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Catholic Men's and Women's Discriminations
Between Morality and Convention

by

Jean M. Bradt

A thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate
School of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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VITA

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INTRODUCTION

During the past two decades, there has been a great increase in interest in moral development among psychological and educational researchers. One of the most exciting issues that has arisen in the area of moral development is that of whether people can distinguish moral issues from conventional issues. That is, can most individuals tell the difference between acts that are wrong because of their intrinsic features and acts that are wrong because of societal rules against them?

In this study, 102 Catholic university students were administered a questionnaire listing 16 acts considered to be seriously wrong by the Catholic Church. The questionnaire tested whether the students considered each act to be a moral issue or a nonmoral issue by asking them to rate the acts on four different scales. Each of the four scales tested one of Turiel's (1983) criteria for distinguishing between moral and nonmoral issues. The first scale tested the Seriousness criterion with a four-point scale from "very seriously wrong" to "not wrong at all"; moral issues should be considered to be more seriously wrong than nonmoral issues.

The second scale tested Intrinsicity; morally wrong acts should be seen as seriously wrong because they are considered to cause harm or injustice in themselves, while nonmoral acts should be considered not to

be wrong. Or nonmoral acts should be seen as fairly wrong, but not because they are seen to have intrinsically negative consequences. This was tested by having the subjects choose a justification for why each act was wrong from a list containing both intrinsic and extrinsic justifications. The third scale measured Unalterability with a two-point scale (unalterable or alterable); moral issues should be unalterable and nonmoral issues should be alterable. The fourth scale tested Universality with a two-point scale (universal or not universal); moral rules should hold for all human beings and nonmoral rules should vary from culture to culture or from religion to religion.

It was predicted that eight of the acts, designated as "wrong", would be given more moral ratings on all four of the scales than the eight acts designated as "nonwrong". It was also hypothesized that, for the eight sexual acts (both the moral and the conventional ones), women would give more serious ratings, but would give fewer moral justifications (the Intrinsicity scale). However no sex difference was predicted for the nonsexual acts. It was hoped that this study would show that the majority of Catholic undergraduates clearly see the distinction between morality and convention.

CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Little research has been conducted in the area of discrimination between morality and convention because it is such a new field. Most of this research, however, suggests that individuals of many different ages agree that certain acts are morally wrong, certain acts are conventionally wrong and certain acts are not wrong at all. Moreover, most people have been shown to use the criteria described by Turiel (1983) to make these distinctions.

Previous Research

Turiel (1983) and Nucci and Junker (1982) have attempted to demonstrate that, with respect to determining what is morally (universally and unalterably) right and what is morally wrong, there is virtual unanimity among judges. They have found that subjects in their studies agree on what acts are morally wrong, such as killing, hitting and hurting, and stealing. On the other hand, disagreements usually arise in matters of social conventions specific to religious and other cultural communities. For instance, attending Mass and avoiding birth control are rules specific to Catholics and are understood as being arbitrary (not applicable to all people at all times) and therefore conventional even by Catholics themselves.

Elliott Turiel (1983) has outlined several criteria which he

believes are used by children and adults alike when they are distinguishing between the two domains. Here four of these criteria will be described: intrinsicity, unalterability, universality, and seriousness. Also, examples will be given of the studies that demonstrate that people use these four criteria.

Intrinsicity

The first criterion shown to be used by many subjects to distinguish between morality and convention has been arbitrarily designated "intrinsicity" in this study, although Turiel has not given it a name. Individuals often consider moral acts to be wrong because they believe that they intrinsically (by their very nature) harm another person or are unfair. For instance, hitting another person, by its very nature, causes harm, and taking others' possessions against their will or without their knowledge is intrinsically unfair to them. On the other hand, conventional acts are not seen to be wrong because they cause harm or are unfair. Most people, when discussing the wrongness of conventions, merely mention that a rule has been broken, an authority has been disobeyed, or simply that they disapprove. For instance, children respond to boys kissing boys simply with loud laughter, signalling their disapproval. None of the common responses to conventional acts seems to depend on a characteristic of the acts themselves. That is, no one mentions why a convention breaks a rule, why the authority made the rule, or why he or she disapproves of the act. Emotional statements such as "I disapprove of it because it's disgusting" are sometimes heard, but few people can explain why they are disgusted by this act as opposed to

some other act. Therefore their disgust may not stem from intrinsic features of the act.

The studies listed below have shown that children's and adults' responses to events considered morally wrong do indeed focus on features intrinsic to the acts, primarily the criteria of harm and unfairness mentioned earlier, while responses to events considered conventionally wrong focus on aspects of the social order such as the rules involved and the disgust incurred in onlookers, not on features intrinsic to the acts.

That the intrinsicity criterion is used could be said to follow logically from the fact that children do experience direct and unpleasant consequences as a result of many moral transgressions. For instance, they hurt when they are hit by others. But they seldom experience unpleasant consequences directly from conventional transgressions; they do not hurt when they or others violate the school uniform code, for example. Therefore it is quite plausible that even young children might infer from their own unpleasant experiences with hitting (intrinsic features of hitting) that hitting is wrong, and have to be told by others (an extrinsic feature) that not wearing the school uniform is wrong.

A series of studies has been conducted to determine, by observing children's responses to transgressions, whether the above hypothesis is true, that is, whether children's responses to moral breaches have an intrinsic focus while their responses to conventional transgressions have an extrinsic focus. Nucci and Turiel (1978) seated themselves in

the rear of classrooms and unobtrusively tallied the responses of preschool children to moral and to conventional (applicable to that school or classroom only) rule-violations. Generally, the children did not respond at all to breaches of school rules, although the teachers usually did. But they usually responded to actions that hurt them, that is actions hypothesized to violate moral rules. Their responses to these moral transgressions did, indeed, focus on their intrinsic features. They would hit the hitter back, or point out the intrinsic consequences of the act, either by expressing their negative emotions or by stating that their friend had been hurt.

Much and Shweder (1978) also recorded the reactions of preschoolers to rule-breaches. These children did occasionally respond to social transgressions, such as the presence of boys in a room where girls were undressing. But they merely pointed out the transgressions and the rules prohibiting them. When they responded to moral transgressions they pointed out the breaches and their intrinsic consequences, ignoring the authority's possible censure.

Turiel and Nucci (1982a) observed children on an unsupervised playground. Whenever the possibility arose that some kind of rule had been broken, they would call one of the children who had been involved in the event over to talk with him or her alone. They first asked if anyone had done anything wrong. If the child said "yes", they then asked for a description of the wrong act. Then they asked why the act had been wrong. Again, the children responded to the intrinsic features of the moral breaches. They usually mentioned the unfairness of the

moral breaches or the fact that someone was hurt. Often they mentioned that someone other than themselves had been hurt or was the object of an unfair act; they were not simply thinking of their own well-being. But they responded to the conventional breaches only by mentioning the rules against them, or by saying that they did not know why they were wrong.

Nucci, Turiel and Gawrich (1981), using the same methods as in the above study, found that elementary school children also tended to judge moral acts using intrinsic criteria (justice, harm, etc.) and to judge social acts according to the rules that governed them. In fact, some children responded to moral transgressions by requesting that the transgressor consider how it would feel to be the victim of the transgression.

A study was performed by Nucci (1984) where he asked Amish adolescents why they considered various acts to be wrong. He tape-recorded the reasons they gave and later classified them according to whether or not they contained any mention of intrinsically negative consequences to others. He found that the moral breaches, again, received justifications mentioning intrinsically negative consequences to others, while the nonmoral transgressions were given justifications mentioning extrinsic factors such as disapproval by authorities who had created the rule.

In summary, acts which intrinsically harm or cause injustice have been hypothesized to belong in the moral domain because children and adolescents respond to these acts by mentioning features involving intrinsic harm or injustice. Also, acts which only violate rules set by parental or school authorities are said to belong in the conventional

domain because children, if they respond to these acts at all, respond only by pointing out extrinsic consequences such as their own or the authority's disapproval. Therefore intrinsicity of an act is considered by Turiel and other researchers to be a criterion for determining whether it is moral or conventional. However, this conclusion requires inferring that because children or adolescents mention intrinsic consequences when saying why moral breaches are wrong they believe that the intrinsic consequences are what makes the breaches wrong. Perhaps there is some other common factor besides intrinsicity that joins the moral justifications and the nonmoral justifications together, for instance, that the moral justifications were the ones they heard from the religious leaders and the nonmoral justifications were the ones they heard from their parents or peers. One of the reasons for conducting the present study was to clarify this issue by specifically presenting possible justifications obtained from all three of these sources for the subjects to choose between, some of which stated intrinsic consequences and some of which did not.

Unalterability

Most people consider conventional standards to be alterable while moral prescriptions are viewed as unchangeable. Children have been observed in order to ascertain whether they consider moral or conventional rules, or both, to be alterable. Davidson, Turiel and Black (1983) presented 6-, 8- and 10-year-olds with two stories hypothesized to depict transgressions which belong in the moral domain because they are intrinsically harmful or unfair, and two stories hypothesized to

depict conventional transgressions because they do not hurt others but are nevertheless prohibited by authorities. Children of all the ages studied judged changes in the rules prohibiting the conventional breaches to be permissible more often than they said that changes in the rules prohibiting the moral breaches were permissible.

Several researchers have administered brief interviews to school children immediately after they witnessed various transgressions (Nucci & Turiel, 1978; Nucci & Nucci, 1982). The children were asked whether the act just witnessed was wrong; almost invariably they responded that it was. They were then asked if it would still be wrong if there had not been a rule in their school forbidding the act, that is, if the rule forbidding the act was alterable. Over 80% of all the children said that the moral rules would still be wrong, but that the conventions would not be. That is, they considered the rules forbidding conventional transgressions, such as making too much noise in the classroom, to be alterable and the rules against moral transgressions, such as hitting classmates, to be unalterable.

Weston and Turiel (1980) studied children's evaluations of school rules. Only 7.5% of the children believed it permissible for a school to allow children to hit other children, yet 67.5% said that it would be permissible for a school to permit children to remove their clothes on the playground.

This evidence suggests that rule-alterability, like intrinsicity, is very likely to be a criterion used by most children to place acts in the conventional domain. On the same token, rule-unalterability

is usually a criterion for placing acts in the moral domain. Unfortunately, most of the studies concerning this criterion have used only children as their subjects. At this time, there is only one study (Nucci & Junker, 1982) that shows that adults also use this criterion. This study will be described in the last section of this chapter.

Universality

Moral transgressions are seen as wrong regardless of the presence of governing rules while conventional acts are viewed as culturally relative, that is, wrong only if they violate rules of the member's religion or other culture. This is because moral rules are seen to apply to all human beings, whereas conventions are considered applicable only to the members of a specific religion or other culture, or to persons who work under the specific authority who made the convention.

Weston and Turiel (1980) asked a second question of the children, after requesting evaluations of the alterability of school rules. They described an imaginary school where each of the wrong acts they had been discussing was not forbidden by the teachers and principal. They asked if a child in that school would be worthy of reprimand if he or she performed each of the acts. That is, they tried to discern which rules the children considered to be universal, applicable in the absence of a prohibition by the authorities, and which rules they considered to be relative, applicable only because of the authority's ruling. Only 45% stated that it would be permissible for a child in a school that did not forbid the act to hit another child. But 75% said it would be permissible for a child in the liberal school to disrobe on the playground.

Thus, Weston and Turiel's results demonstrate that even elementary school children distinguish between rules in the moral domain (covering intrinsically harmful or unfair acts) and rules in the conventional domain (covering arbitrarily wrong acts) by using the criterion of universality. If the rule is universally applicable their answers tend to place it in the moral domain; if it is not universally applicable their answers usually place it in the conventional domain. However, again, only one study has as yet been performed that tests the use of the Universality criterion by adults. This study will be described in the next section.

Seriousness

In general, moral transgressions are considered to be more serious than violations of convention. Smetana (1981) described several morally-wrong and conventionally-wrong acts to preschool-age children (verbally and by the use of cartoon pictures). The children rated the morally wrong acts as significantly more serious than the nonmoral acts, and suggested more severe punishments for the moral acts as well.

Nucci (1981) found similar results when he presented three types of acts to 7- and 20-year-old subjects: moral, conventional, and prudential. (Acts in the prudential domain are said by subjects to affect only the actor and to never be wrong at all. An example would be a cook forgetting to put yeast in the bread. It would be a mistake, but not a "wrong" act.) The subjects judged moral transgressions to be more serious rule-violations than either conventional or prudential transgressions.

Davidson, Turiel, and Black (1983) asked the children they studied to prescribe punishments for the actors portrayed as having done something wrong. Children of all the ages studied prescribed significantly more severe punishments for the actors who broke moral rules than for the actors who broke conventional rules.

Thus the seriousness of rule-violations has been shown to be used by children as a criterion to determine how they will react to rules. But, again, only the study to be described in the following section has as yet demonstrated the use of this criterion by adults.

Therefore elementary school children have been shown to use all four of Turiel's criteria for distinguishing between moral and conventional breaches and adolescents have been shown to use the Intrinsicity criterion. However, only one study has attempted to determine whether these criteria are used by adults; further, it measured only three of the criteria: seriousness, unalterability and universality.

Piaget and Kohlberg: A Different View

The findings of Turiel, Nucci, and their colleagues contradict one of the most important assumptions on which Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Inventory (MJI) is based (Colby et al., 1979). Since the MJI has been the leading measure of moral development to date, it is necessary to briefly cover here Kohlberg's opposing viewpoint. Piaget's theory of moral development will be discussed first, since Kohlberg has based much of his theory on Piaget.

Implications for Piaget's Theory

Piaget's theory, developed after watching boys playing games and debating about their rules, states that children originally believe that all rules decreed by authorities (for them, just about all rules) are unchangeable, that is fixed and absolute (Piaget, 1965). But they learn eventually that rules are determined by mutual consent and are therefore changeable. He called the first, undeveloped, level the heteronomous level since these children obeyed almost all rules, whatever their origin, and considered all rules to originate from authorities external to themselves. The second, developed, level, he called the autonomous level because these children had learned that they could set their own rules. Thus, these rules had an internal origin. He called the process of learning this distinction differentiation.

But the evidence cited earlier indicates that even children as young as 3 years old can already distinguish between changeable and unchangeable rules, universal and culturally variable prohibitions. They do not always view obeying authority as the right thing to do (Weston & Turiel, 1980; Davidson, Turiel & Black, 1981). The evidence from the one study of adults (Nucci & Junker, 1982) also indicates that almost all adults continue to view some rules as unchangeable and universal while they continue to see other rules as arbitrary, perhaps as determined by mutual consent, as Piaget speculates, if not by authority.

Turiel (1983) asserts that the source of Piaget's inaccuracy was that he observed only discussions about game rules, not discussions about moral rules. Violations of game rules, of course, do not have

intrinsically harmful or unjust consequences; if the conditions under which the game is played are changed the consequences of various rule-violations are changed also. Violations of game rules are not considered to be as serious as moral rules either; they simply are not in the moral domain. Game rules are changeable and relative to the group playing the game, that is, made by mutual consent. Therefore, by the criteria of the individuals studied by Turiel and his fellow researchers, Piaget was studying only conventional development, not moral development.

Piaget held that he only needed to study game rules to learn children's attitudes toward all rules, moral and nonmoral, because children cannot differentiate between different types of rules. However, Piaget presented no evidence that children cannot distinguish moral from conventional rules. Now Turiel and his cohorts have demonstrated that Piaget's moral development research was based on a false assumption.

Young children do see rules "as external entities in the sense that they are put into effect and enforced by persons in authority" (Turiel, 1983, p. 148). But they also see that some rules can be changed by those authorities and are not binding unless they are enforced by authorities, while other rules are unchangeable and universal. Therefore Piaget was incorrect in assuming that because young children connect rules strongly to authority they consider all rules to be fixed and universal. Only the rules involving intrinsic harm or injustice are considered to be fixed and universal by children, and this opinion is also shared by most adults.

Implications for Kohlberg's Theory

Kohlberg's theory, although based on Piaget's theory, is not identical with Piaget's. Kohlberg has subscribed to Piaget's assumption that children originally do not distinguish between universal and culturally specific rules (Kohlberg, 1983), or between the moral and the nonmoral, and that they learn to distinguish these domains in time. But he does not hold to Piaget's dichotomy between heteronomy and autonomy. He sees this development as more of a continuum than did Piaget. Children between approximately 1 and 10 years of age (Colby et al., 1979) have a "morality of restraint" which Kohlberg views not only as heteronomous but as external; Level 1 children view morality as restraint or coercion originating from adults. People between 10 and 20 or 25 (a very rough approximation since the rate of moral development varies so much) are at the "conventional" level, Level 2. They are said to have a "morality of obedience"; they obey moral rules and societal laws out of respect for the authorities and society from which they originated. This is not the heteronomy that Piaget saw, since morality and convention are still not clearly differentiated, but it is not autonomy either. Finally, some late adolescents and adults have a "principled morality" (Level 3); they view morality as mutually constructed and agreed upon by themselves and others, and are therefore considered to be autonomous. Only this group clearly differentiates between morality and convention.

As seen above, Turiel objects to Kohlberg's assertion, based on Piaget's theory, that Level 1 children have an undifferentiated view of

right and wrong, that is, cannot distinguish morality from convention at all. And Turiel believes that adolescence (Kohlberg's conventional level) does bring with it a concern for obeying conventional rules, but that this phenomenon is unrelated to the development of adolescents' moral reasoning. Since, from their earliest, external level, children distinguish between morality and convention, their later reasoning about convention must be evidence of development in an entirely different domain, the domain that deals with societal coordination and efficiency.

Summary

Kohlberg (1969) believes that all matters of moral right and wrong are intrinsic, unalterable and universal issues. And he believes that there are some nonmoral issues of right and wrong which are alterable and culturally relative, such as sexual matters. However, he does not refer to these alterable nonmoral issues as matters of convention; rather, he states that many of the issues Turiel would call conventional, such as law and property, are universal issues of morality. Yet he defines the development of moral reasoning as, partly, a process of learning to distinguish between morality and convention. Hence there may be some confusion when his measure, the Moral Judgement Inventory (MJI) is used to determine subjects' moral reasoning levels.

The studies cited above show that both children and university students, most of whom have not reached the principled level of morality and many of whom never will reach it, do distinguish morality from convention. They demonstrate that Kohlberg does, indeed, need to revise the assumptions on which he has based the MJI. However, as will be seen

in the next section, the one study that has dealt with adults to date (Nucci & Junker, 1982) did not come to a definite conclusion as to whether sexual issues are *moral or conventional*. Do adults consider all sexual matters to be conventional issues, or are different sexual rules placed in either the moral, prudential (nonwrong), or conventional domains? It is important to answer this question because, if there are issues that cannot be experimentally placed in either the moral or the conventional domain, Turiel's argument that everyone intuitively knows what issues belong in each domain is weakened.

Kohlberg has maintained that only persons who have reached the principled level of moral judgment, a small minority of individuals, can clearly distinguish between morality and convention. The studies of Turiel and others give evidence to refute this assumption. Turiel has stated an opposing viewpoint also: some issues are moral ones, some are not, and knowledge of the difference is not a developmental issue. However, in the area of sexual rules, he has not determined which issues, if any, are moral and which, if any, are nonmoral. This study attempted to delineate the sexual area in this way, as well as to add to the previous evidence that the moral and the conventional domains are distinct. It was hoped that Turiel's argument would be bolstered by these results.

The Most Relevant Study

The study most relevant to this research is one that was conducted by Nucci and Junker (1982). Fifty high school sophomores who were Catholics were administered a questionnaire in a supervised group setting. Also, 50 Catholic undergraduates at the University of Illinois at Chi-

cago were given the same questionnaire in a supervised group setting. The university subjects were obtained by asking each student who left the University of Illinois student union if he or she was a Catholic. Students who said "yes" to such a question in a public place were assumed to be good enough Catholics for this study, and were asked to attend the experimental session. They were paid one dollar if they did attend the session.

The questionnaire administered to these one hundred Catholics briefly described 24 acts, 12 of which were hypothesized to be morally wrong using the criteria described above and twelve of which were defined as only wrong within the Catholic Church, that is, conventionally wrong. The subjects first rated the seriousness (Criterion #4) of each transgression using a scale that ranged from 1(very seriously wrong) to 4(not wrong at all). All the acts are considered to be serious sins by the Catholic Church, and the first page of the questionnaire confirmed that the subjects were aware of this fact. On subsequent pages, a significant number of subjects rated the issues predicted to be moral ones, such as murder, as more serious than the breaches specific to Catholics, such as missing Mass on Sunday.

The questionnaire then tested Criterion #2 (Unalterability) by asking if each act would be "still wrong" or "alright" if the pope and cardinals were to drop the rule or law forbidding it. It should be pointed out that Catholic dogma holds that the pope has the ultimate authority to determine at least some matters of right and wrong for Catholics. The overwhelming majority of the subjects indicated that it

would be wrong for Church authorities to remove the rules governing the issues in the moral domain. But less than half the subjects believed that it was wrong to remove the Church laws regarding the conventional actions. Nucci and Junker (1982) concluded from these results that "subjects generate notions of the prescriptivity of moral actions independent of the dictates of religious authorities" (p. 13). In other words, Catholics decide for themselves which actions are morally wrong and which are matters of arbitrary Church law, although they accept the Church's designation of which actions are wrong in one way or another.

The final segment of the questionnaire tested for Criterion #3 (Universality) by asking if each act was "still wrong" or "alright" for non-Catholics. Almost all the subjects universalized the moral transgressions. They viewed moral breaches, such as stealing and killing, as wrong for non-Catholics as well as for Catholics. But less than half the students saw the conventional transgressions as wrong for non-Catholics, who, unlike Catholics, are not subject to rules governing the acts.

From this study one can conclude that the areas of morality and of religious convention are indeed seen as two separate domains even by members of a religion with a very strong set of conventions. However, Nucci and Junker found one rule, the prohibition of homosexual behavior, which was placed on the borderline between unalterability and alterability (Criterion #2 above), universality and cultural relativity (Criterion #3 above). That is, the prohibition against homosexual acts between consenting adult men was rated unalterable and universal by

fewer people than was stealing but by more people than was premarital intercourse. The question arises as to whether the subjects who considered homosexual behavior to be unalterably and universally wrong did so because they considered it to be a moral issue or because they considered it to be a convention the violation of which was extremely abhorrent, possibly because it was a sexual issue. In other words, have these Catholics stated that homosexuality is morally wrong because they have rationally inferred that it has intrinsically harmful consequences or do they simply see it as breaking conventional rules which they cannot explain rationally?

To help answer this question, let us consider how Nucci and Junker's subjects responded to the other sexual questions. "A man and woman who love each other have sex before they are married" was rated as seriously wrong, unalterable and universal by many fewer subjects than was the homosexuality question. Obviously premarital sex was not considered to be abhorrent, so if homosexuality was considered abhorrent it was not because it is a sexual issue.

It is apparent that it cannot be determined from this study whether homosexuality is a moral or a conventional, a rational or an emotional, issue for Catholics. Although Nucci and Junker hypothesized that it was a conventional one, the possibility remains that this act was considered to be a morally wrong one by some subjects because of the perception of intrinsically harmful consequences to others, whether to the partner or to human life in general. Nucci and Junker also did not look at the sex differences in their subjects' answers. It is possible

that men reacted differently to this question than did women. Perhaps if the subjects' sex were ascertained, and if a question about female homosexuality were added, Catholics' attitudes to homosexuality would be clarified.

In fact, it is not clear whether or not the premarital sex item was rated as alterable and culturally relative by so many subjects because it was considered to be a conventional issue or for some other reason. It could have been rated as it was simply because its wording suggested that the man and woman were engaged to be married. Also, as with the homosexuality question, sex differences may have shown up in the responses. Sex of subjects needs to be ascertained, and a "nonmarital sex" item, which specifies that the couple does not intend to marry, needs to be added to the questionnaire.

It is possible that there is one other sexual rule that may be placed in the moral domain by a majority of Catholic subjects because it pertains to acts that are seen to have intrinsically harmful consequences to others' welfare. In Nucci and Junker's study, the act "A man and his wife with each other's knowledge and permission each occasionally have sex with some one else", like homosexuality, was rated as unalterable and universal almost as often as most of the more obviously moral issues such as murder. But, once again, were "open marriages" rated this way because of intrinsically harmful consequences (a moral criterion) or because the subjects considered having an open marriage to be a particularly disgusting violation of Catholic convention? And were there sex differences in the answers?

In summary, Catholics often rated certain acts as very wrong, but it is not known whether or not this result was a factor of the subjects' sex. It is also not known whether the acts, especially the sexual ones, were rated wrong for moral (rational) reasons or for conventional (often emotional) reasons.

The purpose of the present study was to attempt to discern into which of these two categories Catholic men and women's justifications for sexual and nonsexual wrongness fall by asking the subjects to choose from several moral and conventional reasons in order to indicate why they rated each act as wrong. In other words, an effort was made to determine whether adults use the Intrinsicity criterion in distinguishing between seriously-wrong and fairly-wrong acts; the moral justifications mentioned intrinsically-harmful or unjust consequences of an act, while the nonmoral reasons did not. This was an attempt to find out whether or not nonsexual acts are more often considered to be wrong for moral reasons, or not to be wrong at all, and sexual acts are more often considered to be wrong for conventional reasons. Also, it was an attempt to determine whether or not some sexual acts would fall, as in Nucci and Junker's study, in a "grey" area between the nonsexual moral acts and the nonsexual nonmoral acts.

CHAPTER II

PURPOSES AND METHODS

Purposes of the Study

The first purpose of the present study was to replicate Nucci and Junker's study by showing once again that certain acts that are wrong for nonsexual reasons (murder, stealing, breaking a very serious promise, and rape) are seen as seriously wrong (Criterion #4) by a majority of Catholic university students, and that four nonsexual acts, (missing Mass and Communion on Sunday, missing Mass on Christmas or Easter, and divorce) are seen as fairly wrong or not wrong at all by most of these subjects. The hypothesis was added that the seriousness ratings of eight sexual acts would fall between these two extremes, and that the sexual acts would fall into not one but two groups with respect to their seriousness ratings, because in Nucci and Junker's study many of the sexual acts fell into a "grey" area between the moral and the nonmoral acts. That is, it was predicted that male and female homosexuality, open marriage and nonmarital intercourse would be considered to be seriously wrong, though not as seriously wrong as murder, etc., and that kissing, masturbation, birth control and premarital intercourse would be considered to be more seriously wrong than missing Mass, etc., though not as seriously wrong as homosexuality, etc., Appendix A reveals the actual seriousness ratings given each group of acts. (See Table 1)

TABLE 1

List of Behaviors As Presented to the Subjects

1. A healthy person does not attend Mass on Sunday.
2. A man and woman who do not intend to marry kiss passionately.
3. A teenager engages in masturbation.
4. A person goes an entire year without receiving Communion.
5. A man rapes a woman.
6. A married couple use artificial birth control methods (e.g. the pill, condom).
7. A person, who is financially secure, steals money from another person.
8. After promising to keep what he hears private, a man tells a woman's most personal secrets to a group of neighbors.
9. A man and woman who do not intend to marry have sexual intercourse.
10. Two men, who love each other, engage in homosexual acts.
11. A healthy person does not attend Mass on either Christmas or Easter.
12. A married couple get a divorce.
13. A man and his wife with each other's knowledge and permission each occasionally have sexual intercourse with someone else.

14. A man shoots and kills a stranger on a train platform.

15. A man and woman who love each other have sexual intercourse before they are married.

16. Two women, who love each other, engage in homosexual acts.

The second purpose of the study was to answer four questions, two of which were posed in the previous chapter:

Morality vs. Convention

Are the behaviors considered by the subjects to be wrong seen as wrong because they are viewed as moral issues or as conventional issues? Thus, when Intrinsicity (Criterion #1) is tested, the eight acts hypothesized above to be rated as very seriously wrong (designated "wrong" acts) should be given a higher percentage of moral justifications than the eight acts predicted not to be rated as very seriously wrong (designated "nonwrong" acts). That is, the "wrong" acts should be seen as moral breaches and the "nonwrong" acts should be seen as either conventional breaches only or not wrong at all (prudential breaches). The two prudential justifications listed in the questionnaire indicated that the act harms only the actor. Subjects were not expected to use these, since an act's being only a mistake that harms the actor should not be enough for it to be considered wrong, and acts not considered wrong were, of course, not given reasons why they were wrong.

To elaborate on the findings of Nucci and Junker, it was also predicted that the eight sexual acts, although in a "grey" area between the two groups of nonsexual acts, would fall into not one but two groups with respect to their seriousness ratings and the number of moral justifications they received. That is, the four "wrong" acts that are sexual were expected to be rated as more seriously wrong and to be given

more moral justifications (as opposed to nonmoral justifications) than were the four "nonwrong" sexual acts. This hypothesis originated from personal observation; many individuals appear to think in terms of two different groups of sexual acts, those that are wrong and moral issues, and those that are not wrong and are not moral issues.

Thus, an interaction between sexual vs. nonsexual acts and "wrong" vs. "nonwrong" acts was expected, since the sexual acts were predicted to fall into two groups between the two groups of nonsexual acts. It was hypothesized that the highest seriousness ratings and the most moral justifications would be given for the nonsexual, seriously wrong acts; the next highest amount of seriousness ratings and percentage of moral justifications should be given for sexual seriously-wrong acts. Then sexual non-seriously-wrong acts should follow, and nonsexual, non-seriously-wrong acts should receive the lowest seriousness ratings and number of moral justifications. Thus, the nonsexual "wrong" acts should be most likely to be considered to be moral issues according to both the Seriousness and Intrinsicity criteria, the sexual "wrong" acts should be the second most likely to be considered moral, and the sexual "non-wrong" acts should be the third most likely to be considered moral. The nonsexual "nonwrong" acts should be the least likely to be considered to be moral issues.

One of the 16 acts, rape, was quite difficult to place in a group. Rape is obviously a sexual act, but it is definitely a violent act also. Thus, there was a question as to whether it should be placed among the

violent acts (the nonsexual "wrong" acts) or the serious sexual acts. The decision was made to place it in the former group because it was predicted that university students would focus on the violent rather than on the sexual nature of rape when trying to decide how seriously wrong it is. That is, it was predicted that the same seriousness ratings would be given to rape as to the nonsexual "wrong" acts, and lower seriousness ratings would be given to all the other sexual acts because none of the other sexual acts necessarily involves violence.

Unalterability

Are the acts considered by the subjects to be the most seriously wrong rated as alterable or unalterable (Criterion #2)? It was hypothesized that the acts rated as the most seriously wrong would also be rated as unalterable and that the acts rated as the least seriously wrong or as not wrong would be rated as alterable.

Universality

Are the acts considered by the subjects to be the most seriously wrong rated as universally wrong or as culturally relative (Criterion #3)? It was hypothesized that the acts rated as the most seriously wrong would also be rated as universally wrong and that the acts rated as the least seriously wrong would be rated as culturally relative.

Sex Differences

How do men and women differ in their ratings of seriousness, alterability and universality of each of the groups of acts? Are women more likely than men to see acts, especially sexual acts, as belonging in the moral domain? It was hypothesized that women would be more likely than men to rate sexual acts as serious, unalterable and universal, because women may have been socialized to view sexual issues more strictly. But, adding an interaction to the hypothesis, women were also predicted to be more likely to rate sexual acts as wrong for conventional reasons, again because they were socialized more carefully than were men concerning sexual right and wrong. Theorists have tried to explain this predicted sex difference in socialization in many ways. Social learning theorists say that girls model their sexual behavior on that of their mothers, which is more strict than that of their fathers. Sociobiologists claim that, since women have babies and men do not, it is only to the women's advantage to restrict themselves to one sexual partner who can help protect the children.

Specifically, then, it was predicted that women would give more "very seriously wrong", "seriously wrong", unalterable, and universal ratings to the sexual acts than would men, while there would be no sex difference here in the nonsexual acts. But women should give fewer moral justifications for the wrongness of the sexual acts than men, even though they should consider the sexual acts to be more seriously wrong than men. (For the nonsexual acts, both the men and the women were pre-

dicted, as stated above, to give more moral justifications to the acts they considered to be more serious.)

Methods

Subjects and Materials

One hundred two students consisting of 48 men, 50 women and four subjects who failed to write their sex volunteered to participate in the study. An attempt was made to enlist only students who considered themselves to be practicing Catholics. Most of the subjects were attending one of Loyola University's general psychology classes.

A cover sheet adapted from that used by Nucci and Junker was used to ascertain whether all subjects could, indeed, be considered to be practicing Catholics. Fifty-six percent of the subjects stated that they attend Mass and receive Communion at least every Sunday. Seventy-two percent have had at least a few years of education in a Catholic school as children. Eighty-eight percent of the subjects stated that they adhere to the basic Catholic belief, the virgin birth, while 98 percent adhere to the belief in Christ's resurrection. However, only 41 percent believe that the pope is infallible when he speaks officially on matters of faith and morals.

The questionnaire was also similar to that used by Nucci and Junker, although it was considerably shorter because only eight of Nucci and Junker's many nonsexual acts were used. (See Appendix C.) In all, thirteen of the behaviors they listed were selected for use in this

study; an attempt was made to choose an equal number of sexual and nonsexual acts and an equal number of acts that would be considered to be seriously wrong and not wrong. Twelve of the 13 behaviors were copied word for word. One of the behaviors, "A man and woman have sex before they are married" was reworded to, "A man and woman have sexual intercourse before they are married" to prevent misunderstanding. Three more acts were added, bringing the total number of acts to 16. The non-marital intercourse item needed to clarify the answers to the premarital intercourse question was one of the three acts. The female homosexuality item mentioned in Chapter I was another. And an item describing "passionate kissing" was added so that the sexual "wrong" group of acts would contain four items as the other groups do. The section to determine whether subjects were aware that the Church forbids all the acts was deleted, and a list of justifications was added. The three added questions were checked with Catholic authorities to make sure that the Catholic Church considers them to be serious sins. (Added portions were written by the author.)

On page 4 of the questionnaire a list of 13 justifications for why a given act could be wrong was included in order to test the Intrinsicity criterion, as mentioned in Chapter I, Section B. Seven of the reasons were moral ones, that is, they mentioned the intrinsic consequences (harm or injustice) of the act or the universality and unalterability of its wrongness. Persons who gave these reasons could be said to be reasoning from the acts' intrinsic features to the fact that they

are wrong.

Eight of the justifications were nonmoral; they did not involve intrinsic features of the acts. Of the nonmoral reasons, five were conventional reasons, since they stated that the act violated Catholic rules or could cause the perpetrator to incur scorn or disgust. Two were prudential reasons, mentioning only possible harm to the perpetrator. Persons who gave these reasons could not be said to be reasoning to the wrongness of acts; they would be showing concern that authority would be violated or others would disapprove or, in the case of the prudential acts, that they themselves would suffer.

There were two versions of the justification page, to find out whether the subjects' responses were affected by the order of the justifications. The justifications were first listed in random order, and this format was designated "A". Then the order of the justifications was reversed; this format was designated "B".

Procedures

Seriousness of act. The questionnaire was administered in many small supervised groups. The first variable, Seriousness, was measured on pages 2 and 3 of the questionnaire. (See Appendix C.) The subjects were asked to circle one of four numerals to describe each of the 16 acts. The numeral 1 signified "very seriously wrong," 2 "seriously wrong," 3 "fairly wrong," and 4 "not wrong at all."

The data that resulted were tabulated in two different ways. For the purpose of performing the analysis relating seriousness to the percentage of moral justifications, the acts that were both rated as 1 (very seriously wrong) and given moral justifications were first counted. Then all the acts rated as 1 were counted. Afterward, the number of 1 acts given moral justifications was divided by the total number of 1 acts, creating a percentage of very serious acts given moral justifications. The same process was used to create a percentage of moral justifications given to the 2 (seriously wrong) acts and to the 3 (fairly wrong) acts. Data analysis compared these three percentages.

For the purpose of comparing seriousness with nature (sexual vs. nonsexual) and hypothesized wrongness of acts, the numbers pertaining to the seriousness ratings circled by each subject for the "wrong" nonsexual acts, "wrong" sexual acts, "nonwrong" sexual acts and "nonwrong" nonsexual acts were each totaled, producing four sums. Data analysis compared these sums.

Moral vs. nonmoral justifications. The second variable, moral vs. nonmoral (conventional or prudential) justifications for the wrongness of acts, was measured by having the subjects read a list of possible justifications on page 4 of the questionnaire. Then they returned to pages 2 and 3 and wrote the letter corresponding the justification they considered most appropriate after each act they had rated as wrong. Acts not considered to be wrong were, of course, not to be given reasons

why they were wrong, so the subjects placed an X after each of these acts.

For the purpose of relating the number of moral justifications given to the nature and wrongness of the acts, the number of moral justifications given by each subject for why each group of acts (nonsexual "wrong," sexual "wrong," sexual "nonwrong" and nonsexual "nonwrong") was wrong was simply counted. Data analysis compared the four numbers.

Unalterability. The third variable, unalterability, was measured on page 5, where the question was posed, "For each act, if the pope and cardinals agreed to drop the rule or law, would the act be still wrong or all right?" Blanks were arrayed in columns under the two phrases "still wrong" and "all right," and the subjects placed a check on the blank under the phrase that they believed applied to each act, providing a 2-point scale.

The set of unalterability data was tabulated in much the same way that the first set of seriousness data was tabulated. The acts rated as unalterable ("still wrong" after being changed by the pope) were first counted. Then they were divided by the total number of acts which were both rated as unalterable and given one or another type of justification. (It will be remembered that acts rated as not wrong were not given justifications.) Next, the acts rated as alterable were counted and converted to a percentage by also being divided by the total number of acts given justifications. The analysis compared the percentage of

moral justifications given to acts rated as unalterable with the percentage of moral justifications given to acts rated as alterable.

Universality. The fourth variable, universality, was measured on page 6, where the question was posed, "For each act indicate whether it would be wrong or all right for another religion to have no rule or law about the act." As for unalterability, blanks were arrayed in columns under the two phrases "still wrong" and "all right," and the subjects placed a check on the blank under the phrase that they believed applied to each act.

Universality data were obtained in exactly the same way that the unalterability data were obtained. Then data analysis compared the percentage of moral justifications given to acts rated as universal with the percentage of moral justifications given to acts rated as culturally relative.

In conclusion, the data obtained in this study were tabulated in such a way as to try to answer the question which arose from Nucci and Junker's research as to which issues Catholics consider to be moral ones, and which they consider to be conventional and therefore applicable only to Catholics. It was also hoped that the study would answer the question as to what the sex differences in university students' views of the various acts are.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Morality vs. Convention

Relation of Seriousness, Sex of Subject and Justifications

A repeated-measures analysis of variance (R-ANOVA) was performed, where the between-subject variable was sex of subject and the within-subject variable was the seriousness rating given each act by each subject. The seriousness ratings were coded 1 (very seriously wrong), 2 (seriously wrong) and 3 (fairly wrong). The dependent variable was the percentage of moral justifications given for each of these seriousness ratings. (The results are shown in Figure 1 and Table 2.)

Moral vs. Nonmoral Acts. The data confirmed the hypothesis that a significantly higher percentage of moral justifications would be given for the acts that were rated as most seriously wrong (the "wrong" acts) than for the acts rated as least seriously wrong (the "nonwrong" acts), [$F(2,174)=33.96$, $p<.0001$]. Subsequent ttests showed that the differences in percentage of moral justifications between the three seriousness ratings were all significant (all $ps<.001$). These results show that the acts seen by the subjects to be the most seriously wrong were significantly more often seen as wrong for moral reasons than for nonmoral reasons and that the acts seen to be the least seriously wrong were seen as wrong for nonmoral reasons significantly more often than for

% of Moral
Justifications

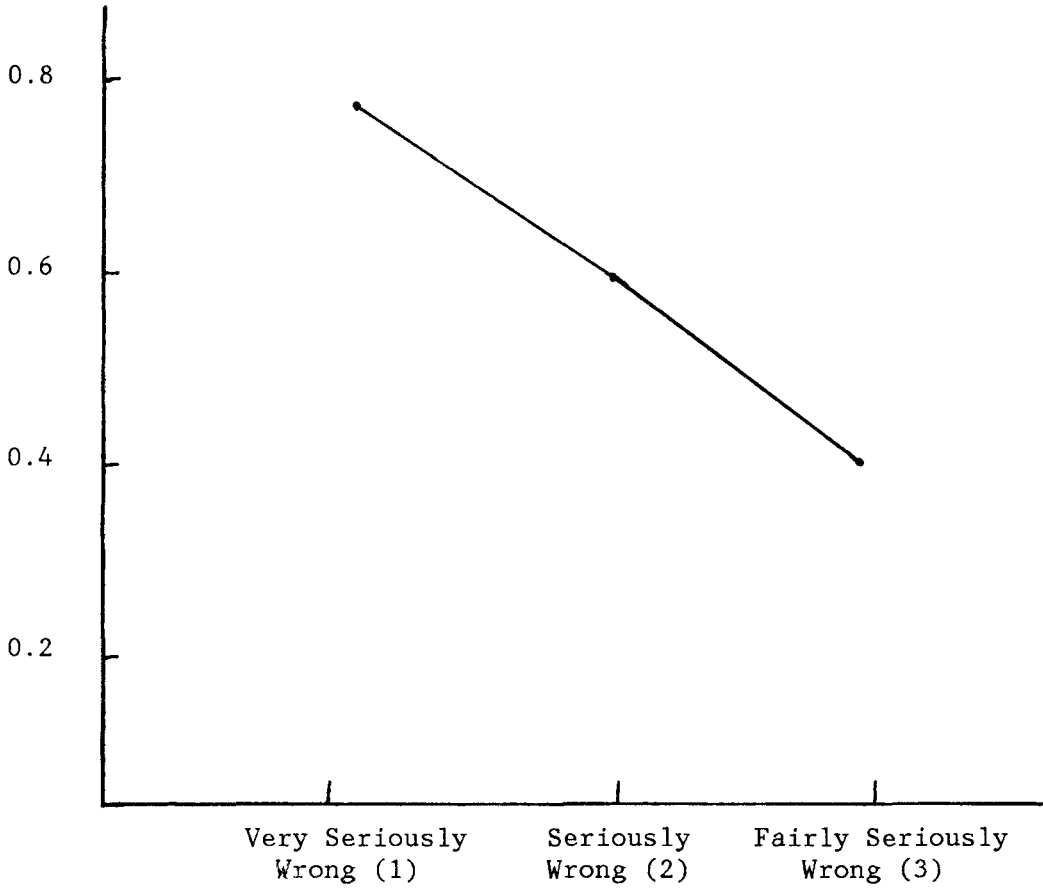


Figure 1: Percent of Moral Justifications as a Function of Seriousness of Act

TABLE 2

Mean Percent of Moral Justifications by Seriousness of Act and Sex

	Male	Female	Marginal
1 Acts	74.2	78.9	76.7
2 Acts	62.1	59.3	60.6
3 Acts	46.0	33.4	39.5
Marginal	60.8	57.2	58.9

moral reasons. That is, the behaviors viewed as most seriously wrong were considered to be moral issues and the acts viewed as least seriously wrong were considered to be conventional issues. Also, as expected, the prudential justifications were rarely used.

Male vs. Female Subjects. The hypothesis that the percentage of moral justifications used by men and by women would differ was not supported by the data [$F(1,87)=0.50$, n.s.]. Thus, the men and the women used equal percentages of moral justifications; the women did not see wrong acts as wrong for emotional reasons any more often than did men. The expected sex by seriousness interaction was not obtained [$F(1,174)=1.87$, n.s.].

Relation of Nature, Wrongness, Sex of Subject and Seriousness

A 2 (Nature of Act) X 2 (Wrongness of Act) X 2 (Sex) R-ANOVA was performed, in which wrongness was nested within nature and wrongness and nature were both nested within the sex variable. (See Figure 2 and Table 3) The nature of an act can be either sexual, such as premarital intercourse, or nonsexual, such as missing Mass on Sunday. The wrongness variable also contained two levels; it was simply hypothesized that eight acts, designated "wrong," would be rated more seriously wrong than

Mean Total
Seriousness

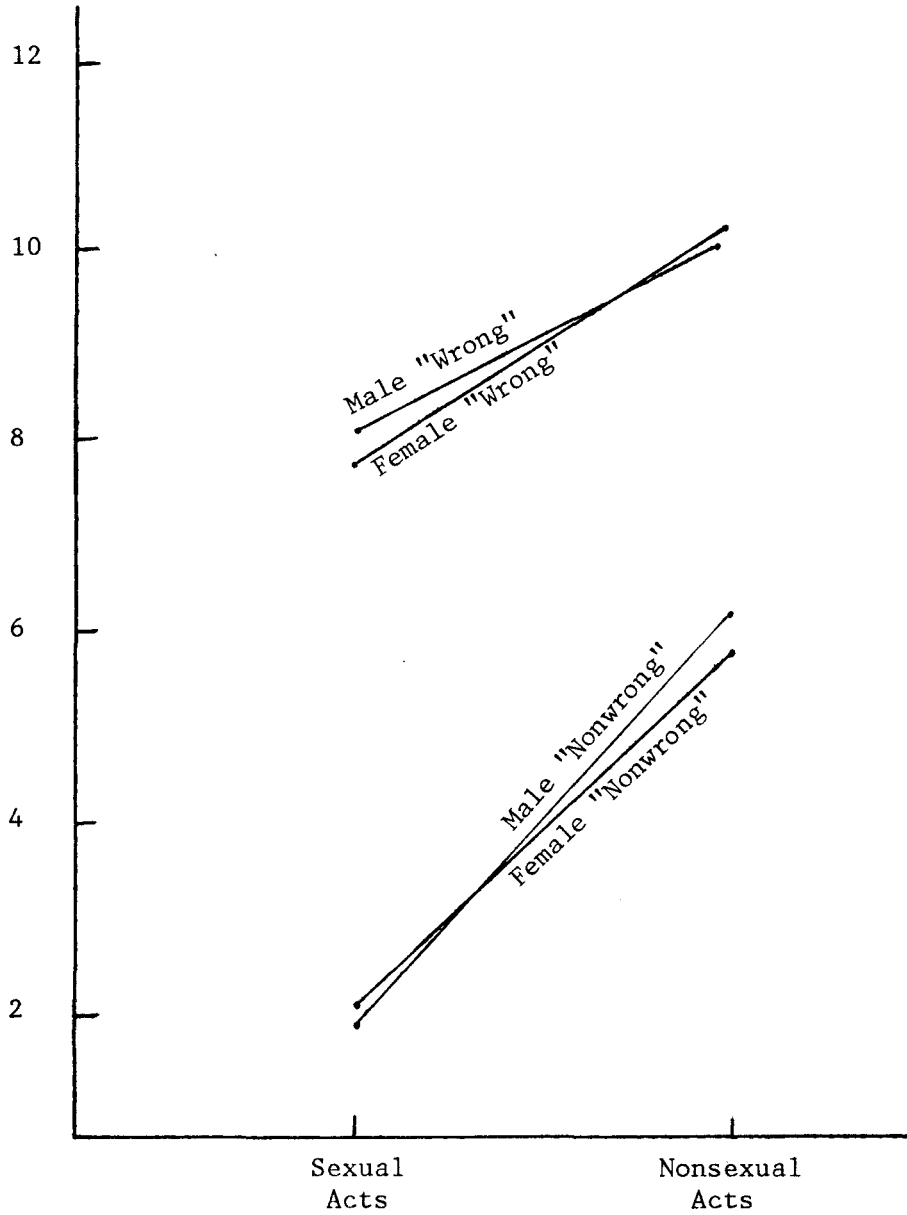


Figure 2: Seriousness Ratings as a Function of Nature and Wrongness of Act

TABLE 3

Mean Seriousness Ratings by Nature and Wrongness of Act and Sex

	Male	Female	Marginal
Nonsexual Nonwrong	6.229	5.200	5.704
Nonsexual Wrong	10.667	10.840	10.755
Sexual Nonwrong	2.146	2.320	2.235
Sexual Wrong	8.208	7.660	7.929
Marginal	6.813	6.505	6.666

would the other eight acts, designated "nonwrong." The dependent variable was the sum of the seriousness ratings given to each of the four groups of acts (formed by combining the two levels of nature with the two levels of wrongness). Thus the dependent variable contained four levels. In this analysis, all the seriousness ratings, from 1 (very serious) to 4 (not wrong at all) were used. The ratings were treated as continuous (although they were not necessarily treated as such by the subjects) for lack of a more reliable way to analyze the data so as to include the 4 (not wrong at all) ratings. (This violated the assumption that the dependent variable was a continuous rating.)

"Wrong" vs. "nonwrong" acts. Supporting the prediction, the eight "wrong" acts received significantly higher total seriousness ratings than did the eight acts hypothesized to be "nonwrong" [$F(1,96)=910.79$, $p<.0001$]. This demonstrates that the "wrong" acts are considered to be significantly more seriously wrong than are the "nonwrong" acts. This is evidence that the hypotheses were correct in their predictions of which acts would be seen as "wrong" and which acts would be seen as "nonwrong" by the subjects. (See Table 4)

Sexual vs. nonsexual acts. Unexpectedly, the nonsexual acts received significantly higher seriousness ratings than did the sexual acts [$F(1,96)=253.51$, $p<.0001$]. Thus, in general, the sexual acts were viewed as significantly less serious by these subjects than were the nonsexual acts. (See Table 4)

TABLE 4

Percentage of Responses Given Using Each Seriousness Rating

	Very Seriously Wrong (1)	Seriously Wrong (2)	Fairly Seriously Wrong (3)	Not Wrong At All
Nonsexual "Wrong" Acts				
5. Rape	97.1	2.0	0.0	1.0
7. Stealing	67.6	29.4	2.9	0.0
8. Br. Promise	52.0	35.3	11.8	1.0
14. Murder	97.1	2.0	1.0	0.0
Sexual "Wrong" Acts				
9. Nonmar. Int.	17.6	18.6	32.4	31.4
10. Male Homo.	50.0	20.6	19.6	9.8
13. Open Mar.	55.9	29.4	9.8	4.9
16. Fem. Homo	50.0	20.6	19.6	9.8

TABLE 4 (cont.)

	Very Seriously Wrong (1)	Seriously Wrong (2)	Fairly Seriously Wrong (3)	Not Wrong At All
Nonsexual "Nonwrong" Acts				
1. Miss Mass	8.8	21.6	45.1	24.5
4. Miss Comm.	17.6	28.4	33.3	20.6
11. Xmas, Eas.	28.4	26.5	31.4	13.7
12. Divorce	17.6	29.4	27.5	25.5
Sexual "Nonwrong" Acts				
2. Kissing	0.0	2.9	10.8	86.3
3. Mastur.	7.8	15.7	28.4	48.0
6. Birth Cont.	3.9	6.9	22.5	66.7
15. Prem. Int.	5.9	13.7	23.5	56.9

Male vs. female subjects. The hypothesized effect of sex of subject was not supported by the data [$F(1,96)=0.60$, n.s.], showing that men and women did not give significantly different seriousness ratings to the 16 acts. That is, the male subjects were not significantly more likely than were the female subjects to see the sexual acts as being more seriously wrong than the nonsexual acts. There was also no interaction between nature of act and sex of subject [$F(1,96)=0.37$, n.s.], and there was no interaction between wrongness and sex [$F(1,96)=0.45$, n.s.]. (See Appendix A.)

Interaction between wrongness and nature of act. The interaction between wrongness and nature of act merely approached significance [$F(1,96)=2.90$, $p<.1$]. Subsequent within-subject ttests revealed that the nonsexual "wrong" acts received significantly higher seriousness ratings than did the sexual "wrong" acts, which received significantly higher seriousness ratings than the nonsexual "nonwrong" acts. The sexual "nonwrong" acts received the lowest seriousness ratings of all. It will be remembered that an interaction had been predicted, such that the four groups would array themselves slightly differently: nonsexual "wrong," sexual "wrong," sexual "nonwrong," then nonsexual "nonwrong." The results show, as expected, that the four sexual "wrong" acts such as homosexuality, are considered by university students to be significantly more seriously wrong than the nonsexual "nonwrong" acts such as divorce and missing Mass, as well as the sexual "nonwrong" acts such as murder

and stealing. That is, there are two distinct types of sexual acts, seriously-wrong ones and nonseriously-wrong or nonwrong ones, in the eyes of university students, just as there are two distinct types of nonsexual acts.

Overall interaction. For the dependent variable of seriousness, there was a significant interaction between nature of act, wrongness of act and sex of subject [$F(1,96)=6.12, p<.05$]. In order to discern how the nature-wrong interaction could have been only marginally significant while the 3-way interaction was significant, a simple effects analysis was performed which calculated separate η^2 values for the nature-wrongness interaction pertaining to the male subjects and to the female subjects. It was found that, for the men, there was a significant nature-wrongness interaction [$F(1,96)=8.95, p<.05$], but for the women there was no nature-wrongness interaction [$F(1,96)<1.00, n.s.$].

Thus, the men's seriousness ratings did not increase from sexual to nonsexual "wrong" acts as much as the women's ratings increased, while the men's ratings increased much more than did the women's from sexual to nonsexual "nonwrong" acts. This means that the women saw approximately equal distances between the four groups while the men saw the sexual "wrong," nonsexual "wrong" and nonsexual "nonwrong" acts as being somewhat closer in seriousness than did the women and the sexual "nonwrong" acts as being even further below the other acts in seriousness than did the women.

Continuing the simple effects analysis, the significance of the differences between the men and the women in each of the four nature-wrongness groups was tested. Only the nonsexual "nonwrong" acts were seen significantly differently by the two sexes [$F(1,384)=3.99$, $p<.05$]. Thus, the men saw divorce and missing Mass and Communion as significantly more seriously wrong than did the women. The other three nature-wrongness groups were given equivalent seriousness ratings by the men and by the women [all $F_s(1,384)<2.00$, n.s.].

Relation of Nature, Wrongness, Sex and Justifications

A 2 (Nature of Act) X 2 (Wrongness of Act) X 2 (Sex) R-ANOVA was performed, in which wrongness was again nested within nature and wrongness and nature were both nested within the sex variable. But here the dependent variable was the sum of the moral justifications given for why the acts in each of the four groups were wrong. (Thus the dependent variable contained four levels. See Figure 3 and Table 5.)

"Wrong" vs. "nonwrong" acts. Supporting the prediction, the eight "wrong" acts received significantly more moral justifications than did the eight acts hypothesized to be "nonwrong" [$F(1,88)=182.55$, $p<.0001$]. This demonstrates that the eight "wrong" acts, besides being considered to be more seriously wrong by the subjects, were also considered significantly more often to be moral issues than were the eight "nonwrong" acts. This is further evidence that acts seen as the most seriously

% of Moral
Justifications

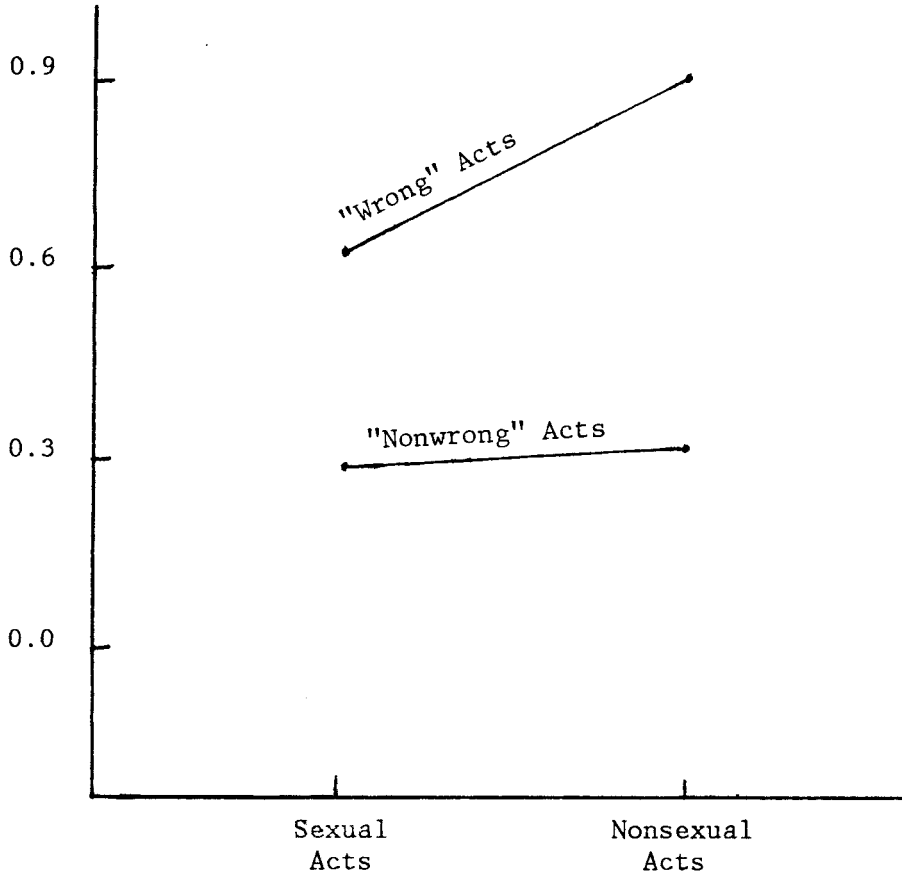


Figure 3: Percent of Moral Justifications By Nature and Wrongness of Act

TABLE 5

Mean Percent of Moral Justifications by Nature, Wrongness and Sex

	Male	Female	Marginal
Nonsexual Nonwrong	31.0	28.2	29.6
Nonsexual Wrong	87.9	88.1	88.1
Sexual Nonwrong	31.4	24.4	28.1
Sexual Wrong	66.7	55.8	61.4
Marginal	54.2	49.1	51.7

wrong were the same ones that were seen to be matters of morality, not of convention, as well as that the hypotheses correctly grouped each of the 16 acts as "wrong" or "nonwrong".

Sexual vs. nonsexual acts. As in the previous analysis, an unexpected effect of nature of act was found. The nonsexual acts received significantly more moral justifications than did the sexual acts [$F(1,88)=21.59, p<.0001$]. Thus, in general, the sexual acts were viewed significantly less often by these subjects to be moral issues than were the nonsexual acts. However, four of the sexual acts were viewed significantly more often than any of the "nonwrong" acts, including the sexual "nonwrong" acts, to be moral issues, as shown by the number of moral justifications they received. Thus, the interaction between wrongness and nature of act proved to be unexpectedly highly significant also [$F(1,88)=18.77, p<.0001$]. Subsequent ttests revealed that the percentages of moral justifications given were arrayed in much the same way that the seriousness ratings were arrayed. The nonsexual "wrong" acts received the highest percentage of moral justifications and the sexual "wrong" acts received the second highest percentage. However, the nonsexual "nonwrong" and sexual "nonwrong" acts received the same percentage of moral justifications, significantly below the other two percentages. Like the above results, these results clearly show that all sexual acts are not considered by university students to be nonmoral (conventional) issues, but that sexual acts, like nonsexual acts, fall

into two distinct groups, here a moral group and a nonmoral group. Nonwrong ratings were, of course, not included in this analysis, since acts rated 4 (not wrong at all) were not given justifications why they were wrong.

Male vs. female subjects. Again the hypothesized effect of sex of subject was not supported by the data [$F(1,88)=1.26$, n.s.], showing that men and women did not give significantly different numbers of moral justifications. That is, the male subjects were not significantly more likely than the were the female subjects to see the sexual acts as being matters of morality. There was no interaction between wrongness and sex [$F(1,88)<1.00$, n.s.], although this interaction had been predicted.

Interactions. Unexpectedly, there was no interaction between nature of act and sex of subject [$F(1,88)=1.55$, n.s.]. There was also no nature by wrongness by sex interaction [$F(1,88)<1.00$, n.s.].

Relation of Unalterability, Sex and Justifications

A one-way R-ANOVA was done with sex of subject the between-subject variable and unalterable and alterable acts the two-level within-subject variable. The dependent variable was the percentage of moral justifications for why the acts considered to be unalterable and the acts considered to be alterable were wrong. (See Table 6)

Unalterable vs. alterable acts. Supporting the hypothesis, the data showed that the acts rated as unalterable received a significantly

TABLE 6

Mean Percent of Moral Justifications by Unalterability and Sex

	Male	Female	Marginal
Unalterable	67.0	66.7	66.9
Alterable	43.1	26.1	34.4
Marginal	55.1	46.4	50.7

higher percentage of moral justifications than did the acts rated as alterable [$F(1,92)=51.62, p<.0001$]. This shows that the acts seen as unalterable are the same ones that are seen by these subjects to be matters of morality, not of convention.

Male vs. female subjects. In this analysis only, there was a marginal effect of sex [$F(1,92)=2.96, p<.1$]. However, here no difference between men and women had been expected! This demonstrates that there was a marginally-significant difference between the percentages of moral reasons given by men and by women. The data also showed a marginally significant interaction between sex of subject and unalterability [$F(1,92)=3.46, p<.1$].

Relation of Universality, Sex, and Justifications

A oneway R-ANOVA was performed using sex of subject as the between-subject variable and universality as the within-subject variable. Again, the dependent variable was the percentage of moral justifications given for each universality rating. (See Table 7)

Universality vs. cultural relativity. As expected, the acts rated as universally wrong received a significantly higher percentage of moral justifications than did the acts not rated universally-wrong (culturally-relative acts) [$F(1,92)=67.34, p<.0001$].

TABLE 7

Mean Percent of Moral Justifications by Universality and Sex

	Male	Female	Total
Universal	69.1	69.2	69.1
Relative	38.9	26.1	32.4
Marginal	54.0	47.6	50.8

Male vs. female subjects. There was no significant sex difference, as expected [$F(1,92)=1.80, n.s.$]. Men and women gave an equal percentage of moral justifications to the acts they considered to be universal and to the acts they considered to be culturally-relative. There

was no interaction between sex of subject and universality [$F(1,92)=2.11$, n.s.], also as expected.

Miscellaneous Analyses

An ANOVA was performed with Versions A and B of the justification page as the independent variable and the percent of moral justifications as the dependent variable. There was no effect of order of justifications [$F(1,93)<1.00$, n.s.].

Also, a hand tally was made of the justifications for why some of the acts were considered to be wrong, specifically the controversial sexual "wrong" acts. Forty-seven of the 98 subjects said that "open marriage" is wrong because it "breaks a promise or vow"; the next most popular reason (also a moral one: that God's law for all human beings for all time would be broken) was chosen by only 16 subjects. Only three said that "open marriage" was "unfair".

Twenty-eight students wrote that female homosexuality was wrong because "it violates the natural order, which requires preserving life"; this was likewise the reason chosen by 26 subjects for why male homosexuality was wrong. For both male and female homosexuality, this negative consequence to the preservation of life was the most common reason given for why the act was wrong. None of the students said that homosexuality was wrong because it was unfair.

For the nonmarital intercourse question, three justifications vied for the most popular place. Twelve students said the act was wrong

because it violates God's universal law, a moral reason, but 13 students said it was wrong because it violates God's law for Catholics and thirteen because it violates Canon Law, which also pertains only to Catholics. The latter two reasons are conventional ones; thus, the nonmarital sex item was primarily responsible for the fact that this sexual "wrong" group was as far below the nonsexual "wrong" group in percentage of moral over nonmoral justifications as it was. Only one student said that nonmarital intercourse was "unfair".

A hand tally was performed of the justifications assigned to the nonsexual "nonwrong" acts, in an attempt to clarify why these acts were considered to be more seriously wrong by the men than by the women. The vast majority of the subjects of both sexes considered missing Mass and Communion on both Sundays and holidays to be wrong because it violates either Canon Law or "God's law for Catholics"; a chi square analysis revealed that there was no significant difference between the sexes here. There were quite a few sex differences in the reasons given for why divorce was considered to be wrong, an area where there was no clear favorite among the justifications. However, none of these differences was significant either.

The men and the women gave the same number of moral and conventional justifications for divorce, but three women and no men gave a prudential reason: "Anyone who did this would hurt him/herself psychologically." Among the moral reasons, five men gave "is against the law laid down by God for all human beings for all time," while only one

woman gave this reason. This was by far the largest sex difference between the number of subjects who used any of the justifications.

Although the predicted tendency for women to use conventional justifications more than men was not borne out by the data, a hand tally of use of the reason "The act is disgusting" for why acts were wrong was performed to see if women might nonetheless have been socialized to judge the morality of sexual acts more emotionally than were men. The "disgusting" justification was, indeed, used only pertaining to sexual acts. Forty women and 21 men used the justification; a chi square analysis revealed that the difference was significant [$p < .001$].

Correlations

This section will briefly review the results of the correlations performed on the data, one between the test of seriousness on pages 2 and 3 and the test of unalterability on page 5, one between the test of seriousness and the test of universality (p. 6), and one between the unalterability and universality tests.

Seriousness and Unalterability

Spearman's rho was used to correlate the seriousness test with the alterability test, since neither of the tests contained interval data. It will be remembered that when seriousness was used as the dependent variable in an ANOVA it was treated as an interval variable for lack of a better way to perform the analysis. Actually, the scale was not an interval scale but an ordinal scale, since the distance between such

ranks as "seriously wrong" and "not wrong at all" cannot be quantified. Therefore Spearman's rho was thought to be the best measure to use to correlate seriousness with unalterability. (See Table 8) An attempt was made to ascertain whether, for these subjects, the two tests measured the same variable. For each subject, the seriousness rating given to Act 1 was correlated with the alterability rating given to Act 1, Act 2's seriousness was correlated Act 2's alterability, and so on. Fourteen of the 16 correlations ranged from 0.3 to 0.8; the overall correlation was 0.49. Thus the two tests were moderately correlated. However, all the correlations (Table 8) except for the issues of rape (Act 5) and stealing (Act 7) were significant.

Seriousness and Universality

Spearman's rho was also used to correlate the ranked data of the seriousness test with the universality test responses. Again, the correlations were done act by act. Thirteen of the 16 acts received correlations ranging from 0.3 to 0.7; the overall correlation was 0.41. Thus these two tests were also correlated. All the correlations except those for stealing (Act 7) and murder (Act 14) were significant. (See Table 9)

TABLE 8

Correlations Between Seriousness and Unalterability

Act Number		Act Number	
1	0.57 ***	9	0.72 ***
2	0.58 ***	10	0.59 ***
3	0.77 ***	11	0.48 ***
4	0.42 ***	12	0.70 ***
5	-0.02	13	0.33 ***
6	0.67 ***	14	0.58 ***
7	0.04	15	0.57 ***
8	0.26 **	16	0.59 ***

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

TABLE 9

Correlations Between Seriousness and Universality

Act Number		Act Number	
1	0.33 ****	9	0.62 ****
2	0.53 ****	10	0.56 ****
3	0.64 ****	11	0.30 **
4	0.37 ****	12	0.51 ****
5	0.19 *	13	0.27 **
6	0.63 ****	14	-0.04
7	0.10	15	0.61 ****
8	0.29 **	16	0.56 ****

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ **** $p < .001$

Unalterability and Universality

Last, Spearman's rho was used to correlate the unalterability test with the universality test, again, act by act. Thirteen of the 16 correlations ranged from 0.3 to 0.8; the overall correlation was 0.49. This shows that these two tests were about as highly correlated as the seriousness and universality tests. Except for the correlations for rape (Act 5), male homosexuality (Act 10) and murder (Act 14), all the correlations were significant. (See Table 10)

In conclusion, the results detailed showed that all the effects hypothesized were supported by the data except the sex difference. An unexpected effect of sexual vs. nonsexual nature of act was found, such that the sexual acts were significantly less likely to be rated as seriously wrong or to be considered as moral issues than the nonsexual acts. And the seriousness, alterability and universality scales were significantly correlated with each other.

TABLE 10

Correlations Between Unalterability and Universality

Act Number		Act Number	
1	0.39 ****	9	0.75 ****
2	0.64 ****	10	0.14
3	0.81 ****	11	0.29 **
4	0.34 ****	12	0.61 ****
5	-0.02	13	0.62 ****
6	0.78 ****	14	-0.02
7	0.26 **	15	0.64 ****
8	0.42 ****	16	0.81 ****

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

This chapter will discuss the results detailed in Chapter III and their implications for the debate between Turiel and Kohlberg. Last, further research in this field will be suggested.

Differences Between Acts

The results of this study show support for the prediction that Catholic university students make a consistent set of distinctions between acts that are moral issues and acts that are not moral issues. Using Turiel's four criteria (cited in Chapter I) for determining what is moral and what is not moral, the subjects placed the eight acts predicted to be moral ("wrong" acts) in the moral domain and placed the eight acts hypothesized not to be moral issues ("nonwrong" acts) in the nonmoral area. The same eight acts predicted to be "wrong" were rated as universally applicable, and the eight acts hypothesized to be "nonwrong" were seen as culturally relative (Criterion #3). The eight "wrong" acts were also rated as unalterable while the eight "nonwrong" acts were seen to be alterable (Criterion #2). Thus, Criteria #2 and #3 are used consistently to distinguish what is moral from what is not moral.

The students also used the Intrinsicity (#1) criterion; this was done when they chose justifications for why they considered the acts to be wrong. Use of this criterion placed the four nonsexual "wrong" acts

(murder, rape, stealing and breaking the promise) high in the moral domain and the four sexual "wrong" acts (nonmarital intercourse, male and female homosexuality and open marriages) lower in the moral domain. The analysis using seriousness ratings (Criterion #4) as the dependent variable instead of justifications showed the same hierarchy and the same amount of difference between the two groups of "wrong" acts. It may be concluded that, for these acts, Criteria #1 and #4 are used consistently to distinguish the moral from the nonmoral, and that the acts are grouped the same as for the universality and unalterability criteria.

Use of the Intrinsicity criterion placed the four nonsexual "nonwrong" acts (birth control and missing Mass and Communion) and the four sexual "nonwrong" acts (kissing, masturbation, premarital intercourse and divorce) at equal levels in the moral domain; that is, they received almost equal percentages of moral justifications (29% and 28% respectively). But use of the Seriousness criterion placed the two types of acts in two very distinct groups, since the mean seriousness rating for the nonsexual "nonwrong" acts was 5.7 and the mean for the sexual "nonwrong" acts was 2.2.

Does this mean that for the "nonwrong" acts Criteria #1 and #4 were treated differently by the subjects? Examination of the data revealed that the answer to this question is no. The sexual "nonwrong" acts received far more 4 (not wrong at all) ratings than any of the other three groups. But the 4 ratings were not used at all in the analysis where nature, wrongness and justifications were compared (the first

analysis mentioned above) so that there was little observed difference between the two groups of "nonwrong" acts. However, the analysis comparing nature, wrongness and seriousness did use the 4 ratings. Since so many of the 4s were sexual "nonwrong" acts, this caused the sexual and nonsexual "wrong" groups to become much more clearly separated from each other.

The implications of these findings are, first, that, according to the first analysis, neither the sexual nor the nonsexual "nonwrong" acts were considered to be moral issues. Thus, for the "nonwrong" acts as well as the "wrong" acts, the Intrinsicity criterion distinguished between moral and nonmoral consistently with respect to the other criteria. Second, the seriousness ratings showed that the nonsexual "nonwrong" acts were considered to be matters of convention, not morality, since most subjects gave these acts "fairly wrong" ratings. The sexual "nonwrong" acts were seen as prudential matters rather than as moral matters, since they were usually rated as "not wrong at all." These results are not surprising because the nonsexual "nonwrong" acts are all covered by rules that are considered to be important for the stability of the Catholic Church. These rules may have been given considerably higher seriousness ratings than the sexual rules because Catholic adults understand their importance to the Catholic Church (their value as conventions), while they do not conceive of the sexual rules as having any power to hold the Catholic Church together. That is, they see the sexual rules as only prudential issues; they are not seen as being wrong at all or, if wrong, wrong only because they are mistakes or matters of mis-

judgment. Yet the nonsexual acts were given equal (but low) percentages of moral justifications as the sexual acts because it is understood that the acts are just as alterable as the sexual acts and are also applicable only to Catholics.

Therefore, it is clear that all the four criteria used by Turiel consistently allocate the eight "wrong" acts to the moral domain and the eight "nonwrong" acts to one or another of the two nonmoral domains. Also, while the "nonwrong" acts are all considered to be nonmoral issues, the sexual "nonwrong" acts are alone considered, for the most part, not to be wrong at all. The strong effect of sexual vs. nonsexual nature of the acts found by the data analysis is consistent with these results. The sexual "wrong" acts were rated as more seriously wrong than any of the "nonwrong" acts, but they were not rated as seriously wrong as the nonsexual "wrong" acts. Likewise, they were given moral justifications by more subjects than were the "nonwrong" acts, but by fewer subjects than were the nonsexual "wrong" acts. Thus, while the sexual acts fell into two distinct groups, one moral and one conventional, they were nonetheless consistently ranked as less serious than the moral acts with the same wrongness rating. This interesting effect appears to result from university students' liberal attitudes toward sexual right and wrong. While the subjects were Catholics, their university environment affected their sexual attitudes more than did the Catholic authorities. The rules specific to the Catholic Church, however, such as missing Mass, were probably not affected negatively by the university environment, and the rules forbidding such acts as murder and

rape may well have actually been strengthened by the environment. Hence, the nonsexual acts were considered to be much more serious issues, on the average, than the sexual acts.

A few more remarks may be added to the discussion of the subjects' treatment of the "wrong" acts as opposed to the "nonwrong" acts. Examination of Table 3 reveals that the addition of the nonmarital intercourse question did help to clarify students' sexual attitudes. Intercourse without intention to marry was seen as far more seriously wrong than premarital intercourse, possibly because of the wording "before they are married," which makes it look as if the couple are planning marriage. Apparently university students take the marriage commitment very seriously; most of the students rated open marriages wrong also, giving the fact that it "breaks a promise or vow" as the reason. The students' assignments of justifications, therefore, clearly grouped the nonmarital intercourse, open marriage and homosexuality items in a seriously morally wrong block and the kissing, premarital intercourse, masturbation and birth control items in a not-wrong-at-all block, as can be seen by Figure 2.

It will be remembered that the two issues of homosexuality and "open marriage" were answered in a confusing way by the subjects of Nucci and Junker (1982) and that this study included these items in an attempt to clarify them. This study also included a female homosexuality item for comparison with Nucci's male homosexuality item. The subjects, as expected, gave the male and female homosexuality items almost exactly the same seriousness rating, and they used exactly the same rea-

sons for why the two items were wrong. Thus, for these students, homosexuality between males and between females is the same issue, morally. The nonmarital intercourse question that was added to the questionnaire completed the sexual "wrong" group. Almost as many subjects rated these four acts as universal and unalterable as rated the nonsexual "wrong" acts as universal and unalterable. (See Tables 6 and 7) And the number of universal and unalterable ratings given the nonsexual "nonwrong" acts was not much smaller.

But although observation of these unalterability and universality ratings alone would indicate that these four sexual acts are in a grey area between morality and convention, observations of the seriousness ratings (see Table 3) and the percentages of moral justifications (see Figure 3) clearly show that these acts are seen as distinctly more serious issues than are any "nonwrong" acts, and are seen as moral issues also.

Turiel used two criteria to determine whether or not acts are intrinsically wrong: the act could be unjust, or it could cause harm by its very nature. He did not predict that homosexuality and "open marriage," or any sexual acts, would be moral issues because he saw no intrinsic injustice in sexual acts. Neither do most Catholic university students. However students do see certain sexual acts as intrinsically harmful. Most of the students believed that "open marriage" was wrong because it "breaks a promise or vow," a consequence that causes hurt to others. The most frequently used justification for why homosexuality was wrong was that it threatened the preservation of human life, also a

harmful consequence to others. These results do not leave too much room for doubt that there are at least three sexual behaviors that are seen as seriously wrong for moral reasons, even by sexually liberal university students.

Examination of Appendix A reveals that rape, as predicted, was grouped by the subjects among the nonsexual "wrong" acts rather than among the sexual "wrong" acts. The fact that it was considered to be as seriously wrong as the other violent acts shows that it was, indeed, considered by the students to be more a violent act than a sexual one.

These results, as it had been hoped, further confirmed Turiel's theory that most individuals perceive clearly the distinction between morality and convention that he postulates exists for nonsexual issues. They also bolstered Turiel's theory by showing that the eight sexual issues tested do not fall in a "grey" area between morality and convention but align themselves clearly in one or the other domain, at least for Catholic university students. Thus, Kohlberg's theory that morality and convention are not clearly distinguished until and unless one reaches the principled level of moral development is further weakened.

Differences Between Subjects

There were no differences in how the men and the women rated all the sixteen acts as a group, but within one of the groups of acts an unexpected sex difference was found in the seriousness ratings. The men gave more serious ratings to the nonsexual "nonwrong" acts (divorce and missing Mass and Communion) than did the women. In light of the fact that fewer men than women are seen at Mass, this is a difficult result

to interpret. The conclusions of Gilligan (1982) and Haan (1975) that men are more apt than are women to reason hypothetically in moral situations may explain these results. Gilligan compared the responses of girls and of boys on Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Inventory. She found that the girls focused on relationship factors when solving moral dilemmas while boys focused, as Kohlberg expects, on logical deduction from hypothetical rights and duties. When presented with one of the dilemmas in the MJI, the "Heinz" dilemma, the boys usually said that Heinz has a moral duty to steal a drug needed to save his wife's life because the druggist refused to give him the drug and his wife has a right to life. However, many of the girls refused to see the issue as a logic problem for Heinz, as it was intended, and instead saw it as a communication problem between Heinz and the druggist. Thus, they suggested improving the communication between them, an interpersonal solution. The girls maintained that it was wrong for Heinz to steal the drug but that Heinz's wife could still be saved by other means. Gilligan writes that "Women's construction of the moral problem as a problem of care and responsibility in relationships rather than as one of rights and rules ties the development of their moral thinking to changes in their understanding of responsibility and relationships, just as the conception of morality as justice [i.e., rights] ties [men's] development to the logic of equality and reciprocity" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 73).

Haan's (1975) research on university students also shows a sex difference in moral reasoning. She maintains that adult women are more concerned with real as opposed to hypothetical dilemmas, just as were

Gilligan's female subjects. To apply these ideas to the present study, Catholic men, while answering what they see as a theoretical question, would say that the rule to attend Mass and Communion is a serious one, but while deciding whether or not to actually obey it would look for loopholes. On the other hand, Catholic women would consider the rule from a more practical, interpersonal viewpoint. It could well be that a healthy person would miss Mass and Communion because his or her child is ill, because a friend needs help, or for any number of relationship-centered reasons. And, as Gilligan states, love and interpersonal responsibility are the major determinants of moral right and wrong for women. True, the questionnaire asked only for evaluation of the hypothetical rightness and wrongness of the acts, but the women may have nonetheless remembered real situations in their own past and therefore marked these rules as less seriously wrong than did men because of the extenuating interpersonal circumstances they remembered. The acts in the categories other than the nonsexual "wrong" group may not have been affected by the hypothetical/practical sex difference, since they already involve interpersonal situations, as the Canon Laws do not.

Divorce was also one of the acts marked less seriously wrong by the women than by the men. The noticeable, though insignificant, sex differences between the justifications given why divorce was wrong may explain this effect. Only women mentioned that by divorcing one might bring harm upon oneself, a very practical reason. Also, only one woman gave "God's law" for all human beings as the justification for why divorce was wrong, while five men gave this very theoretical reason.

Thus the men may, again, have been thinking more hypothetically than were the women.

Last, the fact that significantly more women than men used the justification "The act is disgusting" (only used for sexual acts) gives some support to the hypothesis that women may be socialized differently than are men concerning sexual morality. The prediction that women would see the sexual acts as more seriously wrong than would men because of differential socialization was not upheld, but these women do seem to view the morality of sexual acts from a more emotional viewpoint than do the men. This difference could, indeed have resulted from the predicted differential socialization concerning sexual issues. The women's socializers may have obtained a different result from the one they desired. Instead of instilling a strict, at least as compared to the men, attitude toward sexuality in the women, they may have merely instilled an attitude of disgust toward sexual matters.

In conclusion, although the predicted sex differences were not upheld by the data, two unexpected sex differences were found. Catholic university men answer questions about the seriousness of specific Church laws more strictly than do Catholic women, perhaps because they think about this type of issue more hypothetically than do women. Also, the men in this study were less likely to state that the sexual acts were wrong because they were "disgusting" than were the women, possibly because of differential sexual socialization.

Correlations

Spearman rank order correlations between the Seriousness, Unalterability and Universality tests were performed in this study, as in the Nucci and Junker study. The three tests were found to be significantly related, but most of this study's correlations ranged from 0.3 to 0.8, while Nucci and Junker's correlations were all in the 0.9 area. This difference probably resulted from one or both of two factors. This study's questionnaire was considerably shorter than that used by Nucci and Junker, who also stopped the subjects more often than did this researcher. Possibly their subjects became fatigued near the end of the study and took the easy way out by answering the last two tests, the unalterability and universality tests, in the same way. This study's subjects may have continued to make distinctions between the tests until the experiment ended, since it only lasted 20 minutes.

Second, examination of Tables 8 to 10 will reveal that the nonsexual "wrong" acts (Acts 5, 7, 8 and 14) showed the lowest and least significant correlations. But the raw data reveals that, for these four acts, almost all the subjects marked 1 (very seriously wrong), 1 (unalterable) and 1 (universal), while there was much more variance for the other 12 acts. Murder, rape, stealing and breaking the serious promise appear to show low correlations between the various scales only because the correlation statistic is based on variance, and, in this study, these four acts showed almost no variance. Thus, although the tests in this study were only moderately intercorrelated, there would nonetheless appear to be a great deal of overlap in what the tests measure.

In conclusion, as predicted, the behaviors considered by the students tested by this research to be seriously wrong were seen as wrong because they were considered to be moral issues, not violations of convention, even if the acts were sexual acts. Also, the acts considered to be fairly wrong or not wrong at all were seen as wrong either because they were considered to be conventional or prudential (not wrong at all) issues.

Also as hypothesized, Catholic university students were found to group sexual acts considered to be seriously wrong by the Catholic Church in two distinct groups: acts that really are seriously morally wrong, such as homosexuality and "open marriage," and acts that are not wrong or only fairly wrong because they are violations of Catholic convention only, such as kissing and premarital intercourse.

The prediction that the same eight acts rated as most seriously wrong would also be the most often rated as unalterable and universal was also upheld by the data. Likewise, the eight acts rated as least seriously wrong were least often rated as unalterable and universal.

Last, the hypothesis that men's and women's ratings of the sexual acts overall would differ was not supported by the data. However, the men did rate four of the nonsexual acts, the rules that are the most specific to the Catholic Church, as more seriously wrong than did the women. This was probably because women think of moral dilemmas in more practical terms than do men, and these dilemmas involved more leeway for hypothetical/practical differences than do the other issues.

Thus, this study appears to have made a useful contribution to the

area of moral development by helping to answer the question as to which issues Catholic adults consider to be moral ones and which they consider to be conventional and therefore applicable only to Catholics, especially in the sexual area.

Implications for Further Research

The area of discrimination between morality and convention is a very small one at the present time, but only because it is so new. It is certainly a very important one and needs to be expanded. This study has shown once again that Catholic university students use moral (intrinsic) justifications for very seriously wrong acts and conventional or prudential justifications for fairly seriously wrong acts. This contradicts Kohlberg's assumption that morality and convention are not clearly distinguished, if at all, until late adolescence or even young adulthood. Since this assumption is the basis of the MJI, and since the MJI is the major measure of moral development to date, a new test of moral development needs to be created that tests only the moral domain. Turiel's test could be used to measure development in the conventional domain.

Also, replicative studies need to be done to confirm the unexpected sex difference found by this study. If it is confirmed, the new test of moral development would have to take this difference into account in order to reduce the risk of sex bias.

Once it has been established that morality and convention are indeed distinct areas, and tests of development in the two areas have been shown to be reliable and valid, it will be necessary to create val-

ues education programs for the schools for each of the two areas. Values education programs can be found in the curricula of some schools already, but many of these programs are based on theories that confuse morality with convention (Durkheim, 1925/1961) and see all right and wrong as purely a matter of social consensus within particular cultures. That is, they do not see any rules as universally applicable or unalterable; they believe that all rules hold within certain societies only. This is because they do not see any act as wrong in itself, that is, intrinsically wrong. Morality, therefore, is the same as convention for them, and Turiel's four criteria are considered to be meaningless.

But this and the many other studies cited in Chapter I have shown that children do see a difference between morality and convention and do use the Intrinsicity criterion to determine what the difference is. That is, many individuals see some acts as intrinsically wrong, and they also see these acts, for the most part, as the only morally wrong acts. Thus values education which does not acknowledge the existence of the two domains is doomed to failure. The young students, unable to integrate what they are being "taught" in values education class with their intuitions about right and wrong, will not learn from such a class.

For instance, whenever a child hits another child, the intrinsic harm and injustice needs to be pointed out; this response should not vary from child to child and should not be subject to change. But when a child calls a teacher by her first name, no harm should be mentioned. Instead, the value of the convention of addressing teachers by their titles for the coherence of the school environment would be discussed.

Perhaps a vote might even be taken, allowing the students themselves to decide if this conventional rule should be changed or not. This acknowledgement of the distinctions between moral and conventional rules would certainly increase the students' respect for both the rules and the authorities, and might increase their obedience considerably also.

Thus, this study has answered some questions but has also presented new questions. And it has given moral development researchers and educators more tasks that clearly need to be done.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

One of the most intriguing issues in the area of moral development has been the question of whether most adults see a distinction between the areas of morality and convention, that is, acts that are intrinsically wrong and acts that are wrong only because of societal rules against them. This study has shown that Catholic university students do see this distinction. In fact, most students are in agreement about what is and is not morally right and wrong. This finding is consistent with most of the research conducted by Turiel, Nucci and others, which has also demonstrated the existence of this perceived distinction.

This study, like the previous studies, confirmed that Catholic adults use Turiel's criteria of seriousness, unalterability and universality to distinguish between moral and nonmoral issues. It also, for the first time, tested Turiel's intrinsicity criterion specifically by asking students to choose reasons why the acts seen as wrong were wrong. The Intrinsicity test showed results consistent with the results of the other three tests; Catholics do give moral justifications for very wrong acts and nonmoral justifications for acts are only fairly wrong.

It was also shown here that, although Catholic university students see sexual issues in general as less seriously wrong than nonsexual issues, they do see some sexual issues as serious moral issues. That

is, they see some of the sexual acts that are forbidden by the Catholic Church as not wrong at all but some of the acts as seriously wrong because they harm other persons or the world in general. They view non-sexual issues as belonging in two distinct groups also: acts seriously wrong because of intrinsic harm or injustice and acts fairly wrong only because they are covered by rules that are important to hold the Catholic Church together.

It was revealed that the Catholic university men saw breaking the rules specific to the Catholic Church, such as missing Mass on Sunday, as more seriously wrong than did the women. This sex difference, if replicated, should be taken into account by persons testing the moral development of Catholics both sexes.

Last, the seriousness, unalterability and universality scales used here were sufficiently highly intercorrelated to show that these three criteria measure basically the same thing: whether acts are moral, conventional or prudential (nonwrong) issues.

These findings are not only important for psychologists seeking to understand moral reasoning processes. They are also important for educators, since value education can be improved greatly by basing both values testing and curricula on the greater knowledge of moral reasoning contributed by this research.

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APPENDIX A

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES GIVEN USING EACH SERIOUSNESS RATING

	Very Seriously Wrong (1)		Seriously Wrong (2)		Fairly Seriously Wrong (3)		Not Wrong At All (4)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
	Nonsexual "Wrong" Acts							
5. Rape	95.9	98.0	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.0
Total	97.1		2.0		0.0		1.0	
7. Stealing	63.3	71.4	32.7	28.6	4.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	67.6		29.4		2.9		0.0	
8. Br. Promise	40.8	61.2	40.8	30.6	16.3	8.2	2.0	0.0
Total	52.0		35.3		11.8		1.0	
14. Murder	98.0	95.9	2.0	2.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0
Total	97.1		2.0		1.0		0.0	
Sexual "Wrong" Acts								
9. Nonmar. Int.	14.3	22.4	18.4	16.3	32.7	34.7	34.7	26.5
Total	17.6		18.6		32.4		31.4	
10. Male Homo.	67.3	34.7	16.3	26.5	10.2	26.5	6.1	12.2
Total	50.0		20.6		19.6		9.8	
13. Open Mar.	40.8	71.4	40.8	18.4	12.2	6.1	6.1	4.1
Total	55.9		29.4		9.8		4.9	
16. Fem. Homo.	61.2	40.8	20.4	22.4	12.2	24.5	6.1	12.2
Total	50.0		20.6		19.6		9.8	

	Very Seriously Wrong (1)		Seriously Wrong (2)		Fairly Seriously Wrong (3)		Not Wrong At All (4)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
	Nonsexual "Nonwrong" Acts							
1. Miss Mass	10.2	8.2	28.6	12.2	38.8	55.1	22.4	24.5
Total	8.8		21.6		45.1		24.5	
4. Miss Comm.	22.4	14.3	34.7	20.4	26.5	40.8	16.3	24.5
Total	17.6		28.4		33.3		20.6	
11. Xmas, Eas.	28.6	28.6	30.6	20.4	30.6	34.7	10.2	16.3
Total	28.4		26.5		31.4		13.7	
12. Divorce	22.4	14.3	34.7	22.4	18.4	36.7	24.5	26.5
Total	17.6		29.4		27.5		25.5	
Sexual "Nonwrong" Acts								
2. Kissing	0.0	0.0	2.0	4.1	12.2	10.2	85.7	85.7
Total	0.0		2.9		10.8		86.3	
3. Mastur.	6.1	10.2	18.4	14.3	30.6	22.4	44.9	53.1
Total	7.8		15.7		28.4		48.0	
6. Birth Cont.	4.1	4.1	6.1	8.2	24.5	20.4	65.3	67.3
Total	3.9		6.9		22.5		66.7	
15. Prem. Int.	4.1	8.2	10.2	18.4	26.5	18.4	59.2	55.1
Total	5.9		13.7		23.5		56.9	

APPENDIX B

PERCENTAGE OF SUBJECTS SAYING THAT ACTS ARE UNALTERABLE, UNIVERSAL

Act Rating	Unalterable	Universal
Nonsexual "Wrong" Acts		
5. Rape	99.0	95.1
7. Stealing	97.1	96.1
8. Breaking a Promise	96.1	89.2
14. Murder	99.0	97.1
Sexual "Wrong" Acts		
9. Nonmarital Intercourse	53.9	47.1
10. Male Homosexuality	79.4	73.5
13. Open Marriages	87.3	83.3
16. Female Homosexuality	79.4	74.5

Act Rating	Unalterable	Universal
Nonsexual "Nonwrong" Acts		
1. Missing	58.8	46.1
Mass		
4. Missing	64.7	48.0
Communion		
11. Missing	70.6	55.9
Easter Duty		
12. Divorce	47.1	47.1
Sexual "Nonwrong" Acts		
2. Kissing	6.9	7.8
3. Mastur-	38.2	37.3
bation		
6. Birth	15.7	20.6
Control		
15. Premarital	18.6	25.5
Intercourse		

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

Your age: _____

Your sex: M F

Please give us some information regarding your Catholic background. Please answer each question by placing a checkmark in the space for the statement that most clearly describes your experience.

1. Did you attend a Catholic school while you were growing up?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, what grades?

K ___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10 ___ 11 ___ 12 ___

2. Did you attend Catechism class (rather than full-time Catholic school) while you were young?

YES _____ NO _____

If yes, how many years did you attend?

1 year ___ 2 years ___ 3 years ___ 4 years ___ 5 or more years ___

3. About how often do you attend Mass?

more than once a week	once a week	2-3 times a month	once a month	2-3 times a year	once a year	almost never
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

4. About how often do you receive Communion?

more than once a week	once a week	2-3 times a month	once a month	2-3 times a year	once a year	almost never
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. Do you believe that Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, was a virgin at the time of Christ's birth?

YES _____ NO _____

6. Do you believe that Christ rose from the dead after his crucifixion?

YES _____ NO _____

7. Do you believe that the Pope is infallible when he speaks and writes officially (e.g. in encyclicals) on matters of faith and morals?

YES _____ NO _____

For each of the following acts, please indicate whether you believe that the act is very seriously wrong, seriously wrong, fairly wrong, or not wrong at all. Circle one number for each act.

	<u>Very Seriously</u> <u>Wrong</u>	<u>Seriously</u> <u>Wrong</u>	<u>Fairly</u> <u>Wrong</u>	<u>Not Wrong</u> <u>At All</u>
1. A healthy person does not attend Mass on Sunday.	1	2	3	4 _____
2. A man and woman who do not intend to marry kiss passionately.	1	2	3	4 _____
3. A teenager engages in masturbation.	1	2	3	4 _____
4. A person goes an entire year without receiving Communion.	1	2	3	4 _____
5. A man rapes a woman.	1	2	3	4 _____
6. A married couple use artificial birth control methods (e.g. the pill, condom).	1	2	3	4 _____
7. A person, who is financially secure steals money from another person.	1	2	3	4 _____
8. After promising to keep what he hears private, a man tells a woman's most personal secrets to a group of neighbors.	1	2	3	4 _____
9. A man and woman who do not intend to marry have sexual intercourse.	1	2	3	4 _____
10. Two men, who love each other, engage in homosexual acts.	1	2	3	4 _____

	<u>Very Seriously</u> <u>Wrong</u>	<u>Seriously</u> <u>Wrong</u>	<u>Fairly</u> <u>Wrong</u>	<u>Not Wrong</u> <u>At All</u>
11. A healthy person does not attend Mass on either Christmas or Easter.	1	2	3	4 _____
12. A married couple get a divorce.	1	2	3	4 _____
13. A man and his wife with each other's knowledge and permission each occasionally have sexual intercourse with someone else.	1	2	3	4 _____
14. A man shoots and kills a stranger on a train platform.	1	2	3	4 _____
15. A man and woman who love each other have sexual intercourse before they are married.	1	2	3	4 _____
16. Two women, who love each other, engage in homosexual acts.	1	2	3	4 _____

STOP!! DO NOT CONTINUE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO!

Below is a chart of possible reasons why an act might be wrong. Please return to the list on the previous two pages. For each act that you marked at all wrong, please mark on the line to the far right of it the letter that most closely corresponds to the most important reason in the chart that the act is wrong. Use as many or as few of the reasons in the chart as you wish, but please do not mark more than one (1) letter for each act. If you did not consider an act to be wrong, please place an "X" on the line to the far right of it.

Feel free to change any answers you wrote, and to pull the questionnaire apart to lay the pages out side by side.

- A. To do/not do this would very likely hurt another person.
- B. It violates the natural order, which requires preserving life (including procreation), to do/not do this.
- C. If Catholics did/didn't do this, the Church would be in trouble.
- D. If everybody did/didn't do this, the whole world would be in trouble.
- E. It is disgusting to do/not do this.
- F. It is dishonest to do/not do this; either it breaks a promise or vow or should be accompanied by a permanent commitment to the partner.
- G. Anyone who did/didn't do this would hurt him/herself physically.
- H. Anyone who did/didn't do this would hurt him/herself psychologically.
- I. It is unfair to do/not do this; it violates others' rights.
- J. Anyone who did/didn't do this would be scorned or laughed at.
- K. To do/not do this violates the laws laid down explicitly by the Catholic Church (Canon Law) for Catholics.
- L. Somebody told me so.
- M. To do/not do this is against the law laid down by God for Catholics.
- N. To do/not do this is against the law laid down by God for all human beings for all time.
- O. In this situation, it is selfish to do/not do this.

In recent years the Pope and bishops have rethought Catholic values and decided that certain rules and laws of the Church should be changed. Below are listed several acts that are now against Church rules or laws. For each act, if the Pope and cardinals agreed to drop the rule or law, would the act be still wrong or all right?

IF THERE IS NO LONGER A CHURCH RULE OR LAW ABOUT THE ACT BELOW, THE ACT IS . . .	STILL WRONG	ALL RIGHT
1. A healthy person does not attend Mass on Sunday.	_____	_____
2. A man and woman who do not intend to marry kiss passionately.	_____	_____
3. A teenager engages in masturbation.	_____	_____
4. A person goes an entire year without receiving Communion.	_____	_____
5. A man rapes a woman.	_____	_____
6. A married couple use artificial birth control methods (e.g. the pill, condom).	_____	_____
7. A person, who is financially secure, steals money from another person.	_____	_____
8. After promising to keep what he hears private, a man tells a woman's most personal secrets to a group of neighbors.	_____	_____
9. A man and woman who do not intend to marry have sexual intercourse.	_____	_____
10. Two men, who love each other, engage in homosexual acts.	_____	_____
11. A healthy person does not attend Mass on either Christmas or Easter.	_____	_____
12. A married couple get a divorce.	_____	_____
13. A man and his wife with each other's knowledge and permission each occasionally have sexual intercourse with someone else.	_____	_____
14. A man shoots and kills a stranger on a train platform.	_____	_____
15. A man and woman who love each other have sexual intercourse before they are married.	_____	_____
16. Two women, who love each other, engage in homosexual acts.	_____	_____

There are many religions besides Catholicism. Often these religions have rules and laws which are different from those of the Catholic religion. Below are listed several acts. For each act indicate whether it would be wrong or all right for another religion to have no rule or law about the act.

IT WOULD BE _____ FOR ANOTHER RELIGION TO HAVE <u>NO RULE ABOUT</u> THE ACT BELOW.	WRONG	ALL RIGHT
1. A healthy person does not attend Mass on Sunday.	_____	_____
2. A man and woman who do not intend to marry kiss passionately.	_____	_____
3. A teenager engages in masturbation.	_____	_____
4. A person goes an entire year without receiving Communion.	_____	_____
5. A man rapes a woman.	_____	_____
6. A married couple use artificial birth control methods (e.g. the pill, condom).	_____	_____
7. A person, who is financially secure, steals money from another person.	_____	_____
8. After promising to keep what he hears private, a man tells a woman's most personal secrets to a group of neighbors.	_____	_____
9. A man and woman who do not intend to marry have sexual intercourse.	_____	_____
10. Two men, who love each other, engage in homosexual acts.	_____	_____
11. A healthy person does not attend Mass on either Christmas or Easter.	_____	_____
12. A married couple get a divorce.	_____	_____
13. A man and his wife with each other's knowledge and permission each occasionally have sexual intercourse with someone else.	_____	_____
14. A man shoots and kills a stranger on a train platform.	_____	_____
15. A man and woman who love each other have sexual intercourse before they are married.	_____	_____
16. Two women, who love each other, engage in homosexual acts.	_____	_____

APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Jean M. Bradt has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology.

August 30, 1984
Date

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