moral judgment sequence through social reinforcement and modeling. It is revealing to explore at some length because it presents an opportunity to witness minds from the two schools of thought in relation to one another. It should be noted that Bandura and McDonald are critical not only of stage theories, but also of traditional learning theories for failing to adequately explain complex social behavior and instead relying upon the reductionistic concepts of simple learning principles. The experiment to be discussed involved two Piagetian moral stages in which children under seven base culpability of a person upon

¹Albert Bandura and Frederick J. McDonald, "Influence of Social Reinforcement and the Behavior of Models in Shaping Children's Moral Judgments," Journal of Abnormal Psychology 67 (1963): 274-81.

the objective damage of his actions and children around seven or higher base culpability upon a consideration of subjectivity or intentions. Children from ages 5 to 11 were read pairs of stories, each one entailing a child who deliberately does something wrong, but with only small consequent damage, and a child who innocently, either while trying to be helpful or by accident, produces considerable damage. The children were asked who was the naughtier of the two in each pair and they were required to give reasons for their selection. This phase constituted the pretest and resulted in the children being classified as having given either predominantly objective judgments, basing culpability upon degree of damage, or subjective judgments, basing culpability upon intentions. There were 165 children of both sexes. The stories read to them were adopted from Piaget's protocols in some instances, while others were designed for the occasion. The treatment phase of the experiment utilized 84 children, as only 48 children could be singled out as being predominantly subjective and 36 as being predominantly objective. Upon being redistributed into three treatment groups there was a balance regarding age and sex arrived at by the experimenters. In one group an experimenter read twelve pairs of stories to a model and a child. The first story would be read to the model and second story to the child. All the stories were read in this alternating fashion. The model would deliberately make a judgment contrary to the known classification of the child. Thus, if it was known that a particular child had given predominantly subjective responses

in the pretest, then the model would make an objective judgment in the presence of that child. The experimenter would consistently give verbal reinforcement to the adult model. He would also provide such reinforcement to the child, whenever the subject would reverse his baseline judgment and adopt the model's. A second group of children was exposed to the same experimental condition with the exception that none of the children received verbal reinforcement. In the third group the children were not exposed to a model at all. However, each child received verbal reinforcement whenever making a judgment that was opposite to the predominant response he had made during the pretest. Approximately two weeks expired between the pretest and the treatment phase. A posttest was conducted immediately after the treatment phase, but it took place in a different room, without the presence of a model. An experimenter unknown to each child presented new pairs of stories to see if there had occurred any shift in the type of judgment and rationale the children would make. The treatment conditions provided an opportunity to identify the effects of modeling and social reinforcement combined, modeling without reinforcement for the child, and reinforcement in the absence of a model.

In an analysis of the results, Bandura and McDonald point out that even amongst the youngest children there appeared about a 30 percent rate of subjective judgments at the pretest. Furthermore, amongst the older children there was found a diversity of amounts of objective judgments at the pretest. The two treatment groups in which children observed models made

significant posttest gains in moving from subjective to objective responses. However, change in the group of children which did not receive reinforcement, but only observed the model, who was reinforced, was as significant as in the group in which children were reinforced in addition to watching the model, who was reinforced. In other words, the modeling per se appeared to be the critical variable and not direct reinforcement of the child. This is further supported by the fact that in the treatment group which did not observe a model, although the children did receive social reinforcement, there was only a slight increase in objective responses. The increase was not statistically significant.

What conclusions do Bandura and McDonald arrive at from these findings that are relevant to this discussion on social learning theory and cognitive-developmental moral stage theory? First, they contend that a clear cut demarcation of the stages is not supported, as discrimination of moral judgment representing both subjective and objective responses were found to coexist across all ages. They argue that the apparent malleability of the Piagetian stages delimits its potency as a conceptual tool and that the results of the treatment procedure emphasize how powerful the modeling phenomenon is for effecting change in social behavior which acquires stability. The stability or generalization factor is based upon the posttest which, although taking place immediately after the treatment procedure, did occur in a different physical environment and social milieu, i.e. took place in another room in the presence

of people not previously involved. The reversal of Piagetian stage sequence, that is moving in the direction of going from subjective to objective responses, is something that Bandura and McDonald set out to demonstrate could occur under the condition of introducing appropriate modeling cues. Similarly they had hoped to prove that Piagetian type moral judgments were less age-specific than Piaget, as interpreted by them, had thought.

There is a general propensity in human affairs to judge others more by their overt behavior, while taking into account psychological causation more readily when judging one's own behavior. This is understandable since our own inner world, at least the conscious portion, is primary data to us, whereas information about other people's inner world must rely on our inference or their communication. In the world of scholarship there seems to be a comparable phenomenon in operation. Theorists from school x always appear to capture the richness, depth, and subtlety of their own approach. Yet when it comes to representing an alternate approach, particularly if it is in opposition, those enhancing qualities are omitted and an oversimplified, sometimes even distorted or caricatured, version appears. Piaget, in his references to learning theory has not escaped this pitfall, and it is not likely that many have. Certainly Bandura and McDonald in their characterization of Piaget's position on moral judgments have not. To begin with, their rather atomistic treatment, not surprisingly as it comes from the behavioristic camp, of an essentially holistic theory

does not exactly do justice to it. They fail to make the distinction that Piaget himself does, between the more rigorously stage-like progression of basic cognitive-structural development and the development of moral judgment discussed in his early work. It is Kohlberg, greatly refining Piaget's work on moral development, who has stressed stage sequence in this area. Coincidentally, Kohlberg's findings were first published in the same year that Bandura and McDonald published their experiment. Although this explains why they chose to conduct their experiment on Piaget's observations about moral judgment rather than Kohlberg's theory at the time, it does not account for their misinterpretation of Piaget's studies on moral judgment. Piaget did not claim age specificity for the two stages he discovered, nor did he indicate that one was clearly demarcated from the other in the course of the child's growth. He did speak of a comingling of the two stages with an increase of intentional judgments over time and a diminution of objective judgments occurring simultaneously. In his own words, Piaget states the following:

Thus these answers present us with two distinct moral attitudes--one that judges actions according to their material consequences, and one that only takes intentions into account. These two attitudes may co-exist at the same age and even in the same child, but broadly speaking, they do not synchronize. Objective responsibility diminishes on the average as the child grows older, and subjective responsibility gains correlatively in importance. We have therefore two processes partially overlapping, but of which the second gradually

succeeds in dominating the first.¹

The above characterization by Piaget hardly bears a close resemblance to the age-specific and clearly demarcated stages which Bandura and McDonald ascribe to his moral theory. The demarcation is said, by Bandura and McDonald, to be applied at approximately 7 years of age by Piaget. Yet the Genevan scholar comments: "Nearly all the children under 9-10, while paying full tribute to the thief's intentions, consider the theft of the roll and the cage a more culpable act both from a police and from a moral point of view than that of the ribbon or the sweet."² The fact that children may recognize intentions, yet not utilize them in making moral judgments is a variable which Bandura and McDonald do not ever touch upon although it hardly appears to be a trivial distinction. They simply maintain that for Piaget, young children were, for the most part, incapable of adopting a subjective outlook.

While alluding to the reciprocity and cooperation which Piaget cites as instrumental in leading to subjective moral judgments, which take into account intentions, Bandura and McDonald deemphasize the role Piaget ascribes to the social environment and stress the ontogenetic factor. There can be no question that Piaget's theory deals with the ontogenesis of

¹Jean Piaget, The Moral Judgment of the Child, trans. M. Gabain (New York: The Free Press, 1965), p. 133. Originally published, 1932.

²Piaget, p. 134.

cognitive and moral structuration. However, it is essential to bring into prominence once again that his theory is interactionist and the organism's exchanges with the social component of its milieu is deemed vital. Can this be unclear after contemplating the passage by Piaget which follows:

How, then, does subjective responsibility appear and develop within the limited domain we are analyzing at present? There is no doubt that by adopting a certain technique with their children, parents can succeed in making them attach more importance to intentions than to rules conceived as a system of ritual interdictions....It is when the child is accustomed to act from the point of view of those around him, when he tries to please rather than to obey, that he will judge in terms of intentions. So that taking intentions into account presupposes cooperation and mutual respect.¹

One can only wonder if justice has been done to Piaget's theory by Bandura's and McDonald's delineation of it.

The Bandura and McDonald experiment has become the center of a controversy revolving around the issue of whether its apparent modeling effects disprove Piaget's stage theory. Proponents of social learning theory believe that it does, whereas those of the cognitive-organismic school believe that it does not offer a true test of Piaget's theory even though its findings may be significant in their own right. Cowan, Langer, Heavrich, and Nathanson² point out that success in reversing a sequence under laboratory conditions does not disprove that a particular sequence develops in the natural environment. In the

¹Piaget, p. 137.

²Philip Cowan et al., "Social Learning and Piaget's Cognitive Theory of Moral Development," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 11 (1969): 261-74.

experiment under dispute, individual subjects went from evidencing approximately 20 percent, at the pretest, of the responses that did not predominate to 50 percent at the post-test. Cowan et. al. do not accept that an even split of judgments signifies a structural change, such as from subjective to objective orientations, as much as it might signify a state of confusion. It is quite conceivable that changes in either direction might reflect a tendency toward conformity, possibly to seek approval. Lickona¹ attempted to promote developmental progression in children predominantly utilizing objective responsibility judgments by designing an experiment with four different training procedures. He was interested in identifying variables that could account for structural stage shifts. One technique was aimed at facilitating the children's ability to distinguish between motives and consequences, while holding both in mind simultaneously. A second involved placing children in the presence of adults whose judgments contradicted each others, as well as their own. It was expected that this would eliminate a single and unvarying message from the adult, which could be slavishly imitated. Another method was to instruct the children directly that intentional judgments were the correct ones. Instructions were accompanied by explanations. In this condition the adult's view was clear and unequivocal.

¹Thomas Lickona, "Research on Piaget's Theory of Moral Development" in Moral Development and Behavior: Theory, Research, and Social Issues, ed. T. Lickona (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), pp. 219-40.

The fourth procedure paired one subjective with one objective child. Debate was stimulated between them. The goal in setting up this peer interaction, which Piaget has placed such credence in, was to diminish the egocentrism of the children who made objective responses and to enable them to more readily take the other's perspective. The children, six and seven year olds, made substantial gains in making intentional judgments as a result of the training procedures. The gains were found to be stable at the end of one month, except for the group that had been exposed to the adults making contradictory judgments. In particular, there was an increase to subjective responses of 60 percent in children who engaged in peer interaction. Those children who had been making predominantly subjective judgments before placed in the peer interaction group did not show any shift at all toward an increase in objective judgments. Lickona concluded on the basis of this, that change apparently took place in the direction that growth normally follows. Further, he infers from his results that where change occurs in the reverse direction, such as in the experiment by Bandura and McDonald, it can be accounted for by the child's conformity to adult influence, rather than a structural regression. The peer interaction eliminates the variable of an adult and it is under this condition that movement is found in only one direction.

There are many examples in the Geneva School tradition of training studies in which verbal responses are modified to ostensibly reflect the next highest stage in cognitive development. However, upon analysis the techniques prove not to have

promoted genuine comprehension or durable gains. One of Smedslund's¹ several classic conservation experiments provides a superb illustration of this. Hence, when Bandura and McDonald suggest that they induced precocious moral development going from objective to subjective judgments, one must be wary of how substantial the gains are through the modeling procedures utilized until they are put to the same stringent tests that the Genevans demand of themselves. Cowan et al. are inclined to conclude, following a searching analysis that: "Bandura and McDonald have not always stated Piaget's position accurately and have not provided definitive procedures to assess stages or changes in stages of moral development."² They also suggest that Piaget and the social learning theorists have perhaps not been attending the same phenomena and have been measuring what they are attending in different ways.

Cowan et al.³ attempted a replicated study of the Bandura and McDonald experiment. They introduced some variation to enlarge upon the findings, but they remained true to the social learning formulation of the research, deliberately not redesigning the experiment the way one might to truly test Piagetian

¹Jans Smedslund, "The Acquisition of Conservation Substance and Weight in Children. III Extinction of Conservation of Weight Acquired 'Normally' and by Means of Empirical Controls on a Balance Scale," Scandinavian Journal of Psychology 2 (1961): 85-87.

²Cowan et al., p. 264.

³Cowan et al.

stage development. Their findings were in support of the changes that had been reported by Bandura and McDonald and attributed to the modeling procedures. Their interpretation of course, was not in accord with the researchers of the original experiment, as is undoubtedly obvious in view of much of the preceeding discussion. Although they found that adult modeling, indeed, does have the power to induce moral judgment shifts in either direction, they raised question about the meaning of these changes. The Bandura and McDonald study performed a posttest immediately after the treatment procedures. Cowan et al. conducted a second posttest two weeks after the experimental techniques were implemented. The findings were exceedingly important and were not revealed by the design of the original experiment which this replicated. Those children whose shift had been from objective judgments to subjective judgments were discovered to have continued increasing in that direction. Contrary to this, those subjects whose responses had been modified from subjective toward objective judgments had begun to revert back to their pretraining position of making predominantly subjective responses. In other words, there was a prevailing tendency for change in the natural direction to continue, whereas change in a backward direction, once the artificial modeling cues were removed, declined. Cowan et al. highlight the inadequacy of social learning theory in explaining this differential effect. Similar findings to that

just cited were uncovered by LeFurgy and Woloshin¹ in an experiment with adolescents utilizing Kohlberg's moral dilemma stories.

One of the most striking refutations made by Cowan et al. of the vicarious or observational learning position is that objective judgments do predominate at the lower ages despite the presumed tendency on the part of adults to neither model nor reinforce objective moral responses. They point out that if one contends that adults do model and reinforce such behavior, it would be difficult to explain the readily verifiable age trend from objective to subjective judgments. Bandura,² in a response to Cowan et al., rejects the suggestion that adults relate toward their children in an invariant manner; instead he finds them quite variable depending upon the many facets of the circumstances obtaining in any given situation. He also emphasizes that peer models have a considerable impact upon growing children with the result that they are often exposed to conflicting standards. Bandura's rebuttal to Cowan et al. was formulated by invitation and provides a succinct

¹W. S. LeFurgy and G. W. Woloshin, "Immediate and Long-Term Effects of Experimentally Induced Social Influence in the Modification of Adolescents' Moral Judgments," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology 12 (1969): 104-10.

²Albert Bandura, "Social Learning of Moral Judgments," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 11 (1969): 275-83.

refinement of some key social learning principles. The ongoing debate between structuralists and social learning theorists will surely not be resolved here, nor is it likely to achieve resolution in the near future. There certainly exist fundamental differences which are perhaps ultimately irreconcilable. The clash between them, nevertheless, is to be regarded as a desirable dialectic, for as a result both are forced to continuously strengthen and sharpen their positions. Indeed, paradoxical as it may seem, each school pursues research vigorously and makes major contributions to the growth of scientific knowledge. It may well be true, as Alfred Whitehead has said, that a clash of opinions is not a catastrophe, but an opportunity.

Chapter Eight

CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES FOR INTERVENTION

Neither Piaget nor Kohlberg had set out to deliver theory or techniques for practice to the helping professions. Yet it was inevitable that the cognitive-structural approach to development would generate new ways of conceiving practice and action models for carrying them out. There does not exist a single monolithic technique for guiding all practice, but instead a diversity of ideas for application has gradually been emerging from several related sources, all deriving from a sociocognitive or moral developmental paradigm. The present chapter is designed to introduce some of the most suggestive and promising attempts at applying those ideas that have appeared thus far. In presenting this material I have classified each of the approaches under one of three perspectives: the psychodynamic, the interpersonal, and the organizational. There is no doubt that in each case an argument could be made for classifying a particular approach under another category. The distinctions are a matter of emphasis and sometimes subtle. Nevertheless, I have adopted this formulation in the hope that it will impart at least a shade more of understanding as the reader encounters the material.

Kegan has been classified under the psychodynamic perspective both because that seems to be his own preference and

because of the special phenomenological focus his work reflects in discussing the developing person. Abroms is viewed within an interpersonal matrix because of the emphasis he gives to the dialectic between the therapist's developmental stage and that of the client. Selman and Chandler are also both classified under the interpersonal perspective and this is so because of the attention they pay to promoting the ability to see the other person's viewpoint and the effect this has on one's relationships and interpersonal behavior. Lastly, because the intervention by Kohlberg and his collaborators is explicitly intended to effect the climate and structure of organizations such as schools and prisons, their work is presented within the organizational perspective.

The Psychodynamic Perspective

Kegan¹ has attempted to elaborate upon the Piagetian system, integrating affective components, to emerge with an impressive and striking theory of personality. The central concept which proves to be the key to unlocking a comprehensive personality theory from the system is equilibration. The equilibrating process that undergirds an ongoing activity in which the self is taken through a progression of self-other disengaging and rebalancing stages is the major theme winding through

¹Robert Kegan, "Ego and Truth: Personality and The Piaget Paradigm" (Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1977).

Kegan's extensions of Piaget and Kohlberg. Equilibration as seen from the outside is descriptive of the cognitive aspect, but the "self-constituting meaning making" constituent of equilibration is the phenomenological feeling aspect. Kegan, in his formulation, feels that his approach is an interactionist one, escaping a mere intra-psychic focus. Consider his rather bold statement, as follows:

Each re-equilibration of a person's self-other balance brings the equilibrative whole into greater balance, and -- outrageous as it must sound -- changes the world. The importance of saying so is to stress that such transformation does not go on only in someone's head, but means something to the balance of the universe, and most immediately to those persons and social organizations which people that individual's other.¹

The helper who concentrates upon facilitating the equilibrating process in the individual will of necessity be involved in the social matrix. The traditional focus of social work practice, the interface between person and environment, will not shift to an intra-psychic one by adopting a developmental psychodynamic perspective. Further, the helper must assume a responsibility for considering the manner in which the "others" of his client might be affected by further development in the client.

The work of Kegan is profound and comprehensive. I plan to introduce only two facets of it here, beyond the preceding introductory remarks. The first is an alternate way of conceptualizing depression; which differs from the standardized

¹Ibid., p. 344-45.

approach of diagnostic and descriptive psychiatry. It is based upon a study by Kegan of thirty-nine cases and is linked to Kohlberg's stage theory. I will then follow with some of Kegan's general comments on the significance of a cognitive-structural approach for the helper.

Kegan investigated the data that had been accumulated on each of the thirty-nine patients in his study. He had access to staff reports, in-take information, material describing interpersonal relationships and social milieu, and the patients' descriptive formulations of their own condition. He discerned an underlying pattern which he organized into three discrete categories reflecting the world view of the individuals involved. Kegan chose the affect of depression around which the three classifications were galvanized. Some of the patients were clinically depressed, but others were not. His use of depression, however, was independent of the patients' official psychiatric diagnosis. Instead he viewed it as an emotional state of varying intensities which was found to one degree or another in all of the patients. A patient so viewed was not necessarily found to be depressed all of the time or with great intensity. Because the Kohlberg instrument is fairly tuned to measuring the state of balance between self and other, Kegan's central developmental interest, he adopted it as a theoretical framework. He found that each of the three categories reflecting patients' views of their world reality bore a strong relationship to one of three Kohlbergian stages, as interpreted by Kegan, himself. Furthermore, their stages

did not correlate with their diagnoses as determined with the use of standard psychiatric nomenclature. In other words, no particular stage was more frequently associated with either neurosis or psychosis. Similarly, for example, no one Kohlbergian stage was more readily associated with a specific psychotic state or with a character disordered personality. Thus, persons found to be within a particular Kohlbergian group could be from any one of the standard psychiatric categories, but they held in common a phenomenological outlook about their world reality. Briefly, despite having been labeled variously from a psychiatric standpoint, they had constructed a certain way of knowing the world which they shared. In this study, that shared feature which earned them membership in a Kohlbergian group was typified by a characteristic form of a depressive affect. Kegan, in effect, is maintaining that this reconceptualization of emotionally disturbed people provides a new way of understanding them through their own phenomenology based upon qualitatively different ways of knowing-in-the-world.

The first kind of depression identified by Kegan is referred to as "self-sacrificing."¹ It revolves around the subject's own needs. Each of the three types has a fundamental concern. The concern for the self-sacrificing type is the discontinuance of need gratification. An alternative concern of this type, should needs be met, is the mounting cost to the

¹The reader is cautioned against attaching a connotation of altruism to this term.

individual of having his needs met. There is an uneasy anticipation that should need satisfaction not be achieved, the I of the subject will cease to be.

The second kind of depression has as its main concern the interpersonal context with the accompanying potential for loss of relationships. Subjects experiencing this variation of the affect feel helpless, hopeless, weak, and lonely. They are especially sensitive to the threat of being abandoned. Subjects in this phenomenological category, called "dependent depression" are preoccupied with the apprehension they have over angering or hurting others. There exists an overriding fear that should a significant relationship terminate, the I of the subject will disappear along with it.

The third kind of depression expresses concern over an incapacity to execute one's proper role, conceived independently of others' judgments, and to live up to one's own standards. The world is experienced as a meaningless void. Guilt and despair are prevalent feelings. Kegan calls this "guilty depression." It is feared that faced with a lack of role fulfillment and failure to appropriately discharge responsibilities, the I will evaporate.

In each case, apart from the threat of annihilation of self, there is also the overriding apprehension that the basic orientation implied in the outlook is without meaning. For example, in dependent depression there is an underlying fear that an interpersonal outlook in life as a source of meaning and security may itself be without any foundation. Kegan

observed a stability within each patient, such that an individual subject consistently reflected the same orientation and did not shift from one to another.

Upon invoking the Kohlberg measure, it was found that a strong association existed between self-sacrificing, dependent, and guilty forms of depression with stages 2 or 2-3 transitional, 3 or 3-4 transitional, and 4 or 4-5 transitional, respectively. Approximately half of the patients were scored in the transitional state. By transitional, Kegan is not alluding merely to stage mixture. It is a state in which the subject possesses a unitary outlook which has passed beyond one stage, but has not yet achieved a new balance or centration typical of the following stage. Hence, a transitional state is said to be characterized by a single world-view of its own, existing midway between the perspectives of two balanced stages. The subject in transition may hold a critical attitude toward the balanced stage from which he is moving away, while not yet exhibiting the rebalanced perspective to be acquired at the stage he is moving toward. An alternate criterion for assigning a subject to a transitional phase, is finding him to be undergoing the dissonance of simultaneously experiencing the perspectives of two consecutive stages. Kegan points out that while transition entails previous disequilibria, not all states of disequilibrium necessarily signify further transition. Kegan makes many subtle, complex, and sometimes even abstruse distinctions. His work is bold and innovative. He is

attempting to be not simply a Piagetian "cognitivist" but "psychodynamicist." I will not be quite as bold, and so will refrain from pursuing his work through every compartment of the labyrinth he has constructed. However, I would like to trace his efforts just a few more steps.

Kegan conceptualizes depression as being more a matter of disequilibrium, in his terms, than transition. The Kohlberg measure picks up the features of transition, but not disequilibrium in the psychodynamic sense. Kegan is in full accord with the cognitive emphasis that depression will be known variously, contingent upon stage of development. He states:

The correlation I have just reported is not by itself evidence that depression is related to disequilibrium. It is evidence that when people are depressed they will describe, construe, and probably experience, their depression in different ways depending on ego level. It is evidence that a "feeling" is known differently at different "levels of knowing."¹

Kegan, however, is struggling to establish more than the above, which reflects a purely cognitive interpretation. In striving to go beyond the cognitive, he conceptualizes what he views as the psychodynamic interpretation that would flow from a Piagetian and Kohlbergian orientation. He goes on to observe:

But what I am suggesting is that depression... is not only shaped but is about that shaping activity. Our hypothesis is not that, once depressed, meaning-constitutive activity will cast a meaning for this experience as

¹Ibid., p. 190.

it will for any others; but that depression is meaning-constitution itself under assault. Meaning-constitution, in equilibrium, is a matter, not of an individual's having an "answer" for the world, but of an individual's being an "answer." Yet those "depression concerns" ...are not ...mere grist for the "answer" that is equilibrium; rather they express the particular forms by which meaning-constitution in disequilibrium leaves the individual, not so much having a "question," as being one.¹

Kegan's own meaning in this somewhat opaque quote is difficult to grasp. He is, first of all, going beyond a cognitive-structural position which would assert that the stage of cognitive development in an individual structures the way he interprets the depression he may experience. In that viewpoint, cognitive stage is the independent variable and depression is the dependent variable. I have indicated above that Kegan does not reject such a position. However, his psychodynamic reformulation introduces an existential quality not evident in the original formulation. For Kegan, the core of depression is itself one form or another of radical doubt about the very foundation of what ordinarily constitutes meaning at a given developmental stage. It might be said that at such a point one's existence is in essence meaning that has become undermined and challenged. Hence, the individual is not simply asking a question, but is experiencing his very existence as questionable.

Kegan reasons that a constructive-developmental view sees growth as going from stages of diminishing subjectivity to in-

¹Ibid., pp. 191-92.

creasing objectivity. Development moves away from self-contradictory and less adequate subjectivity toward that which is more equilibrated in that it more adequately covers a wider range of situations and demands. Progressively, development is the construction of a world-view that is "true-for-all." The rebalance between self and other at a given stage is more adequate than the preceding balance. At stage 2, the subject is emmeshed in his own needs, hence loss of satisfaction of those needs constitutes loss of self. The shift from stage 2 to 3 entails a decentering from one's own needs. The self must no longer be equated with its needs. Instead the subject will go on to experience the self as that which possesses needs, but is not the same as them. The self, no longer exclusively embedded in the own needs, may reflect upon them in stage 3. The needs of other people are clearly recognized and at stage 3 are coordinated with one's own needs. Because of this shift there has occurred a rebalancing of self and other which has a defining characteristic of an interpersonal matrix. Prior to transition, while still at stage 2, there is an assimilation of events and potential precipitants of change to that stage. There occurs little in the way of accommodation, with the result that the scope of experience that is realistically adapted to is severely limited. Kegan refers to the person in such a fixed state, regardless of stage, as a "balance defender." Each new rebalancing of self and other allows for an enlarged range of adaptive experience, although it is characterized by limitations in relation to the following stages. Before achieving a rebalanced state there is a phase

of disequilibrium during which there is a sense of having lost one self without having acquired a new self. The epistemic subject in going from Stage 2 to 3 is unaware that his needs per se are not being lost, but rather that he is giving up a way of conceiving them for a more adequate orientation. The person who suffers depression as a result of this kind of concern is experiencing "radical doubt" about the continued existence of self.

In discussing clinical case material of a 15 year old female on a hospital ward, Kegan asserted that an insight-oriented treatment would be contraindicated for a patient not yet at stage 3. The patient saw others merely as thwarting the fulfillment of her needs. On the ward she was seen by staff as resistant and manipulative in that she appeared more interested in finding out what she was supposed to say, rather than genuinely sharing something of her self. She did not experience guilt, but was concerned over whether her mother would learn that she had lied pertaining to a certain matter. Her problems were viewed by her as having their locus in the external environment. The staff react to her with distaste. Kegan suggests a reconceptualization which takes some of the onus off the patient and may even perhaps lead to more accepting attitudes by staff, as well as to a more effective treatment strategy. Taking a constructive-developmental position, Kegan points out the patient's mode of being is consistent with a stage 2 orientation. By locating the source of difficulty for herself as external, she is reflecting a developmental stage.

It is as "true" for her that the difficulties she is experiencing have an external locus, as it would be that the person at a later stage who talks of guilt experiences his difficulties as internal. The patient is not being resistant in the sense of concealing a deeper self, which she guardedly refuses to unveil. By her statements and actions she is revealing, in fact, the self that there is. Labeling her as a "sociopath," which the hospital did, is not a particularly helpful step, with the pejorative implications that such a label carries, as do many other labels. Rather than viewing the patient as having a psychiatric illness, Kegan's approach would suggest an equilibrative analysis with a view toward promoting development to a more adequate stage. The particular patient in this case was bound to frustrate the staff, which could hardly be helpful to the patient, because she was expected to meet the demands of hospital milieu treatment. Yet that treatment approach requires that a participating patient have at least a Stage 3 interpersonal orientation. The Stage 2 patient is not "acting out" or being willfully resistant, for such a patient truly does not as yet have a way of "knowing" the requirements of the treatment contract.

Kegan makes the intriguing suggestion that the precipitating events leading to hospitalization may vary according to stages. That is, a specific type or range of events may account for hospitalization of those patients at one stage and these precipitants may differ for patients at another stage. It is those events which an individual at a particular stage can

neither assimilate nor accommodate, which cannot be meaningfully ordered and adapted to by his world-view, that would result in disequilibrium sufficiently severe as to warrant hospitalization. One thing that is clear from Kegan's groundbreaking work is that the concept of equilibration is utilized to explain much more than Piaget's cognitive periods and that the stage theory of Kohlberg opens a door to understanding much wider aspects of personality than moral development only. The equilibrative analysis brought to bear upon the young patient at Stage 2 is merely an example of what may be done with any person regardless of developmental position. It is the equilibration process which is at the heart of Kegan's conception of personality drawn from the work of Piaget and Kohlberg. Each stage is a way station of dynamic stability along the path of the self-other reequilibrating process toward greater objectivity. The role of the helping person then, in a constructive-developmental viewpoint, is to facilitate the equilibrating activity. More adaptive ways of knowing-in-the-world is the pivotal point of growth. Knowledge is not dormant waiting within the individual to be uncovered or activated. Knowledge is constructed developmentally as the epistemic subject experiences dissonance upon encountering events he cannot adequately construe. The knowing subject must resolve the discrepancy between his present meaning system and the unassimilatable event by constituting meaning anew. Despite the phenomenological emphasis in Kegan's work he avoids the pure existentialist position which honors the uniqueness of each

person's meaning system accompanied by a refusal to acknowledge objective meaning in the world. He believes strongly, as I do, that one may respect the uniqueness of the individual, without according parity to all of his specific convictions.

The helping person shares with the helpee the very process that the former seeks to stimulate in the latter. The helper is engaged in his own developmental process just as is the helpee. Kegan reformulates conventional ways of looking at the helping process when he states that the way he looks at the helpee:

...derives not from convictions about "patients" or "sick persons" or even "persons with problems," or "persons in pain," but simply (and complexly) about persons growing. Hence, the clinician's most fundamental orientation toward the persons with whom he works derives from convictions about an activity he shares at that very moment with the persons with whom he works.... We neither escape from our own fate as life-long meaning-makers nor escape from our life-long fraternity or peoplehood with those who may be finding that fate a greater burden.¹

I believe that this formulation of the helping process diminishes its hierarchical character and links both helper and helpee in a mutual growth process. Furthermore, I think Kegan's words reflect the spirit of social work philosophy more adequately than most other conceptualizations.

¹Ibid., p. 323.

The Interpersonal Perspective

Psychotherapy as Value Change

Abroms,¹ in a similar vein to Kegan, but concentrating upon a narrower scope, has argued that while the therapist cannot impose his own personal and narcissistic goals upon the client or patient, he should derive power and direction from the transpersonal values he embraces. It is those higher-order values which the therapist must move the patient toward. The therapist, just as he does not impose his purely subjective interests, also does not mindlessly help the patient to achieve any goal regardless of how narcissistically and selfishly determined it may be. Abroms sees psychotherapy as a process of value change primarily and symptomatic relief as only a secondary component. To achieve the goal of assisting the patient toward adopting higher-order values, the therapist must, himself, be at a higher level than the patient. Abroms envisions the therapist as the embodiment of inspirational ideals held forth before the patient. He has adopted Kohlberg's stage theory of moral development because it is his conviction that it can become a loadstone which provides guidance in selecting appropriate treatment goals and methods.

At Stage 1, the aim of therapy is to assure physical and

¹Gene Abroms, "The Place of Values in Psychotherapy," Journal of Marriage and Family Counseling 4 (October 1978): pp. 3-17.

material well-being. The keynote at this stage is sheer survival. Treatment methods correspond to biomedical methods and conditioned learning theory. Stage 2 rises above an embeddedness in sheer survival needs to encompass pleasure seeking. Activities such as eating and sex which have a survival function may be engaged in for pure pleasure. Treatment seeks to facilitate appropriately uninhibited expressiveness and to reward pleasure. Although Abroms is not specific in differentiating amongst the many varieties of behavior therapy, it would seem that positive reinforcement would be appropriate at both stages 1 and 2, but with different aims in mind. Punishment, in technical learning theory terms, might best be reserved for Stage 1, as in the use of aversive therapy to prevent an autistic child from continuing to batter his head against the wall. It should be noted that Abroms, himself, does not explicitly recommend this. The use of aversive therapy to treat any problem has been ruled out by some ethicists. Others, however, would argue that it is the only alternative to certain death or brain damage in some cases.

Treatment methods at Stage 3 have a socializing goal, regardless of whether individual, group, or family modalities are brought to bear. The necessity for survival and desirability of pleasure are not eliminated, but are subordinated to the value of belonging and socialization. At Stage 4, the orderliness of the total social unit going beyond one's personal social matrix is recognized. Hence therapy seeks to institute ego controls and a sanctification of proper authority.

There is a valuing of rule-regulating behavior to which the self is subordinated. The maintenance of order goes beyond the mere seeking of approval within the sphere of one's personal society of significant others.

At Stage 5 one is no longer rigidly bound by the pre-existing laws of the land. One is capable of creatively innovating new laws and institutional arrangements to seek a higher justice than the prevailing one. Adaptive flexibility is said to be the chief mental health value. Abroms holds that at this stage the formation of utilitarian contracts becomes a matter that should receive paramount attention in the therapy, with a special emphasis upon the commitment to adhere to those contracts consented to. At Stage 6 universal values assume a role of supremacy over the relativity inherent in adaptive flexibility. Therapy now seeks, "The synthesis of a cohesive self with an idealized super-ego, devoted to the realization of social justice..."¹

Abroms elaborates at some length upon the relative fit between developmental level and therapist. It is out of the dialectical process between the two that development to the next stage in the hierarchy can occur. The essential point, however, is that the therapist must be at least one stage above the patient in his own personal development, if he is to facilitate the patient's growth. If he is merely at or below the patient's dominant stage, then failure in the therapeutic

¹Ibid., p. 12.

endeavor is inevitable. The problem of mismatch can occur at the other end of the scale, as when a therapist at a stage much higher than the patient, will offer interpretations at a level beyond what the patient can possibly comprehend. In such a case, the patient will either reject the lofty wisdom or assimilate it to a mode of comprehension that depletes its potentially meaningful contribution. Hence, Abroms advances a view of therapeutic competence in which:

One aspect of technical skill involves the ability to exemplify health and personal values at a level appropriate to the client's sophistication in cognitive and moral awareness. The therapist cannot, for example, interpret troublesome behavior as lacking in fairness or loyalty if the client is a devoted hedonist, out for his own pleasure and uncomprehending of the rejection that he thereby provokes. According to the schema, the technically appropriate intervention would involve interpretations and corrective experiences aimed at the issues of social concordance (Stage 3) or the organizational and personal boundaries (Stage 4) that he has violated.¹

Technical competence, in Abroms view, would direct the therapist to formulate an interpretation or promote discussion at Stage 3 for the Stage 2 hedonist. The focus of communication would be upon the social unit confined to the patient's personalized experiences and significant others. This could encompass the immediate family, circle of friends, or organizational milieu. The impact of the patient's behavior upon these people or the

¹Ibid., p. 14.

institution and the reciprocal effect upon him may be concentrated upon. Conceptualizing the discussion at this stage may offer the client or patient a sufficiently discerning glimpse of the next higher truth to stimulate his movement in that direction. Abroms also makes the point that the therapist might recognize that an individual at a fairly high stage level may be living a life that neglects some of the requirements for fulfillment at a lower level. Thus, a principled client may not be enjoying his proper due at the level of sensuality characteristic of Stage 2. Upon making such a diagnosis, the therapist should assist the client in experiencing that aspect of Stage 2 which he has an ethical right to.

Abroms' contribution consists of adapting Kohlberg's stage theory to the psychotherapeutic enterprise in a manner that lends much greater precision to assessment and differential intervention than has prevailed in many quarters. Although the overall goal is value change achieved by stimulating developmental progression, he has also achieved greater precision in goal setting by specifying sub-goals corresponding to each stage in the hierarchy. Abroms has redefined the therapist's technical competence and has set an unconventional goal for the therapeutic process. His formulation is a reconceptualization that is both creative and innovative. He maintains that the position he espouses joins both humanism and science, further asserting that as the helper leads the helpee towards the construction of higher spiritual values he is by definition helping him to achieve a more adaptive knowledge of reality.

Promoting Role Taking Competence

Chandler¹ has reported good results in combining drama and filming techniques, subjects rotating at playing character roles, and subsequent group discussions in work with delinquent boys. Role-taking competence increased in the participants and their rate of recidivism significantly reduced in comparison to control and placebo groups. Staub² found that training in role-taking skills led to a differential effect in the pro-social behavior of boys and girls. Boys subsequently exhibited increased sharing behavior and girls increased helping behavior. Chandler, Greenspan, and Barenboim³ conducted an experiment with emotionally disturbed institutionalized children who were divided into three groups. There were two experimental groups, one of which received role-taking training, a second of which received referential communication training. Referential communication refers to the speaker's ability to select the most appropriate word in his vocabulary to convey his meaning while taking into account both the context within which he is speaking and the informational needs

¹Michael Chandler, "Egocentrism and Antisocial Behavior: The Assessment and Training of Social Perspective-Taking Skills," Developmental Psychology 9 (1973): 326-32.

²Erwin Staub, "The Use of Role Playing and Induction in Children's Learning of Helping and Sharing Behaviors," Child Development 42 (1971): 805-16.

³Michael Chandler, Stephen Greenspan, and Carl Barenboim, "Assessment and Training of Role-Taking and Referential Communication Skills in Institutionalized Emotionally Disturbed Children," Developmental Psychology 10 (1974): 546-53.

of the listener. A third group received no training. The two training groups demonstrated significant post-intervention improvement compared to the control group. The role-taking group utilized video filming techniques in which the children rotated opportunities to portray disparate characters, thereby giving them practice at taking the perspectives of others. In the referential communication group, children were given feedback when they delivered inadequate messages. It was predicted that the feedback would create cognitive conflict and out of the dissonance they would reconstruct the messages more accurately. It is of interest that those children who received referential training only, improved both in that area and in role-taking. The children who trained in role-taking improved in that area, but showed no improvement in referential communication. It is likely that referential communication demands role-taking competence as a precondition, hence while training at the former, the latter is also developed. Role-taking competence, however, does not automatically imply referential communication skills.

The most extensive and highly conceptualized efforts directed at applying sociomoral knowledge in a cognitive-developmental framework to clinical practice have been emanating from the Judge Baker Guidance Center in Boston, frequently in collaboration with Harvard University. The leader in this pioneering undertaking, which has been gaining

recognition over the last several years has been Robert Selman, the Director of the Guidance Center. Selman's conceptual orientation to role-taking and its relationship to moral development have been presented in Chapter Three. Paralleling these structural developments are qualitatively increasingly more complex stages of interpersonal conceptions which children acquire with age. The various components of development as seen in Piaget's, Kohlberg's, and Selman's work are all inter-related as structural wholes. Selman's work is geared to making a diagnosis of how this all comes to bear upon a child's competence at social reasoning. Developmental lags which may be instrumental in causing or maintaining emotional disturbance are diagnosed and attempts are then made to stimulate development with a view toward improving social functioning. Strategies of intervention are designed with the specific aim of furthering development in role-taking and interpersonal conceptions. Selman is clear in conveying that he does not see a cognitive-structural approach as replacing more traditional psychodynamic models, but as an alternate orientation that may offer a greater clinical yield in some cases, depending upon the problem.

In one clinical vignette, Selman¹ describes diagnosis and intervention with a ten year old boy who was at an ego-

¹Robert Selman, "Social Cognitive Understanding: A Guide to Educational and Clinical Practice" in Moral Development and Behavior: Theory, Research and Social Issues, ed. T. Lickona (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), pp. 299-316.

centric level generally found in children at ages four and five. Upon observation it was discovered that when he interacted with others he appeared not to be making any differentiation between what he was feeling and what others might be feeling. He failed to evidence any role-taking capacities and, hence, his interpersonal relationships were shorn of reciprocity. He expected that his needs would be gratified immediately and, of course, failed to take into account what other people's perspective of that expectation might be. In fact, since he could not role-take, he had no way of knowing that from another person's point of view his needs may often remain unknown unless explicitly communicated by him. Social work practice has certainly discovered this type of problem even amongst adults in dysfunctional relationships. Selman's young client, like many an adult, would feel that he was hated when his uncommunicated needs were not being met. In fact, the young boy was disliked, but this was the result of the deficiency in his social reasoning, rather than any inherent inclination on the part of others to turn against him. The intervention strategy was to give him a concentrated experience over a period of time in a therapeutic camp at differentiating between his own and other people's feelings and thoughts. He was helped to seek out internal causes of behavior in other people and to take their point of view. He was constantly informed about the usual expectations that other people would have of him in different situations. At

the end of eight weeks his conception of friendship had matured, he had shifted from being completely egocentric to evidencing some role-taking ability, and his popularity had increased to the point where he had acquired many friends. The strategy adopted in this case can be adapted to a variety of settings. When the child is not as accessible around the clock, the way this child was in a summer camp or another may be in a residential treatment center, the parents may be trained by the social worker to continue the intervention at home. A secondary benefit of doing this is in enlisting the parents in a constructive activity which may promote in them a sense of being directly helpful to their child. The increase in positive interaction between parent and child may itself be beneficial. Furthermore, conceptualization of the problem in this manner avoids the dilemma of pointing an accusatory finger at the parents, who so often feel either guilty or defensive about their child's problem. Lastly, this orientation does not label the child as sick, but views him as in need of developmental stimulation to further development in social reasoning along its normal course. The enhancement of psychosocial functioning, a primary goal of social work practice, meshes well with Selman's conceptualization of helping. Not only is this true, but social workers are often in key settings where they have the opportunity to provide precisely this kind of help either directly or by training caretakers to implement it under proper supervision.

Selman, in citing another example, demonstrated how a refined diagnosis from a sociocognitive perspective can provide valuable supplementary material to other data obtaining methods. A fourteen year old adolescent was brought to the clinic by his mother because he was socially isolated and had not been promoted to the next grade the previous year due to a school phobia. He seemed to have low self-esteem and was fearful of entering into social relations. The clinic team decided to administer the Heinz dilemma from Kohlberg's repertoire of moral dilemmas. Asked whether Heinz should steal the drug to save his wife's life, he replied that he should do so only if he loves her. If he does not love her, then there is no point in risking jail. He elaborates further that he should steal for her only if he needs her. Asked if Heinz should steal the drug to save himself, the adolescent replies that Heinz should not, explaining that he, the boy, would not steal the drug to save himself because he is not worth it. Asked to explain further, he points out that he does not have a lot of money and, therefore, is not important. In discussing capital punishment he comes out in favor of it because he would not want to spend a lifetime in prison. Encouraged to see it from the point of view of other hypothetical prisoners he could not entertain the possibility that any of them would have a different perspective. He sensed that they would have a perspective, but he failed to differentiate it from his own. In Selman's analysis the youngster is seen as

being at Stages 1 and 2 in both role-taking and moral development, even though by his age most young people would be at Stage 3 in both areas, some as high as Stage 4 in role-taking. His view of saving the wife's life reflected an instrumental orientation, Stage 2, in moral development since it was based on his own need gratification and had nothing to do with respect for her as a person. His orientation regarding the preservation of his own life was at Stage 1, being based upon a purely materialistic conception of his own worth. This cognitive structural aspect of his development clearly coincides with his feelings of low self-esteem. Selman conveys, "...not that cognition is cause and feelings are effect, but that cognition and feelings about the self and about others are inseparable."¹ Despite the lag in the moral area he was functioning at a low formal operational level in his performance on Piaget's and Inhelder's cognitive tasks in the physics area, reflecting good scientific reasoning for his age. However he scored at the concrete operational level in his social reasoning. Selman suggests that his lack of social interaction offered him little opportunity to test out his interpersonal and social hypotheses, in the fashion that adolescents would normally do, often with great vigor. The point of such an analysis is to individualize the client, understand him from his own phenomenological

¹Ibid., p. 315.

perspective, and to assess from this information the strategic entry level for developmental intervention. In a general statement encompassing his basic orientation, Selman expresses the following:

Determining the stage of cognitive or social development of a particular child leads the professional to understand how the child looks at the world, and to avoid expectations of conceptual and emotional abilities that the child has not yet developed. Far from disdaining the value of understanding the child's interpersonal dynamics, this approach enhances that understanding by exploring the stage and by identifying the next stage toward which his development can be directed.¹

The Organizational Perspective

To illustrate an imaginative and novel application of Kohlberg's orientation in an often neglected milieu with underserved populations, let us turn to intervention within the correctional field. Kohlberg, Scharf, and Hickey² conducted a series of pilot studies which ended in 1972. Since that time they have elaborated at some length upon the theory and rationale utilized in those pioneering efforts.³

¹Ibid., p. 300.

²Lawrence Kohlberg, Peter Scharf, and Joseph Hickey, "The Justice Structure of the Prison: A Theory and an Intervention," The Prison Journal, Autumn-Winter (1972): 3-14.

³Lawrence Kohlberg et al., "The Just Community Approach to Corrections: A Theory," Journal of Moral Education 4 (1975): 243-60.

The goal of the studies was to implement moral development programs amongst inmates and staff of correctional institutions as a form of rehabilitation. The approach was one of "justice as treatment" in contrast to previous inefficacious attempts at rehabilitation. Work with offenders in early society had emphasized retribution and moral reform. Imprisonment and punishment were ways of extracting the price one had to pay for the offense. There existed a climate of moralism in which prisoners were subject to persuasion and sermonizing with the expectation that they would add such traits as honesty, restraint, and respect for authority to their "bag of virtues," as Kohlberg is fond of saying. These methods proved unsuccessful. The traditional approach of attempting to produce reform by altering moral character gave way to a modern viewpoint, adopted by many professionals, that offenders are sick and should receive psychotherapy. Programs directed at psychotherapy have not demonstrated any greater success than the historical emphasis upon reform by modifying moral character. An alternate modern approach has been the use of behavior therapy technology. Although some immediate gains in modifying behavior have been observed through the use of token systems which dispense rewards for desired behaviors, long-range benefits have been minimal. This was predictable as the emotions, cognitions, and values of the prisoners were ignored. Since it is difficult, if not impossible, to maintain the reward system in the natural environment upon release, newly acquired behaviors were eventually extinguished. It is true that psychotherapy

does deal with feelings and attitudes, but there is little focus upon the existential reality the prisoner encounters daily in relationships with security officers and fellow prisoners. A vacuum existed in terms of effective rehabilitation programs, which Kohlberg and his collaborators have been trying to fill. It is my contention that the theory and practice they follow is compatible with social work practice in every respect and that implementing such programs on a broad scale falls well within the parameters of the social work profession.

In what has come to be known as The Cheshire Experiment, Kohlberg and his collaborators investigated the justice structure of a reformatory located in Cheshire, Connecticut. In addition, they collected data on the moral stages of prisoners. The prisoners judgments on moral dilemmas designed to test their perceptions of justice both outside and inside of the prison were sought. In examining the justice structure of the institution it was clear that prisoners were completely subjected to the authority of the administration. They held no decision-making power whatsoever. Rewards and punishments were not uncommonly dispensed arbitrarily by staff. There existed no avenue for appealing abuses. Punishments were sometimes disproportionately harsh for minor infractions of rules and sometimes administered as a means for a guard to exercise a personal dislike toward a prisoner. The discipline board that prevailed did not feel obligated to offer rational explanations for punishment meted out. Certain privileges

were accorded to influential prisoners by staff to elicit cooperation in exchange. From this analysis it was concluded that the justice structure operated at Stage 4 insofar as there did exist definite bureaucratic rules which inmates were expected to conform to with no opportunity to have the rules reconsidered, much less modified. It was also found to be operating at Stage 2 insofar as staff indulged their own needs and bestowed rewards in anticipation of a reciprocal exchange that would benefit them. It is against this description of the prisoners' reality that their moral perceptions can most fruitfully be considered. The inmates tended to perceive the prison as functioning at a premoral level, encompassing both Stages 1 and 2. Their relationships with other prisoners they mostly viewed as being at Stage 2, hence predicated upon instrumental exchanges. The justice of the prison administration was identified by inmates as coercively demanding obedience and, therefore, assigned to Stage 1 by most of them. Perceptions by inmates of how the prison was actually run proved to be independent of their scores on normative moral judgments. A comparison was made between inmates' proposed resolutions to hypothetical moral dilemmas involving the prison environment and the non-prison dilemmas of the standard variety. There appeared to be a significant difference in moral judgments depending upon whether the inside or outside environment was being evaluated. In general, the moral reasoning was at a lower level when considering dilemmas within the prison context as compared to judgments about moral

dilemmas based upon stories that were non-prison related. Not a single inmate demonstrated a higher level on a prison related dilemma in comparison to a non-prison dilemma. Inmates who exhibited as high as Stage 3 and even Stage 4 on standard moral dilemmas, were scored at Stage 1 or 2 when responding to prison related dilemmas. Thus it is seen that the impact of the environment has a decided influence upon the moral judgment of the individual. This finding was typical not only at Cheshire, but at other prisons as well. It is important, however, not to overestimate the level of moral development attained by most offenders independently of the prison environment. Kohlberg, Kaufman, Scharf, and Hickey report:

A variety of studies in the United States and other countries indicate that criminal offenders are remarkably lower in moral judgment development than are non-offenders of the same social background. In fact, the majority (75 per cent) of non-criminal adolescents and young adults are at Stage 3 or 4, while the majority of adolescent offenders are at Stage 1 or 2.¹

This information is vital in appreciating the rationale of the moral development programs designed by Kohlberg.

The Cheshire intervention was comprised primarily of moral discussion groups which resulted in small gains for some in moral maturity. A two year follow up did show that those who had advanced were less subject to recidivism than released prisoners who had not participated. However, the overall moral atmosphere of the prison justice structure placed severe restraints on what could be achieved.

¹Ibid., p. 256.

Furthermore, life within the prison provided no role-taking opportunities such as might be stimulated by the availability of leadership roles, flexible dialogue with open-ended outcomes, and decision-making powers. The Cheshire experience led to the design of a more comprehensive treatment model which was mounted in 1971 at the Niantic State Farm for Women. By the time the experiment had been functioning for two years, only 16 per cent of those women who had been discharged either returned or once again had encountered some kind of trouble with the authorities. Many of the women had even gone on to create quite stabilized and decent lives. This was not the case for all, however. (In 1973 the experiment was enlarged to continue with "justice as treatment" in a community based facility, where some of the inmates were permitted to finish their sentences.) The difference introduced at Niantic was that the experiment became a total experience. The institution had agreed to reshape its policies so that the participants were permitted to assume self-governing responsibilities. Nine staff were trained by the Kohlberg team which served as trainers and consultants. Staff assumed the role of discussion leaders and facilitators. They had to be trained, for example, to avoid falling into the trap of becoming preoccupied with the content and outcome of management issues, as opposed to their proper role of facilitating discussion amongst inmates, with a focus on moral issues. It would be up to the inmates as a cohesive self-governing group to determine policies of right and wrong behavior and

to recommend just disciplinary action for violations.

In the early training sessions with line staff, they voiced many of their own complaints, but following sufficient time for ventilation they shifted to a problem-solving orientation. Put simply by Kohlberg et al., "The involved staff members committed themselves to an intervention which, working from a moral development framework, would address the problems of the institution."¹ It became apparent that their function was not viewed as being exclusively custodial; but although they had wanted to be helpful to the inmates, they lacked leadership and a theoretically grounded practice model to work with. The inmates' early sessions focused on very specific recommendations which were personal and idiosyncratic and, hence, did not offer a basis for forging out a policy document to govern their behavior. As the level of discussions became transformed there emerged a working constitution that was accepted as law by all members of the experimental community. As might have been anticipated, a preliminary problem that demanded attention was the mutual distrust that occurred between staff and inmates. The Kohlberg team served as mediators and eventually this obstacle, undoubtedly an inevitable one, was surmounted. One of the major objectives of the training model was to create a moral climate for the inmates which was at least at their own level or higher. Community meetings, almost always called by

¹Kohlberg, Scharf, and Hickey, "The Justice Structure of the Prison," p. 9.

inmates, could be invoked by staff or inmates to resolve issues of discipline as they would arise. Each person had only one vote, including staff. The Kohlberg team has made the point that for many of the women in this project the constitution, which they had participated in establishing, was the first objectified set of rules and regulations they had had a genuine stake in. This is essentially different from traditional small group treatment. Participants are more involved in the total matrix of operations. Emphasis is upon promoting their moral development to Stage 3, where they will experience some group loyalty and concern about others feelings towards them, which clearly goes beyond the hedonistic-instrumentalist orientation of Stage 2. There is an even more ambitious goal, albeit a realistic one, of stimulating moral development to Stage 4, where the inmate at that stage would become a citizen of the community with a commitment to uphold the laws, which she has had a part in creating. In addition to special community meetings to deal with emergent problems, regular small group meetings are held. Fears and dilemmas that are very real to the women, some prison based and others related to the outside, provide the grist for the discussion mill. The discussions are led in such a way as to facilitate and heighten role-taking capabilities. Alternate perspectives to what others are saying are deliberately elicited. Logical analysis of problems is invited. Conflicts inherent in competing claims are brought into prominence and higher stage exposure emerges in discussion, as not all of the discussants

are at the same level. It is the role of the leader to sharpen the nature of the conflict and to take some responsibility for introducing higher stage reasoning. Indoctrination and didactic teaching are avoided at all times. Structural mode of reasoning and developmental progress are stressed over content and sermonizing. As has been seen throughout this dissertation, structural advance is not an isolated psychic phenomenon. Moral stages reflect distinctly the organization of social and interpersonal knowledge in an individual. They generate rules and ultimately principles that play a strong governing role in behavior.

The actual creation of a just community is the essence of the treatment provided by the moral development program model. Kohlberg et al. capture this well in formulating the following:

We can see that democracy is central to moral development if we see that the heart of morality is a sense of fairness and justice. Morality means a decision of what is right where there is a conflict between the interests and claims of two or more people. Justice means fairness in deciding the conflict, giving each person his due and being impartial to all While most inmates do not care about society's morality, they do care about justice or fairness. Because they feel they are treated unjustly and live in an unjust world they do not try to be fair to others. To be motivated to act fairly, inmates must feel they are part of a just community.¹

As a follow up to the preceding comments, Kohlberg et al.

¹Kohlberg et al. "The Just Community Approach to Corrections," pp. 247-48.

continue:

In interviews with inmates two years after release, many who were functioning well outside expressed why they thought the programme had led to significant changes in their lives. They said that for the first time they had lived in a setting where people treated each other fairly and with mutual concern. On leaving the programme they had decided that they wanted to have lives in which they could continue to have such relationships and choose life patterns which could enable them to do that.¹

Conclusion

The interventive methods that have been under discussion in this chapter are firmly anchored in the cognitive-developmental sociomoral tradition of Piaget and Kohlberg. They are certainly not mutually exclusive of other approaches and, indeed, have not as yet attained a high level of technical refinement. Each method, either explicitly or implicitly, employs tactics designed to promote greater objective relativism by facilitating the subject's decentering process in the socio-cognitive moral realm. In each approach a diminution of embeddedness in the egocentrism of one's present perspective is sought in favor of development toward a greater capacity for identifying, coordinating, and synthesizing multiple perspectives. Success in such an endeavor is virtually seen as the construction of a higher and more adaptive level of sociomoral knowledge. In all cases the interventionist has a clear idea of the direction he believes it is necessary for the subject to move toward if more adaptive behavior is to be achieved.

¹Ibid., p. 248.

The interventionist adopts a directive-catalytic role rather than a passive-neutral stance in the change procedure. The method in each approach is not interpretive, but instead entails the disclosure of the subject's phenomenological state followed by a strategy for facilitating the transformation of that state into the perspective characteristic of the next stage in the universal developmental sequence. Adopting a developmental framework deemphasizes pathology and the over-worked medical model in favor of an outlook emphasizing positive change and growth. It also reduces the dichotomous structure of the therapeutic situation as consisting of one sick person and one well person, replacing it with a view of two or more participants all of whom share in a potentially ongoing process as developing persons.

Despite the shared commitment to a cognitive developmental framework and the commonalities described above, there are differences amongst the interventionists examined here that are worth identifying. Selman and Chandler have been very specific in citing concrete techniques that lend themselves to direct application. These techniques are designed primarily to foster role-taking competence in subjects whose interpersonal relationships appear dysfunctional due to a limited capacity to see the other's point of view. In the strategies of Abroms, Kegan, and Kohlberg we find their interventive methods formulated in broader terms.¹

¹Selman's theoretical contribution, of course, includes broadly conceptualized developmental stages of social perspective taking.

Abroms is distinct from all of the others in that he is a psychiatrist whose professional education was not based upon a cognitive-developmental perspective, which he has embraced only recently. Therefore, it is not surprising that he has attempted to link more conventional treatment approaches to corresponding stages in the cognitive developmental sequences. In other words, for example, biological, behavioral, and family treatment approaches form a hierarchy of their own which may conceivably be most appropriately implemented in relation to the stage development of the subject or patient in question. It is also my impression that Abroms is perhaps the most openly avid advocate of psychotherapy as a value change procedure.

The work of Kegan is the most theoretically ambitious, as he struggles vigorously to develop a psychodynamic model that goes beyond the basic Piaget-Kohlberg paradigm. His work is demanding and requires that one grapples with his ideas through repeated encounters with them. Even by the most liberal literary standards, some of Kegan's passages fail to yield a clear and unequivocal meaning. Nevertheless, the total impact of his formulations suggests to me a stunning breakthrough to a new reconceptualization of personality theory and development. Although all cognitive-developmental theory has a strong phenomenological component, it is in the work of Kegan that each individual's way of knowing-in-the-world is brought to its sharpest focus. This is accomplished largely by integrating existential and developmental themes into a single model. Although Kegan has formulated an enlightened view of the

helping process, and this is especially true of his comments regarding the relationship between the helper and helpee, he has not as yet presented specific techniques to guide the helper in his efforts to promote development.

It is in their attempts to create "just communities" within prison and school environments that Kohlberg and his colleagues have exhibited the broadest spatio-temporal approach to intervention. Integral to any attempt at altering the sociocognitive moral structure of the individual is an equally concentrated effort at modifying the environmental structure. The way to promote individual moral development is to create a total community that fosters conditions conducive to it. A repressive and excessively authoritative climate is inimical to moral growth. An organizational context, on the other hand, which provides direct participation in democratic decision-making and role-taking opportunities related to the everyday lives of the individuals involved will maximize the potential for moral growth. In adopting this position, Kohlberg's Piagetian roots are highlighted, as we recall Piaget's emphasis upon the growing child's evolution toward genuine cooperation and reciprocity.

As further progress is made in developing change methodologies for this field we might look forward to an increased range of interventive applications and an accompanying advance in the identification of more specific strategies and tactics. We might also reasonably anticipate attempts at integration

with other models of helping and practice techniques, as well as the use of these approaches in the exercise of responsible eclecticism.

CHAPTER NINE

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK

Since the 1920's, beginning with the seminal work of Jean Piaget, the field of cognitive developmental psychology has been growing and expanding. A major area of study within this field which has gained great momentum over the last twenty years due largely to the efforts of Lawrence Kohlberg and his colleagues, is the development of sociomoral knowledge. Although social work has been commendably receptive to theories and research findings from the behavioral sciences, there has been a paucity of references in the profession's literature to either Piaget or Kohlberg. Three leading social work theorists¹ have produced current books of excellent quality on clinical practice, each of which omits any treatment of Piaget's or Kohlberg's relevant and prodigious work. A review of each issue of Social Work, Social Casework, and Clinical Social Work for the year 1976 revealed not a single article or explicit reference to Piaget or Kohlberg, or the significantly related theorists, Flavell, Feffer, Selman, Rest, and Turiel. Yet despite these omissions there was a great diversity of subjects covered from

¹Florence Hollis, Casework: A Psychosocial Therapy (New York: Random House, 1972, 2nd ed.); Francis J. Turner, Psychosocial Therapy: A Social Work Perspective (New York: The Free Press, 1978); Herbert S. Strean, Clinical Social Work: Theory and Practice (New York: The Free Press, 1978).

the behavioral and applied behavioral sciences inclusive of, although not exhausted by, the following: communication theory, crisis theory, ego psychology, psychoanalytic theory, behavior modification, organizational theory, modeling, existentialism, gestaltism, rational-emotive therapy, transactional analysis, telepathy, and mysticism. A few articles even dealt manifestly with developmental psychology or values, but still with no allusion to cognitive-developmental theories. The drought in professional journals was broken by Edleson,¹ in the Spring of 1978. Further, Maier² and Rosen,³ both social workers, have written clinically oriented books on the subject. In a recent volume a rare comment by a social worker on Piaget is made by Wasserman in his article on ego psychology. He states, "The teachings and findings of Piaget have enriched our understanding of the role of the intellect in ego development... This complementarity -- instead of diminishing ego psychology or other theories -- has added to each."⁴

¹Jeffrey L. Edleson, "A Piagetian Approach to Social Work Practice with Children and Adolescents," Clinical Social Work Journal 6 (Spring 1978): 3-12.

²Henry W. Maier, Three Theories of Child Development 3rd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1978).

³Hugh Rosen, Pathway to Piaget: A Guide for Clinicians, Educators, and Developmentalists (Cherry Hill: New Jersey: Post-graduate International, 1977).

⁴Sidney Wasserman, "Ego Psychology," in Social Work Treatment: Interlocking Theoretical Perspectives, ed. F. J. Turner (New York: The Free Press, 1974) p. 50.

Wasserman's comments reflect the spirit of Piaget's own remarks, when upon addressing the American Society of Psychoanalysis in full session during the early 1970's he urged that a general psychology be formed from a synthesis of psychoanalysis and genetic epistemology.

The Piaget-Kohlberg Model

A cognitive-structural approach to the development of sociomoral knowledge is highly congenial to social work practice, while at the same time imparting an innovative perspective to be coordinated with more traditional viewpoints. It is generally viewed as compatible with ego psychology as advanced by Hartman, Erikson, and White.¹ It also lends itself well to integration within the ecosystems framework that has been forged out by contemporary theorists of social work practice such as Germain and Meyer². Recent texts on practice, in addition to Meyer's, which utilize a systems or ecosystems orientation are those by Goldstein, Pincus and Minahan, and

¹Heinz Hartman, Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation (New York: International Universities Press, 1958); Erik H. Erikson, Identity and the Life Cycle: Selected Papers, Psychological Issues 1, 1 (New York: International Universities Press, 1959); Robert W. White, Ego and Reality in Psychoanalytic Theory, Psychological Issues 3, 3 (New York: International Universities Press, 1963).

²Carel B. Germain, "An Ecological Perspective in Casework Practice," Social Casework 6 (June 1973): 323-30; Carol H. Meyer, Social Work Practice: The Changing Landscape (New York: The Free Press, 1976, 2nd ed.).

Comptom and Galaway.¹ Especially relevant is a volume edited by McGurk² in which the contribution of ecological psychology to human development is explored, with a special section devoted to cognition focusing largely upon Piaget.

The approach under discussion is grounded in a conception of interaction from birth onward between the human organism and its environment. The interaction is seen as productive of change and growth through the simultaneous activities of assimilation and accommodation in striving toward a more differentiated and complex system of structures that enhances adaptation. By adopting a biological view of intelligence as adaptation, Piaget has avoided the Cartesian duality of mind and body. He has further eliminated a bifurcation between organism and environment for it is only out of the necessary transactions between the present structure of the organism and the given structure of the environment that development occurs. Intelligence for Piaget is action. It may be the practical intelligence of the infant's behavior during the sensorimotor

¹Howard Goldstein, Social Work Practice: A Unitary Approach (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1973); Allen Pincus and Anne Minahan, Social Work Practice: Model and Method (Itasca, Illinois: F. E. Peacock, 1973); Beulah R. Comptom and Burt Galaway, Social Work Processes (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1975).

²Harry McGurk, ed. Ecological Factors in Human Development (New York: North-Holland, 1977).

period or the interiorized action of an operation that appears several years later. In either case, cognitive structuration takes place through the individual interacting within the environment, which both transforms him and in turn is transformed by him. The assimilative and accommodative processes of adaptation assure both stability and continuity on the one hand, as well as change and growth on the other. Each new scheme or structure has an intrinsic motivation to function and, hence, seeks out "nourishment" from the environment to further its growth and competence. This is as true of the adolescent who constantly devises hypothetical ideas with his newly developed formal operations that are tested out experimentally on physical objects and verbally with his peer group, as it is with the infant's sucking and grasping schemes which stimulate him to seek out things to be sucked and grasped. Novelty in the environment leads to the invention of new structures in the advance toward greater competence and adaptation. Negative feedback from the environment, when the cognitive-structural stage produces incongruity between expectation and experience, serves as energy input facilitating a reorganization of cognitive structures. The disequilibrium that results from the new and unexpected experience is thus resolved by an equilibrating process that furthers the growth of the organism. The image that emerges from the Piagetian developmental model is one of the person as an agent actively constructing knowledge and achieving competence as he interacts with the structure

of the environment. Overton and Reese, in a discussion on human ecology, comment on Piaget's holistic structuralism thusly, "...We find that it is...Piaget's theory which reflects the clearest articulation of the interdependent systems conception of the man and environment system...."¹

The sociomoral developmental perspective of Kohlberg offers a model for change in a clear direction involving a progressive sequence of stages and strategies for facilitating passage through those stages. It provides the conceptual tools to implement with a reasonable degree of specificity the social work maxim, "Start where the client is." Perhaps a slightly modified version might be, "Discover where the client is and then proceed from a point that is only moderately beyond his basic stage orientation." The concept of equilibration and the six moral stage structures offer the helper a dynamic change principle and a theoretical outlook for understanding any client's way of organizing his interpersonal and social knowledge. Regardless of whether a social work practitioner is administering a service with a multi-problem family through a social welfare organization, conducting marital counseling in a family agency, engaged in psychotherapy in a community mental health center, or working with prisoners in a correctional institution, the constructive-developmental paradigm offers him

¹Willis F. Overton and Hayne W. Reese, "General Models for Man-Environment Relations" in Ecological Factors in Human Development, ed. H. McGurk (New York: North Holland, 1977), p. 17.

a powerful conceptual foundation.

The model is concerned with thought and action predicated upon a view of rights, responsibilities, and values, yet respecting at all times the autonomy of the individual. The socio-environmental context is never ignored even though the organism's auto-regulative activities are considered of central importance. Full recognition of the need for appropriate resources in the environment to stimulate growth is present and the debilitating force of environmental deprivation is acknowledged. The construction of knowledge in the physical, social, and moral realms remains an activity, however, which springs from within the individual. In an illuminating and integrative commentary, Furth has asserted:

Philosophers, social workers, psychiatrists, educators, social scientists, all have an incredibly limited conception of what knowledge is and how it functions...When I consider these dehydrated conceptions I see in Piaget a theory of knowledge and intelligence that gives life and blood to it and restores it to its biological source which is no doubt the source also of everything else such as the id, affect, motivation, the preconscious or any other deep structures. This source is the living person who coordinates all the various experiences by doing or thinking. Intelligence is as deep and as much in the bones of a person as any affect or motivation.¹

In accord with the social work ethos, the Piaget-Kohlberg model in the ethical dimension calls for mutual cooperation,

¹Hans Furth, "Intellectual Health in School: What can Piaget's theory contribute?" in Piagetian Theory and Its Implications for the Helping Professions, ed. F. J. Magary et. al., Proceedings Sixth Interdisciplinary Conference, University of Southern California, 1977, p. 11.

participatory democracy, and a respect for persons. Autonomy is valued, reciprocity essential, and manipulation anathema. As the individual undergoes stage progression, retributive justice yields to distributive justice.

Application to Fields of Social Work

Essentially moral dilemmas are situations involving either competing claims between individuals or between individual rights and the general welfare. As Kohlberg, Scharf, and Hickey state:

At each successive stage there is an increased capacity to reason through moral conflicts in a rational, equitable, and consistent manner. The conception of moral stages defines the underlying logical structure of the individual's moral philosophy: definition of right, responsibility, and law are derived from the logic implied by the moral stage.¹

Members of the social work profession are concerned with issues of rights, ethics, values, justice, and human welfare. Social workers, perhaps more than any other helping professionals, work with populations of people who have been deprived of justice in their environment and of the role-taking opportunities which stimulate moral stage development. Our concern spans social-systems levels from the interpersonal and familial to the scale of government where economic justice and humane social legislation are sought. At the practice level we are constantly

¹Lawrence Kohlberg, J. Peter Scharf, and Joseph Hickey, "The Justice Structure of the Prison: A Theory and Intervention," The Prison Journal, (Autumn-Winter 1972): 3-14.

invoking our clients' capacity for choice in sociomoral domains. It may be with an individual facing a sexual dilemma, a spouse contemplating divorce, or a juvenile delinquent on probation. Whether the focus is upon an interpersonal relationship, as in marital counseling, or helping an individual in trouble with a social organization, such as a prisoner facing the court system, there are always issues of conflicting rights and responsibilities to be taken into account. A small social system, as in a family, experiences many problems because of the implicit rules and principles which underpin its sociomoral conceptions of rights and responsibilities. Of course, since members of the family are likely to be at differing levels of moral development this in itself could become a source of conflict, as well as growth. Social workers deliver services to people in a highly diversified range of settings where conflicts of rights between individuals or between an individual and an organization are often prominent. These include such settings as prisons, general hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, schools, residential treatment centers, child welfare agencies, camps, transitional homes, boarding homes, mental health clinics and others. The interventive methods discussed in the preceding chapter may be adapted to clients and organizational structures ranging across these many settings. In particular, the "justice as treatment" concept of Kohlberg and his colleagues need not be confined to prisons or reformatories.

It has already been applied with some success to schools.¹ Special target populations that might profit from an application of this approach include juvenile delinquents and police officers. A group frequently overlooked until recently are the retardates in the community, whose full developmental potential we have hardly begun to invest in. One of the most prevalent potentialities for it in a modified version is in work with families, which has the added value of introducing a preventive, as well as rehabilitative component. One might even experiment with groups of families which would enrich the interaction and multiplicity of stage levels. Cojoining families in this fashion may be contraindicated in traditional family therapy, but in a "justice as treatment" program this would not necessarily be so. The lives of all members and, indeed, the neighborhood at large, might well be enhanced as individuals increase in their moral maturity in areas of fairness and reciprocity.

Applying Role-Taking To Practice

Considerable attention has been devoted to egocentrism and role-taking in a preceding chapter of this dissertation. It has been shown that role-taking is a necessary, but not sufficient ontogenetic development for mature sociomoral knowledge. The complexity of this development has been emphasized and the inverse relationship between egocentrism and

¹Elsa R. Wasserman, "Implementing Kohlberg's 'Just Community Concept' in an Alternate High School" in Readings in Moral Education, ed. P. Scharf (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1978): 164-72.

role-taking cited. Task complexity has been identified as a significant variable which may lead to reverting to an earlier phase of egocentrism, whereas task simplicity may tap higher levels of role-taking. Be that as it may, egocentrism will most assuredly impede the development of communication and social skills. A lack of competence in these areas will become especially dysfunctional if the growing child falls markedly behind his peers as they progress to increasingly high levels of perspectivism. An approach that takes into account a diagnosis of "role-taking deficiency" could lead to effective forms of intervention which might otherwise be overlooked. From the preventive side, the cognitive-developmental viewpoint would alert the practitioner to certain at-risk populations, such as children from lower socioeconomic levels, where it is frequently found that role-taking opportunities are minimal.

Adults do not share uniformly high levels of perspectivism and many of them will be found to be significantly behind their peers in this capacity. Even adults who have advanced considerably in the acquisition of mature levels of perspectivism may revert to egocentrism on a situational basis, such as under duress or in particularly affect laden relationships. Knowledge of this phenomenon should in itself be useful to the social work practitioner, whose focus so frequently is the interpersonal relationships of clients. Even when this aspect of a client is not receiving immediate attention, the very fact

of being alone during an interview with a client, constitutes an interpersonal experience which will bring into play varying degrees of egocentrism and perspectivism. The social worker aware of role-taking as a cognitive skill will use the knowledge to assess the client's level of competence and arrive at some formulation about how a possible deficiency may be creating interpersonal and social problems. Upon identifying a deficit in this area the worker will not only be influenced accordingly in her own verbalizations to the client, but will seek out strategies designed to assist the client in becoming more sensitized to other people's perspectives. Social workers conducting marital counseling and family therapy will, of course, have an opportunity to observe the problems of low role-taking skills at the moment they are occurring. In addition to helping a client develop increasing role-taking skills, the worker may also reeducate other members of the family so that they understand the phenomenon, make allowances for it when appropriate, and exercise the patience necessary for the developmental process to occur. For example, a mother who thinks her boisterous child is selfish for persisting in his noise making, when she complains of a headache, may be helped to soften her attitude toward him by realizing his limitations in comprehending what the pain and distress must be like for her. Working with a married couple, of course, provides exceedingly fertile grounds for an assessment of mutual perspective-taking levels and subsequent steps to enhance this ability. One obvious technique

would be to encourage each to express how he or she may be feeling and perceiving a range of events, with efforts being made to assure that the opposite spouse is attending the communication, with a view toward differentiating it from his or her own inner experience. A series of probing questions or explorations about whether the other had ever realized the spouse felt that way may be initiated. The spouse may be asked to imagine himself in the other's shoes and to then talk about how a situation might feel to the other. Following this he would then be asked to decenter, returning to his own perspective, and to comment upon the perspective he had just constructed in the imaginary position. Group therapy may prove to be the treatment of choice for some clients whose problems may in large measure derive from egocentrism. The multiple perspectives and confrontations that abound provide a crucible of social interaction that will induce the client to attend other people's viewpoints, as well as to render his own communications comprehensible and supported by logical argumentation. A less conventional approach might involve assigning a part in a play that has been written with the clients in mind. The script would call for each client to assume a role that would impart a perspective he seems insensitive to and might benefit from glimpsing. After playing the part he would then be asked to discuss it.

A variation of this might be to have clients rotate, assuming different characters in a script, such as parent role,

and possibly even social worker role. Discussions would then be held about how the various perspectives were experienced. In general, we tend to be more aware and, therefore, sensitive to the subtle psychological motivations influencing our own behavior, which we can readily justify with such knowledge. On the other hand, the tendency is to judge other people by their overt behavior with relatively little attempt to see things from their perspective. At the most primitive stage of egocentrism, of course, there is a total lack of awareness that the other has a point of view of his own, hence, there is no basis for even attempting to make an inference about what it might be. In the case of many adults the role-taking competence may be present, but frequently inactive, which would indicate the need for training in its use rather than the stimulation of genuine development. It is more likely, when dealing with children who lack perspectivism to a dysfunctional degree that developmental stimulation will be required. The social work practitioner who is making a first acquaintance with this sociocognitive developmental phenomenon should not be deluded into thinking that role-taking is a simple skill, which one either has or does not have. Like the interrelated components of cognition and justice, it is based upon deep structures which undergo gradual transformations into increasingly more complex hierarchies.

Communicating Across Diverse Stages

Much of social work practice, of course, takes place through verbal communication. Yet the meaning to the listener of what is spoken depends greatly upon his level of cognitive-structural development. Specifically, in the realm of sociomoral knowledge, if a social worker discusses a dilemma with a client (child, adolescent, or adult) at several stages beyond where the client is, then the listener will either not comprehend at all, or will assimilate what he hears to his own stage, hence reducing and distorting the meaning. Clearly, this can lead to a failure in the practitioner's efforts. A helper who is not familiar with the stages of cognitive and moral development will neither possess the conceptual framework to understand what is taking place, nor will he grasp what must be done to achieve effective communication. As we have seen previously, one cannot assume from age alone where a child or adult is in his stage development. Indeed, research indicates that approximately only 50 percent of adults reach the formal operational level of cognitive development and only 5 percent ever reach the highest or sixth stage in moral development. Therefore, 95 percent of children and adults will be found somewhere along the continuum of sociomoral stages from one to five. Yet the implications for the individual's total existence of being at one stage or another are enormous and far-reaching. In broadening the significance of Kohlberg's work further than he, himself, intended, Kegan has asserted:

"Beyond an attention to issues of fairness, competing claims, moral conflict and choice, these stages...look to the broader range of socio-personal experience which it is the human fate to construe and thereby create."¹

A Philosophical Marriage

I would like to advance for serious consideration the position that Kohlberg's sociomoral system based on Piaget's constructivist psychology is thoroughly compatible with contemporary social work practice and philosophy. Its contribution, which I am urging that the profession integrate with preexisting knowledge and practice, is its scientifically validated theoretical orientation about human-being in the realm of social perspectivism, morality as justice, and personal autonomy.

As social workers we frequently talk about helping clients achieve autonomy in making their own choices. However, autonomy does not operate in a vacuum and some choices are better than others. It is not for the social work practitioner to tell the client what choices to make, but clients can be helped to acquire the governing principles higher along the sociomoral cognitive-developmental scale which will enable them to make more adequate choices. Kohlberg has stressed throughout his work that the level of moral development is reflected

¹Robert Kegan, "Ego and Truth: Personality and the Piaget Paradigm" (Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1977), p. 80.

primarily in the mode of reasoning utilized in resolving dilemmas and not in the specific content of that choice. In this spirit, he and his colleagues have discovered and validated means for advancing modes of moral reasoning which do not rely upon indoctrination into any particular ideology or rigid moral position based on content of choice. Although there always exists a measure of choice for each individual, the range and type of choice is limited by development. In the realm of self-propelled transportation, humans can choose to crawl, walk, leap, jog, or run; but they are not free to fly. Yet it is conceivable that in the future humans may choose to fly should structures that enable flight evolve for the species. On a less spectacular scale, the infant has not yet developed the capability for running and, hence, may not choose to do so without first passing through a stage in which he has learned to walk. In this same fashion, the higher one's sociomoral stage of development, the more adequate is his range of choice within the social and interpersonal environment.

Below is a set of central characteristics which identify aspects of the theory and interventive methods discussed in Chapter Eight. Some or all of them apply to each of the intervention programs. All of them are congenial to a philosophy of social work practice. Furthermore, they all apply to Kohlberg's "treatment as justice" program, which is predicated upon a paradigm that:

1. Acknowledges the individual's potential for growth.
2. Aims toward the enhancement of psychosocial functioning.
3. Is based upon a belief in the philosophical superiority and practical desirability of democracy.
4. Takes into account a systems perspective.
5. Views the structure of the environment as instrumental in affecting human welfare.
6. Utilizes principles of community organization.
7. Addresses the reality of the client in the here and now.
8. Is not based upon the medical model and, thereby, minimizes an orientation based upon pathology.
9. Adopts a belief in the efficacy of rational problem solving activity, without diminishing the profundity of deep structures in the psyche.
10. Is concerned with the individual's relationships and wider social context.
11. Refrains from indoctrination and imposition of ideology, while at the same time recognizing the impossibility of being value-neutral.
12. Respects and promotes the individual's self-regulating autonomy.
13. Is humanistic in its methods and goals.
14. Is scientific in its theory building.
15. Seeks social justice.

These characteristics thread their way throughout the entire tapestry of the present dissertation. They are juxtaposed in this section to convey a sense of the integrated design which they create when placed together, as well as to suggest their

striking resemblance to the profession's values and practice approaches.

In 1973 Germain introduced the concept of ecology to casework practice. A linkage of ecology to systems theory, termed ecosystems, has swiftly been gaining ground in many quarters as a preferred and viable framework for viewing social work practice. Germain states:

Ecology is the science concerned with the adaptive fit of organisms and their environment and with the means by which they achieve a dynamic equilibrium and mutuality. It seems to furnish an appropriate metaphor for a helping profession concerned with the relationship between human beings and their interpersonal and organizational environments, with helping to modify or to enhance the quality of transactions between people and their environments that support human well-being.¹

The fundamental similarity between an ecosystems perspective and the Piaget-Kohlberg model is strikingly highlighted when considering the above formulation by Germain in relation to the material under discussion in the present work. Additional characteristics of the ecosystems orientation, as found in Meyer's² exposition, are as follows: 1.) active engagement of the client in pursuing the helping process, 2.) a deemphasis of digging for historical case material and of conceiving a case in terms of pathology, 3.) an emphasis upon strengths presently possessed by the client and rational thought,

¹ Germain, "An Ecological Perspective in Casework Practice," p. 326.

² Meyer, Social Work Practice.

4.) conceptualizing service largely in preventive terms rather than in a narrowly clinical fashion, 5.) designing and delivering social services by taking into account people's natural life-space and developmental tasks. Dealing with pathology or residual needs is not eliminated from the scheme of ecosystems, but it becomes only one subset of a broad diversity of approaches to services organized to reach large populations in their natural environment. None of the aforementioned is incompatible with the Piaget-Kohlberg model and in many respects each is distinctly congruent with it. Although the model which has been the theme of this dissertation, in its broadest conception, coincides with an ecosystems orientation, it becomes differentiated within that classification by its concentration upon moral development and the derivative sociopersonal implications.

Limitations of the Piaget-Kohlberg Model

The era of exclusive adulation of Piaget's cognitive developmental psychology has passed, despite the vitality of its impact upon several major disciplines.¹ While the Geneva School and its followers around the world continue to pursue their research vigorously, neo-Piagetian and alternative epistemological models are emerging. Presentation of these may be found in the current work of Siegall and Brainerd and that of

¹Frank B. Murray, ed. The Impact of Piagetian Theory on Education, Philosophy, Psychiatry, and Psychology (Baltimore: University Park Press, 1979).

Keats, Collis, and Halford.¹ A technical review of the criticisms contained in these books, however, would take us far afield from the major concern of the present work. A critique of Kohlberg's moral developmental psychology may be found in Chapter Six of this dissertation. Comments in the present section, however, will focus on some reservations about the sociomoral developmental model from the standpoint of the social work practitioner.

There are some potential abuses in Kohlberg's theory which are neither integral nor necessary, but which one should be cautioned against, nevertheless. First, there is the danger of resorting to the utilization of stages as a means of ascribing pejorative labels. Kohlberg,² himself, strongly urges that this be avoided. One's conception of justice, as governed by stage development is not to be construed as psychodynamic motivation. The sociomoral model is not, in itself, a personality theory. The stage concept does not make a comment about the type of individual the person is. A Stage 2 person, for example, should not automatically be viewed as having

¹Linda S. Siegal and Charles J. Brainerd, eds. Alternatives to Piaget (New York: Academic Press, 1978); J. A. Keats, K. F. Collis, and G. S. Halford, eds. Cognitive Development: Research Based on a Neo-Piagetian Approach (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1978).

²Lawrence Kohlberg et al. "Assessing Moral Stages: A Manual" Cambridge: Center for Moral Education, Harvard University, 1978. (mimeographed).

a narcissistic and selfish personality. What his stage tells us is the mode of reasoning through which he comprehends the nature of justice at his particular developmental level. It is necessary to stress this point precisely because so many abuses have been known to occur.

A second and related danger is that an excessive preoccupation with the internal development of the individual, overlooking the interactive and environmental components of the model, could lead to falling back into the old trap of "blaming the victim." It is important to be vigilant against statically identifying the person in trouble as being maladaptive and to keep in mind that in an adaptive model we are concerned with the relative fit between organism and environment. For example, we may find that a precocious youngster who is at the formal operational period cognitively and at Stage 5 morally is interacting dysfunctionally with a group of his concrete operational peers who are at Stage 3 and 4. We would not, of course, diagnose such a youth as being pathological or even as possessing a deficiency, but we might seek to restructure his cultural and social milieu in such a way as to provide him with the stimulation and "nourishment" he needs. In doing we will have enhanced the optimal match between him and his environment, without identifying the cause of the problem as inhering in him. The same principle operates when working with disadvantaged populations, but because of certain biases through which such groups are

often approached, it is more difficult to realize.

A third danger derives from the possibility of an uncritical zeal for fostering moral development in an individual regardless of the sociomoral context within which he lives. It may be that at any given point in a person's life, the optimal stage development does not coincide with the maximum potential that it is possible for him to achieve. A youth whose dominant social milieu is the neighborhood gang operating at a preconventional level, with at best some Stage 3 functioning reserved for members only, could be physically endangered if he were to progress to a full use of Stages 3 and 4. He would then be at a conventional level with a societal perspective that would be entirely discordant with his peers, most of whom would be singularly unimpressed with his new found achievement. Viewing the situation through an ecosystems lens, it becomes vividly apparent that the moral stage which is most adaptive cannot be determined on purely philosophical and psychological grounds, as Kohlberg has attempted to do. The process of ascertaining the most adaptive moral stage for an individual at any given time must take into consideration his existential life-space. This analysis need not lead to the assumption of a position of futility in such cases as the above, but instead it points to the necessity of directing change efforts toward an ever-widening circumference encompassing the gang, the neighborhood, and ultimately social legislation. The social work profession should not only implement the moral tone of the community and

nation, but should also play a leadership role in shaping it.

Lastly, attention should be drawn to the distinction between competence and performance. A blurring of the distinction can lead to an inaccurate assessment of the individual's developmental stage and consequently down barren interventive paths. The achievement of competence in a constructivist psychology signifies that the appropriate structures and undergirding cognitive system have been arrived at through ontogenetic development. This, of course, presupposes that genuine competence has been exhibited and not merely surface behaviors which fail to meet the requirements of stage criteria. One must be alert to the possibility, however, that the absence of performance does not necessarily mean that the individual lacks competence and the underlying structural network. The organism may possess the necessary structural development for competence in a particular area, but yet not perform at the corresponding stage for reasons other than its absence. Cross-cultural research is rife with this particular problem due to language differences, as well as lack of familiarity with task materials and the strangeness of the researcher. These and other factors can readily restrain the performance of an individual even though he may possess the competence which the task demands.

The fact that Kohlberg's work does not constitute a theory of personality is not a weakness from his viewpoint, since he never set out to formulate one. However, this does leave the helping person unsatisfied, as the helper is forever

seeking a comprehensive personality theory. There are two directions that can be taken to resolve the dilemma. One is to reformulate the Piaget-Kohlberg model in such a way as to encompass issues and aspects that are central to personality theorizing. We have already seen an effort in that direction made by Kegan. I anticipate that the future holds promise for further attempts of this sort. The other is to attempt an integration of the sociomoral model with preexisting theories that would complement it. To a limited extent Haan¹ has attempted this with Freud and Maier² with Erikson. As indicated previously, Piaget, himself, has suggested that his genetic epistemology, upon which Kohlberg's work is founded, may be fruitfully articulated with psychoanalytic theory. Psychoanalysis has resisted strenuously many attempts to wrest it from its position as the queen of personality theories. Regardless of one's personal assessment of it, the fact remains that it embodies the most comprehensive theory of normal personality development and psychopathology available. Its durability over the years suggests a certain adaptiveness of its own. It was borne out of much clinical wisdom which finally has been subject to increased scientific testing, the results of which have been summarized at length by Fisher and

¹Norma Haan, Coping and Defending (New York: Academic Press, 1977).

²Henry W. Maier, Three Theories of Child Development (New York: Harper & Row, 1978, 3rd ed.).

Greenberg.¹ As the myths of psychoanalysis are stripped away and the viable portions retained, the stage for integration of the Piaget-Kohlberg model with it becomes set.

The stages in Kohlberg's work are unvarying in their universal sequence. Knowing the dominant stage of a person does tell us something important about him, but it does not individualize him for us within that stage. For example, Jung has devised a typology which is divided into two attitudes, introversion and extroversion, and four functional modes, which are thinking, feeling, intuiting, and sensing. These are combined in various ways to provide a set of psychological types. Relating this to Kohlberg's stages, it is conceivable that an individual at any given stage may still be further understood as being one or another type of personality from a Jungian standpoint. With a frame of reference of this kind, it is not difficult to see how much information is omitted for the professional seeking a comprehensive theory of personality. The missing information may, indeed, supply a powerful lever for understanding human behavior, as illustrated by the following speculation. The reader may recall from Chapter Five that a study of students at Berkeley during the time of the protest movement revealed that while an impressive majority of Stage 6

¹Seymour Fisher and Roger P. Greenberg, The Scientific Credibility of Freud's Theories and Therapy (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

students did participate, an unaccounted for minority of them did not. Is it not possible that one's psychological type would influence behavioral choice once the moral judgment has been made? For example, perhaps Stage 6 students who were extroverted were much more likely to engage in the protest because the activity involved was more congruent with their personality make-up. Introverts, on the other hand, may have been less likely to actively protest on the front steps of the school's administrative building because this type of behavior may have run counter to their introverted personalities. To carry this line of speculation one step further, an introverted Stage 6 student with a dominant thinking mode of functioning (introverted-rational psychological type) may have refrained from overtly protesting publicly in a group, but he may also have written an article for the school newspaper or even authored a book in which full expression was given to his Stage 6 moral vision. In other words, the avoidance of engaging in the more obvious Stage 6 behavior, such as civil disobedience, yet still pursuing activity consistent with moral judgment at that stage may be explained by invoking a personality theory, which is not supplied by the sociomoral model itself. As a caveat, one should not minimize the potential influence of a book written with morally principled eloquence, as witness the work of Harrington¹ which drove

¹Michael Harrington, The Other America (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962).

home the reality of the poor amongst us and helped trigger the War on Poverty.

The question of the role of affect in cognitive-structural psychology is a recurrent one that disturbs many who are more accustomed to viewing human development through a predominantly affective prism. Although Piaget held that affect is indissociable from cognition, he apparently was not particularly interested in elaborating his views upon it. Cowan¹ reports that the only extensive treatment given by Piaget to affect was in a lecture course at the Sorbonne in 1954. In logical terms it may be said that there exists a relationship of reciprocal implication, in which the presence of cognition implies emotion and the presence of emotion implies cognition. The affect involved in performing a highly intellectual feat may be no more than that of the minimal interest it takes to persist in the task. Emotion is never experienced in a totally unstructured manner, but is interpreted through a cognitive structure which imparts meaning to it. The role of affect can be seen as motivational when acting upon the environment produces an outcome other than what had been expected. The misexpectation produces perplexity and arouses curiosity which energizes the organism to search for more adaptive behaviors.

¹Philip A. Cowan, Piaget with Feeling: Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Dimensions (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1978).

Kohlberg seems to be in fundamental agreement with Piaget on the role of affect, which is not at all surprising. We have observed how Kegan has tried to go one step beyond this in his attempt to reformulate the Piaget Paradigm into a psychodynamic theory. Kegan has taken nourishment from Perry, whose view on the emotion of courage and its role in achieving developmental progress is too valuable to bypass. Perry suggests:

Since our developmental scheme concerns precisely a person's "moral" development, in the sense of his assumptions about values and responsibility, these implications require direct confrontation. For example, since each step in the development presents a challenge to a person's previous assumptions and requires that he redefine and extend his responsibilities in the midst of increased complexity and uncertainty, his growth does indeed involve his courage. In short, the development resembles what used to be called an adventure of the spirit.¹

Working within a cognitive-structural tradition, Perry is commenting upon his own developmental study of Harvard undergraduates and their evolving relationship to the acquisition of knowledge itself. In a closing passage, he remarks, "At each step the student senses his option of taking up new responsibilities or of pulling out in retreat or alientation."² In his description of the developmental process, Perry seems to have captured the excitement inherent in the dialectic between fear and courage, which many find missing in the work

¹William G. Perry Jr., Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968), p. 44.

²Ibid., p. 215.

of Piaget and Kohlberg. It becomes the responsibility of the helping person to maintain respect and sensitivity toward what the client is experiencing as he struggles at the crossroads of stage transition.

Professional Development and Social Work Education

To be effective it is necessary that the social work practitioner achieve a high level of perspectivism. Certainly of equal importance is his or her sociomoral development in the cognitive-structuralist sense that has been the subject of this dissertation. The social worker at Stage 3, who fears disapproval of his supervisor, will be less likely to take appropriate risks in his practice unless he knows in advance that they will be met with approval. At Stage 4, the worker in a bureaucracy will be disinclined to effect change in those administrative policies that are detrimental to the welfare of his clients. At Stage 5, the worker will be unlikely to take to the streets in protest to effect social change, even when the issue is so emergent that waiting for the democratic process to go at its usual pace will violate justice. I will avoid suggesting what the hazards might be of a practitioner at Stages 1 or 2. In face-to-face contact with clients the social worker who is not more advanced in his own developmental level of sociomoral knowledge will not only fail to understand the client, but will also be incapable of discerning the direction toward which the client must develop. I believe that content from the field of sociocognitive moral

development should be incorporated into the social work curriculum because it constitutes a legitimate and relevant area of study from contemporary behavioral science. Beyond this, however, I would also recommend that the curricula of the various schools should be designed to stimulate development in the students' own form of sociomoral reasoning. Levy, in his unique work on social work ethics seems to think that students would welcome something along these lines. Observe his remarks on the subject:

Learning that takes place in response to the quest for professional development--the quest for ethical performance and for the mastery of the principles that can be called on to achieve it--is more durable. It does not depend on the particular setting and the persons who are overseeing it.

The student's view of success is not a high grade or an authoritative pat on his back but objective evidence of value-based and ethical practice, with full awareness of what made it so and with full confidence that he can replicate the process and has the will to do it.¹

Levy, of course, is not specifically referring here to the cognitive-structuralist orientation to sociomoral knowledge. However, that orientation does provide a theoretical and empirical foundation for achieving the goal of which he speaks. Siporin² has characterized social work as a normative

¹Charles S. Levy, Social Work Ethics (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1976), p. 236.

²Max Siporin, Introduction to Social Work Practice (New York: Macmillan Press Co., 1975).

profession. We are concerned not only with what "is" but with what "ought" to be. In order to sight the highest vision of that ought, we must, ourselves, move closer and closer toward its attainment.

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