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## A Psychological Study of Adolescent Everyday Morality

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A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF ADOLESCENT EVERYDAY MORALITY

by

Charles M. Shelton

A Dissertation 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

The author, Charles M. Shelton, is the son of June Shelton and the late Walter Shelton. He was born in 1950 in Berea, Kentucky.

He obtained his secondary education at Mater Dei High School in Evansville, Indiana where he graduated in June, 1968.

In September, 1968 he entered St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri and in June, 1972 he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, with a major in political science. While attending St. Louis University he was elected to three honor societies: Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Sigma Nu, Pi Sigma Alpha as well as a social fraternity, Sigma Pi.

In September, 1972 he entered the Missouri Province of the Society of Jesus' Novitiate in Kansas City, Missouri. In September, 1974 he began his Master of Arts degree in political science at St. Louis University and received the degree in January, 1976. While at the university he also completed all requirements from the state of Missouri for life certification in social studies at the secondary school level. From September, 1976 until June, 1979 he was an

instructor in social studies and a counselor at Regis Jesuit High School in Denver, Colorado. He also taught as an instructor in social science (psychology and political science) at Regis College.

In September, 1979 he began his theological studies at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, California. He was ordained to the priesthood in June, 1982. He received his Master of Divinity degree, with distinction, in June, 1983; concurrently, the faculty voted him the school's outstanding student of theology. From September, 1982 until June, 1983 he was an associate pastor at St. John's Church, El Cerrito, California.

In September, 1983 he entered the doctoral program in clinical psychology at Loyola University of Chicago. During his studies he was awarded the Charles Doyle Fellowship as well as a Schmitt Dissertation Fellowship.

He has published over thirty articles and book reviews and one book. The topical areas for these publications include: pastoral counseling, educational issues, religious formation, and adolescent development. He is currently completing a secondary school textbook on morality with Dr. John Nelson of Fordham University which will be published by William H. Sadlier & Co. of New York.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In 1975 I was completing my Master's degree in Political Science at St. Louis University along with satisfying requirements in the Department of Education in order to obtain certification as a secondary school instructor. At this time I also was employed as a residence counselor and lived in a college dormitory. This employment provided numerous opportunities for interactions with young adults. Through conversations I noted that late adolescents' discussions of moral issues and their questions regarding the morality of their personal behaviors were closely linked to developmental issues. As a seminarian I was naturally attracted to discussions about morality. In addition, however, I sensed my own academic interests were in a state of transition. I became increasingly dissatisfied with the content of my Political Science courses; rather, what did stimulate my intellectual interests were counseling issues as well as questions pertaining to human development.

During my assignment as an instructor in social science and as a counselor at a Jesuit secondary school



in Denver Colorado, I observed that high school youth, at a more rudimentary level than their college counterparts, shared the same developmental issues. That is, moral questions and concerns frequently were tied to developmental issues. For me, this observation proved a catalyst for later academic pursuits. I began to read avidly in the area of developmental psychology in general, and moral development in particular. Specifically the writings of Lawrence Kohlberg began to occupy my time. Yet, while I was reading, I sensed a growing discontent with the framework in which psychology, particularly the cognitive-developmental approach, interpreted morality. My own observations of and interactions with adolescents led me to conclude that another approach needed to be pursued. Moreover, the adolescent's moral development, I thought, was more properly viewed as an attempt to develop and sustain caring responses in the midst of everyday functioning. Throughout my three-year teaching assignment in Denver and subsequent four years of graduate theological studies leading to my Master of Divinity degree as well as through my first three years of doctoral studies in Clinical Psychology, I have reflected on the issue of adolescent moral development, particularly how such development can be reconciled with the Christian

religious tradition and, more specifically, the efforts of religious educators to focus on the development of the moral self. In essence, this dissertation sets forth, from a psychological perspective, a way to conceptualize morality that brings together psychological theories of morality and the concerns of religious education.

Recently, few topics have generated as much interest among psychologists and educators as "morality." The questioning of cultural norms in the seventies (as exemplified by the Vietnam War and Watergate), youth's demand for "honesty" and "authenticity" in relational concerns, and the questioning and challenging of formerly sacrosanct values (e.g., traditional sex-roles, interpersonal and sexual behaviors, acceptance of legal and political authority) have converged to stimulate questioning as to what constitutes morality for youth today. Answers to the question--what is morality?--continue to occupy the time of developmental psychologists, theologians, and educators.

Kohlberg's (1981, 1984) cognitive-developmental view represents the most theoretically advanced and empirically scrutinized perspective on morality advanced

thus far. Even so, numerous criticisms of his theory (e.g., Kurtines & Gewirtz, 1984) have led theorists to consider other approaches. In order to delineate everyday morality in adolescence, attention must first be given to the merits and limitations of this dominant theoretical perspective as set forth by Kohlberg. Chapter II provides a critical reading of this theory. By exploring the tenets of Kohlberg's theory and addressing salient criticisms, the need for an alternative view of morality emerges. Moreover, a critical examination of Kohlberg's theory suggests that explicit attention be given to the religious dimensions of human experience. Recently, Bergin (1980) has criticized the non-religious character of clinical and counseling psychology. It is equally important, however, that developmental theory, particularly moral developmental theory, be asked to address this challenge.

More recently, Rest (1983, 1984, 1985; Carroll & Rest, 1982) has proposed that a fully developed view of morality must incorporate four components. These components of morality are:

1. Recognition and sensitivity: translating and disambiguating a given social situation so as to be aware that a moral problem exists; to be sensitive enough to recognize that someone's welfare is at stake;

2. Moral judgment: determining what ideally ought to be done in the situation, what one's moral ideals call for or which moral norms apply in the given circumstances;

3. Values and influences: devising a plan of action with one's moral ideal in mind but also taking into account non-moral values and goals which the situation may activate;

4. Execution and implementation of moral action: behaving in accordance with one's goal despite distractions, impediments, and incidental adjustments; organizing and sustaining behavior to realize one's goals. (Carroll & Rest, 1982, p. 434)

Rest (1983) maintains that psychologists have opted to view only one or more of these components, yet have neglected to consider all four components of morality simultaneously as integral for morality; consequently, the complexity of morality is underestimated. At the same time, religious educators' focus on prescriptive behaviors (Component II) most likely narrows their own vision and precludes them from discerning the numerous factors suggested in Rest's model which undoubtedly influence a person's moral behavior. Rest asserts that "we need to attempt a fuller, more complicated, more integrated picture of morality and to envision how the part processes are organized" (p. 558).

From another perspective, Martin Hoffman has provided a different focus for morality. According to Hoffman, empathy emerges as a catalyst for stimulating

prosocial behavior. The contrast of Kohlberg's and Hoffman's theories highlights a fundamental limitation of each approach. Though Kohlberg defines a valued ideal (the justice principle), there exists no human mechanism in his theory to account for why people behave morally. On the other hand, Hoffman adequately explores the human element required for prosocial responding (i.e., empathy), yet he fails to provide a valued principle which directs one's prosocial responses. Chapter III delineates Hoffman's theory of empathic morality as well as the limitations of his approach. Relatedly, Chapter IV formulates a perspective of morality termed everyday morality (Shelton, 1985, Shelton & McAdams, in press) which incorporates Hoffman's empathic perspective and addresses Rest's concerns for a more integrated and fully developed view of morality. Moreover, this chapter critically examines the similarities and differences between everyday morality and what Haan (Haan, Aerts & Cooper, 1985) has come to call interactional morality.

Nonetheless, there remains the need to reorient everyday morality in terms of Rest's call for a more fully integrated view of morality. A critical reading of his writing points out both the merits of his

conceptual scheme and the need to set forth "processes" that fulfill his criteria. Chapter V is an examination of "processes" which allow for the development of the adolescent's everyday morality. Situated within the context of an everyday morality, these processes reconcile Kohlberg's need for a human mechanism as well as Hoffman's lack of a directional focus for empathic responding. Furthermore, these processes are sensitive to the concerns of religious educators (e.g., Groome), which heretofore have been absent in the developmental literature. An application of this process is provided in Chapter VI with special emphasis given to adolescent social morality.

In sum, this study will look to a different focus of morality than Kohlberg's moral orientation which is centered around one's understanding of justice. Specifically, in contrast to the notion of justice, morality will be framed in a prosocial context and be concerned with prosocial acts as they commonly occur in everyday life (thus this morality is termed everyday morality). In order to study everyday morality during the adolescent years, Rest's component process model is utilized. Moreover, the features set forth in the examination of Rest's model will be termed "morality of the heart." It is the morality of the heart which

fosters and sustains the adolescent's attempt to care for others.

### A Final Comment

Finally, this dissertation provides a broad view of adolescence. An acceptable definition of adolescence is stated by the American Psychiatric Association (cited in Nicholi, 1978):

a chronological period beginning with the physical and emotional processes leading to sexual and psychosocial maturity and ending at an ill-defined time when the individual achieves independence and social productivity. This period is associated with rapid physical, psychological and social changes. (p. 519)

More specifically, however, this dissertation is focused on secondary school youth; as a consequence, adolescence is limited to this population. As a result, given this focus, the meaning of this study for specific segments or sub-populations of adolescents (e.g., the mentally retarded, drop outs) is unclear.

In addition, morality (which will be discussed more fully in Chapter IV) is defined as behavior which benefits others. The word "religious" is consonant with the theistic value system as set forth by Bergin (1980).

Numerous ideas as to the nature of morality as well as the enormous research findings necessitate the need to develop some means for organization. More to the point, Rest has proposed what he terms a component

process model for investigating morality. In this study, Rest's means of conceptualizing morality will be utilized.

The integration of disciplines has become the norm rather than the exception for research pertaining to morality (Carroll & Rest, 1982; Kurtines & Gewirtz, 1984). Increasingly, approaches to the study of morality must seek to incorporate psychological, educational, and philosophical concerns. "Altogether, investigation of everyday morality is a trans-disciplinary venture that best includes psychology and philosophy as well as those social science disciplines that focus on human collectivities" (Haan, 1982, p. 1103). With an eye towards this end, this study provides an integration of the available literature and sets forth a view of morality that is germane to the adolescent's experience and which addresses the research concerns of psychologists and educators. In turn, it is hoped that this study will generate future empirical research as well as stimulate constructive interventions for professionals who work with adolescents.



## CHAPTER II

### THE KOHLBERG LEGACY

Questions of moral meaning have always been an essential focus for human inquiry (Staub, 1978). At the same time, emphasis on the function, maintenance, and continuity of human societies necessitates discussion as to the nature of morality. (Rest, 1983; Staub, 1978). Thus, "although the specific definitions may vary, there is an acknowledgment that morality constitutes the basic fabric of societal and interpersonal relations" (Colangelo, 1985, p. 244). Pointing to this universal consensus, Berkowitz and Oser (1985) observe that in any poll-taking venture, few people would vote against morality although considerable disagreement would ensue as to what are morality's essential elements.

Moreover, psychologists note that individuals attempt to view themselves as moral persons (Guidano & Liotti, 1983; Haan, et al., 1985; Kagan, 1984). The importance of morality for people's lives has not gone unnoticed in social science theorizing. Psychology's relationship to the study of morality has led Haan (1982) to conclude that "issues concerning moral

meanings in people's lives can not be ignored if social science is to be complete and competent" (p. 1096).

Among psychological explanations of morality, Lawrence Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental approach has been dominant, although other approaches have surfaced (e.g., Kurtines & Greif, 1984). In earlier writings, Haan gives credit to Kohlberg's empirically rich formulation of the justice principle, but in her most recent work it is dismissed as ill-defined; furthermore, the meaning of morality, she maintains, lacks a unified consensus in the social science community. Having rejected Kohlberg's cognitive-structural approach, Haan has championed a notion of morality which she terms "everyday morality." Haan construes this morality as meaning how individuals act morally in their everyday lives (Chapter IV sets forth a definition of everyday morality for the present study). She cautiously offers the hope that social science in general, and psychology in particular, can profit from a redirected effort to investigate the importance of morality for people's everyday lives.

Haan's call for an everyday morality has heuristic appeal; recently, she has offered a more understanding yet equally incisive critique of Kohlberg's theory (Haan et al., 1985). Still, any psychological discussion of

morality can ill afford to take lightly Kohlberg's contribution. Indeed, discussion of the psychological meaning of morality must proceed from an understanding of both the merits and inadequacies of Kohlberg's approach. His significance for a psychology of morality arises for two reasons. First, Kohlberg has provided psychological research with the most theoretically integrated and empirically tested theory of morality. Thus, psychological investigations of morality must consider his approach before offering alternatives. Secondly, Kohlberg's moral theory, among all psychological theories of morality, enjoys broad support in educational, philosophical, and religious circles (Berkowitz & Oser, 1985; Muson, 1979). Woodward and Lord (1976) report that over 5,000 school districts have utilized aspects of Kohlberg's theory in their curricula. Accordingly, in order to explore a psychological understanding of morality for the adolescent's everyday life, attention must first be given to Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental view.

#### The Background for Kohlberg's Theory

Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental approach (1975, 1978, 1981, 1984) is the most ambitious attempt to date at delineating a psychological view of morality. A catalyst for Kohlberg's research was the apparent

previous failure of psychologists and educators to set forth a universal and empirically valid moral theory. According to Kohlberg, two movements in particular typified the failure to generate a viable moral theory. These movements were the character studies undertaken by Hartshorne and May (Hartshorne & May, 1928; Hartshorne, May, & Maller, 1929; Hartshorne, May, & Shuttlesworth, 1930) and the value education movement of the 1960s (e.g., Simon, Howe, & Kirschenbaum, 1972). In regards to the latter, Kohlberg has rejected the values clarification approach (e.g., Martin, 1982; Simon, Howe, & Kirschenbaum, 1972). Briefly stated, this approach objected to moralizing in the classroom and advocated student participation as a way to foster the child or adolescent's personal value system. In other words, this approach attempts to develop the child's recognition of specific values and an awareness as to how these personal values correspond to the child's behavior. Essentially, this approach encourages students, through a method of value process, to prize, to choose, and to act on values they deem appropriate for a given situation. The inadequacy of value clarification approaches, says Kohlberg, resides in the relativity to which all values are reduced. Consequently, any and all values are options for

students. Kohlberg (1981) notes that a value clarification approach, in order to be consistent, must even allow cheating to be a legitimately chosen option for the child.

In the 1920's Hartshorne and May embarked upon a massive character study of over ten thousand elementary and secondary school students. These researchers employed over thirty behavioral tests to measure behaviors associated with a "virtuous" character. Having surveyed religious leaders and educators, Hartshorne and May constructed an agreed upon list of behaviors which virtuous children and adolescents would be apt to carry out (e.g., altruistic acts, instances of self-control). In addition to these tests, teachers rated students on lists of virtuous characteristics. Intercorrelations among the various tests yielded low relationships, generally in the .20 to .30 range. These findings led Hartshorne and May to conclude that positive behaviors such as altruistic acts are situation specific. In other words, these researchers found no evidence of a "moral character" which influenced one's moral behavior across a variety of situations. Thus, they concluded that positive behavior was contingent upon the situation.

When commenting upon these disappointing results, Kohlberg (1981) has noted "it is a fair statement of the history of psychological research in the field to say that the study of character as a set of virtues has not been a flourishing or successful research paradigm" (p. 2). As a general comment, Kohlberg has characterized the Hartshorne and May studies as exemplifying a "bag of virtues" approach to morality.

In contrast to an approach which focuses on the behavioral study of traditionally accepted positive behaviors, Kohlberg (Kohlberg, 1984) has insisted that there exists an "internal component" (p. 500) involved in "moral action". Kohlberg's own research has attempted to redress the disillusionment fostered by Hartshorne and May's findings that moral behavior is situation-specific. Throughout his nearly thirty years of research, Kohlberg (1981) has maintained there exists a "universal ontogenetic trend toward the development of morality" (p. 105) as it has been set forth by Western moral philosophers. In effect, Kohlberg's writings underscore his acceptance of a deontological ethical position. Essentially, this position argues that morality is not based on rules (e.g., the Ten Commandments), but on principles that are universally binding on all human beings. Thus, Kohlberg

(1984) maintains

The focus of Piaget and myself on morality as deontological justice springs, in part, from a concern with moral and ethical universality in moral judgment. The search for moral universality implies the search for some minimal value conception(s) on which all persons could agree, regardless of personal differences in detailed aims or goals. (p. 248)

Kohlberg has set forth a three level-six stage theory of morality that is invariant, sequential, and cross-cultural. Individuals tend to prefer the highest stage in which they can reason. These stages have been empirically validated in longitudinal studies by Kohlberg and his associates. The three levels and six stages which make up Kohlberg's theory are given below. Recently, Kohlberg (1984) has responded to critical comments and challenges to his theory. When appropriate, Kohlberg's responses are presented as a way to expand on the theory and his current thinking.

#### I. Preconventional Level

At this level, the child is responsive to cultural rules and labels of good and bad, right or wrong, but interprets these labels either in terms of the physical or hedonistic consequences of action (punishment, reward, exchange of favors) or in terms of the physical power of those who enunciate the rules and labels. The level is divided into the following two stages:

Stage 1: The punishment-and-obedience orientation. The physical consequences of action determine its goodness or badness, regardless of the human meaning or value of these consequences.

Stage 2: The instrumental-relativist orientation. Right action consists of that which instrumentally satisfies one's own needs and occasionally the needs of others.

## II. Conventional Level

At this level, maintaining the expectations of the individual's family, group, or nation is perceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences. The attitude is not only one of conformity to personal expectations and social order, but of loyalty to it, of actively maintaining, supporting and justifying the order, and of identifying with the persons or group involved in it. At this level, there are the following two stages:

Stage 3: The interpersonal concordance or "good boy-nice girl" orientation. Good behavior is that which pleases or helps others and is approved by them. There is much conformity to stereotypical images of what is majority or "natural" behavior.

Stage 4: The "law and order" orientation. There is orientation toward authority, fixed rules, and the maintenance of the social order. Right behavior consists of doing one's duty, showing respect for authority, and maintaining the given social order for its own sake.

## III. Postconventional, autonomous, or principled level

At this level, there is a clear effort to define moral values and principles that have validity and application apart from the authority of the groups or persons holding these principles and apart from the individual's own identification with these groups. This level also has two stages:

Stage 5: The social-contract, legalistic orientation, generally with utilitarian overtones. Right action tends to be defined in terms of general individual rights and standards which have been critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society. There is a clear awareness of the relativism of personal values and opinions and a corresponding emphasis upon procedural rules for reaching consensus.



Stage 6: The universal-ethical-principle orientation. Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. These principles are abstract and ethical (The Golden Rule, the categorical imperative); they are not concrete moral rules like the Ten Commandments. At heart, these are universal principles of justice, of the reciprocity and equality of human rights, and of respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons (Kohlberg, 1975, p. 671).

This central, underlying principle which forms the basis for morality is the individual's understanding of justice. Kohlberg (1974) has stated "there is a natural sense of justice intuitively known by the child" (p. 5). Accordingly, an individual reasons about values, life dilemmas, and personal choices in the context of an understanding of justice which is appropriate for his or her stage. Firmly placing himself within the cognitive-developmental tradition of Piaget, Kohlberg (1981) has argued

A cognitive-developmental theory of moralization holds that there is a sequence of moral stages for the same basic reason that there are cognitive or logicomathematical stages; that is, because cognitive-structural reorganizations toward the more equilibrated occur in the course of interaction between the organism and the environment.

Kohlberg (1984) states that "stage notions are essentially ideal-typological constructs designed to represent different psychological organizations at varying points in development" (p. 39). Kohlberg

distinguishes his own stage theory of moral development from other stage theories. He labels, for example, Erikson's theory of life cycle development as a functional stage; that is, Erikson's theory focuses on individual functioning within a variety of cultural roles. Another type of stage theory (Kohlberg also describes these theories as models) is that of a soft structural stage. A soft structural stage is characterized by the inclusion of "elements of affective or reflective characteristics of persons, characteristics not easily assimilated to the Piagetian paradigm" (p. 237). Kohlberg offers Loevinger's theory of ego development as an example of a soft stage structure. In contrast, Kohlberg presents his theory as being a hard stage structure; in essence, a hard stage structure is one which meets Piagetian stage criteria. In brief, there are four criteria for a stage: (1) the structure of each stage is distinguishable from other stages; (2) these stages form an invariant, sequential ordering in human development wherein cultural factors can influence the rate of development but are unable to alter the sequence; (3) each stage represents a "structural whole"--a distinctive "underlying thought organization"; (4) stages are hierarchically integrated thus a higher stage

incorporates all lower stage structures.

According to Kohlberg, Erikson's functional theory lacks three of the four Piagetian criteria. Erikson's functional stages delineate a variety of ego functions in response to crises rather than focus on a single form of activity such as moral reasoning which is constant across situations and experiences (criterion three). Further, a functional stage theory addresses psychological aspects of the "self's concern" and can, therefore, be culturally relative. In contrast, hard stage structures separate the forms of reasoning from psychological accounts of self and thus can be tested cross-culturally (criterion two). Finally, Erikson's stages lack hierarchical integration; in reality, says Kohlberg, the ego takes on a new function at each stage. On the other hand, hard structural stages "replace earlier stages in the sense that each succeeding stage transforms the previous one into a more adequate reorganization" (p. 239) (criterion four).

In summary, the differences between Eriksonian functional stages and hard structural stages are relatively straightforward. These differences concern not only the nature of the stages but also the focus of the theories they are based upon. The focus of functional stage models on the self coincides with the notion of developing stages of an ego, viewed as an executor or chooser that uses cognitive and

other structures. In contrast, the focus of hard structural stages is upon forms of manifest reasoning rather than upon the ego's processes of affirming or defining itself. (p. 240)

Kohlberg, likewise, uses Piagetian stage criterion to distinguish his theory from Loevinger's "soft stage" theory of ego development. Kohlberg finds similarities between the two theories. Even so, Kohlberg states his theory is viewed as a focus on forms of thinking whereas "Loevinger's scheme consider structure less as a form of thinking and more in terms of fairly stable personality functions and contents" (p. 242) (see criterion three). Moreover, Loevinger's theory, says Kohlberg, addresses the self's definition, its unity, and its "enhancement and defense". This type of thinking is labeled second order thinking and is contrasted by Kohlberg to the Piagetian hard structural stage thinking which is thinking logically related to a set of operations. "The Kohlberg stage model, then, represents the different hierarchically integrated forms of the operations of reciprocity, equality, and equity" (p. 244).

All in all, Kohlberg sees clear distinctions among the three differing views of stages.

In sum, we have attempted to elaborate a set of distinctions between functional, soft structural, and hard structural stage models. We have argued that a rigorous application of the Piagetian

criteria for a hard structural stage can distinguish three stage models, and that only a hard structural stage model can actually meet these criteria. (p. 248)

Kohlberg believes that moral growth, like cognitive development, allows for increasingly moral structural transformations. These transformations are the result of life experience, increasing capacity for role-taking, encounters with and discussions about hypothetical dilemmas, and most recently, his belief on the importance of the existence of a socio-moral environment which fosters a just community (Kohlberg, 1984, 1985). All in all, given the foregoing experiences, an individual encounters a greater degree of disequilibrium which engenders stage advancement. "In essence, there is a "deep logical structure" of movement from one stage to the next; a structure tapped by both a psychological theory of movement and by families of philosophical argument" (1981, p. 182). Moreover, each stage reflects a more adequate understanding of the justice principle because inherent in each stage of moral development is a greater degree of differentiation and integration. That is, each stage, because of its differentiated and integrating capacities is, in essence, a more mature structure capable of meeting the complexity and variability inherent in life dilemmas, conflicts, and differing

points of view. "These combined criteria, differentiation and integration, are considered by developmental theory to entail a better equilibrium of the structure in question" (p. 135). Even so, though each stage underscores a distinctive understanding of the justice principle, it is only at stage six that justice embraces the attributes of fairness, equality and reciprocity. Only at this stage does justice become universally acceptable because only stage six morality incorporates a view of justice which all rational persons regardless of cultural background or existential situation could agree upon.

#### Some Salient Criticisms of Kohlberg's Theory

Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental approach has been the subject of numerous critiques. Accordingly, in this section, major criticisms are highlighted which elucidate the limitations of Kohlberg's theory in light of the need for a morality for everyday life (e.g., Shelton, 1985).

##### 1. Methodological shortcomings of his approach with special emphasis on the validity of stage six.

Among all the critiques directed against his theory, few have been as pointed as the criticism of methodological inadequacies. These shortcomings

include: flawed scoring procedures, lack of reliability, and the validity of a post-conventional morality (Kurtines & Greif, 1974; Wonderly & Kupfersmid, 1980).

Recently, Kohlberg and his associates (1984) have attempted to address these criticisms. In effect, Kohlberg has introduced a standard issue scoring that obtains a more objective and reliable scoring system by specifying exact criteria requisite for each stage. In turn, these measures have produced an extremely high degree of reliability as well as a clear demarcations of content from structure. The subject responds in an interview format to a group of dilemmas constructed by Kohlberg and his colleagues. Once a response is given, a series of questions are asked in order to probe the respondent's level of moral reasoning and to expunge content. To summarize briefly, Kohlberg (Kohlberg, 1984; Rest, 1983) utilizes a classifying procedure in which the subject's open ended responses are first classified by issue. The issue is then divided according to one of twelve possible norms and then classified further according to one of seventeen elements. Only then is the open ended response scored. Commenting on these new efforts, Rest (1983) notes that Kohlberg has been able to purge "content with a vengeance" (pp.

582-583). One must wonder, however, that in purifying his stages, Kohlberg is left with a narrowly based view of morality--a morality so concerned with its structural purity that it eschews other significant factors (e.g., emotion, personal meaning to the moral agent). On the other hand, although the new scoring format has rectified many previous shortcomings, the new scoring format has failed to satisfy all of Kohlberg's critics (e.g., Cortese, 1984; Montemayor, 1985; Villenave-Cremer & Eckensberger, 1985).

Nonetheless, the most damaging criticism leveled against Kohlberg's theory is the inability to validate a sixth stage. In earlier formulations of the theory (Kohlberg, 1969), Kohlberg spoke convincingly of the obtainment of principled morality and the exciting possibilities that such a post-conventional world view had for human society. Heretofore, when discussing the adolescent years, Kohlberg (Kohlberg & Gilligan, 1971) optimistically maintained that the adolescent's development would lead to a questioning and relativistic stance leading some (albeit a minority of adolescents) to adopt a principled (post-conventional) solution to life issues. By the late seventies, however, Kohlberg was less sanguine in regard to the adolescent's achievement of a principled morality. A reanalysis of his original



data led Kohlberg to reject his assertion as to the likelihood or even the possibility of stage six moral reasoning. Commenting in a critical way on his own research he noted

Empirical research between 1968 and 1976 did not confirm my theoretical statements about a sixth and highest stage (Kohlberg, 1979). My longitudinal subjects, still adolescents in 1968, had come to adulthood by 1976, but none had reached the sixth stage. Perhaps all the sixth stage persons of the 1960s had been wiped out, perhaps they had regressed, or maybe it was all my imagination in the first place. (1980, p. 457).

In a similar vein, Kohlberg argued that the American secondary school could no longer accede to his challenge to foster a principled morality among its students. By the late seventies Kohlberg called instead for the development of stage 5 thinking as a goal for the secondary school. Yet, in 1980, Kohlberg admitted that further "retrenchment" was necessary and that only stage 4 thinking was a realistic possibility for the secondary school student. By the mid-eighties (Kohlberg, 1984) maintained that moral reasoning above stage 4 was unobtainable for adolescents and most young adults. Stage advancement up through stage four requires a more adequate conceptualization of role-taking which allows the student to comprehend the social system. However, movement beyond Stage 4 requires the subject to commit him or herself to ideals which are

valued and which in turn will be carried out. Only with college experience and leaving home is the late adolescent capable of anticipating commitment to valued ideals. Kohlberg believes such experiences as separation from parents are necessary for advancement beyond stage 4 for only through such transitions does a person encounter experiences that are not of his or her making and which require choices for which the adolescent must take responsibility. Movement to principled thinking (stage 5) necessitates a combination of life experiences, active and on-going questioning about life choices, commitment to personal decisions, and corresponding moral reflection.

In summary, personal experiences of choice involving questioning and commitment, in some sort of integration with stimulation of cognitive-moral reflection, seem required for movement from conventional to principled (Stage 5) thought. It is probably for this reason that principled thought is not attained in adolescence. (p. 493)

Nonetheless, Kohlberg has reemphasized in his own theory the importance of truly principled morality (stage 6). Although no longer maintaining the empirical verifiability of stage 6, Kohlberg now views that the theoretical possibility of a principled morality evinced in stage 6 thinking has considerable import. Further, Kohlberg now sets forth a role for substages (termed "Substage B" for each of the stages). Individuals who

demonstrate reasoning at Substage B levels tend to be more autonomous and responsible in their thinking and are more inclined to view the importance of justice operations such as equality and reciprocity. For example, Kohlberg reasons that individuals who score at substage B for stage 5 are able to intuit part of the principles of justice set forth in stage 6, yet they are unable to articulate the central role accorded the justice principle as the criterion for stage 6 reasoning.

The present position of stage 6 thinking, moreover, appears to provide two features for his theory. First, justice has come to operate as a functional component inasmuch as it offers a conceptual understanding for his theory. Thus, Kohlberg (1984) argues that "a terminal stage, with the principle of justice as its organizing principle, helps us to define the area of human activity under study" (p. 271). Secondly, he appears to view stage 6, in the current sketch of his theory, as an "ideal end point" for the development of the more limited understandings of justice articulated at lower stages. It should be noted, however, recent scoring revisions demonstrate only minimal support even for stage 5 thinking. Thus, Rest (1983) noted that "stage 5 even in minor traces is a rarity" (p. 583) and that,

in general, movement from one stage to another is an exceedingly slow process wherein most change occurs among only a few stages (usually from 2 to 4).

Yet, Kohlberg now hypothesizes the utility of a stage 7. Kohlberg views a stage 7 orientation as a "soft" hypothetical stage. Thinking at this stage is concerned with life issues and questions which go beyond the "hard" philosophic reflections characteristic of the first six stages (e.g., Why be moral?, Why is there evil?). In entertaining the idea of a stage 7, Kohlberg acknowledges the limitations of his theory to account for all meaningful life questions. In this respect, Kohlberg appears sensitive to challenges to his own thinking. "Generally speaking, a Stage 7 response to ethical and religious problems is based on constructing a sense of identity or unity with being, with life, or with God" (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 249). He associates stage 7 thinking with more theistically based orientations; for example, he includes such thinkers as James Fowler in this latter category.

In sum, even though there is absent an empirically verifiable sixth stage, Kohlberg argues for its inclusion as an ideal end-point in an individual's on-going moral development. Nonetheless, Kohlberg (1981, 1984) has so identified the justice principle

with morality that its absence in fact and the paucity of post-conventional scores leaves open the question of what is moral as well as the question of who can be moral. Kohlberg (1984) has stated

Morality as justice best renders our view of morality as universal. It restricts morality to a central minimal core, striving for universal agreement in the face of more relativist conceptions of the good. (p. 306)

Although this view of morality is understandable given Kohlberg's emphasis on hard stage structures, it is also problematic in that it rules out an individual's full obtainment of morality.

2. The contextual relevancy of Kohlberg's view of morality and the resulting inadequacy of the cognitive-developmental view for addressing moral situations in everyday life.

A second difficulty with Kohlberg's conceptualization of morality concerns the application of the justice principle to everyday life situations. Surprisingly, even though the concept of justice is the central focus for Kohlberg's moral system, the exact meaning which Kohlberg accords the justice principle is unclear. He has defined justice as "equality" (p. 38); a moral principle, that is, "a mode of choosing" which all people will adopt in all situations (p. 39); the resolution of competing claims (p. 143); the "core of

morality" (p. 295); "the agreement, contract, and impartiality of the law" (p. 300); and as an abstract formal principle containing characteristics termed by philosophical discourse as universality, inclusivity, consistency, and objectivity.

Regardless of the justice definition one adopts, the justice principle, when applied to Kohlberg's dilemmas, negotiates the conflicting rights and claims of individuals. Morality for Kohlberg is justice. And the highest form of morality is contained in justice reasoning characteristic of stage six. However, from the standpoint of the nature of morality, interpreting morality as the resolution of rights and claims represents a circumscribed perspective of morality's meaning (Staub, 1978). Furthermore, the emphasis on rights and duties underscores what many have believed to be the strong ideological bias in Kohlberg's system (Haan, 1982; Hogan, 1975; Kagan, 1984; Shweder, 1982). Thus, as Gibbs and Schnell (1985) conclude "Kohlbergian theory as currently constituted would indeed seem to be compromised by philosophical individualism with its ethnocentric and elitist ramifications and would appear to be in need of revision" (p. 1075). Moreover, the dilemmas Kohlberg utilizes to develop a stage morality delimit moral context. In other words, individuals as

moral agents frequently encounter what they would term moral situations not reducible to a conflict of competing claims. Eisenberg (1977) has addressed this very point regarding the rule oriented focus of Kohlberg's dilemmas. Her development of prosocial moral reasoning categories attempts to widen the narrow conflicting rights focus associated with Kohlberg's hypothetical dilemmas. Even so, her emphasis on hypothetical dilemmas wedds her to the reasoning focus of Kohlberg rather than a context for morality situated in everyday life events. Relatedly, Lemming (1978) found that when given everyday situational dilemmas, adolescents tended to reason at stages lower than corresponding stages associated with Kohlberg's hypothetical dilemmas. Recent investigations by Kohlberg (Higgins, Power, & Kohlberg, 1984; Kohlberg, 1985) have attempted to be more sensitive to the practical dimensions of moral dilemmas. Advocating the concept of a democratic or just community, Kohlberg and his associates have shown that the moral atmosphere of the school fosters positive behaviors.

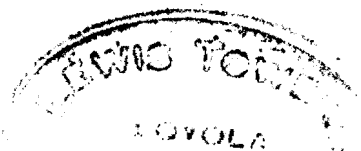
To summarize, notwithstanding Kohlberg's acknowledgement of a more practical side to morality, it is likely that Kohlberg's preference for defining morality in terms of justice necessarily narrows

morality's meaning. Likewise, hypothetical dilemmas neither provide an emphasis for other dimensions of morality (e.g., personal everyday behaviors) nor do they accurately reflect numerous situations that individuals encounter in everyday life events.

3. The tension between an ethics of justice and an ethics of care: The cognitive versus affective debate.

Essentially, the question associated over the debate between an ethics of justice versus an ethics of care focuses on the following: What is the nature of morality? As noted above, for Kohlberg, the essence of what is moral is found in the justice principle which is applied impartially and universally to competing claims or interests; in addition, this view of morality or what Kohlberg terms "the moral point of view" is discovered through rational discourse.

On the other hand, Gilligan (1982) focuses on an ethics of care and proposes a significant refocusing of morality's meaning. Gilligan's work results from three studies undertaken by her and her associates. The first study contained interviews of college sophomores and a follow-up study five years after graduation. The second study focused on women's experience of abortion and the reasoning utilized in making such a decision. A cross sectional study of 8 men and 8 women at 9 different ages





was the focus of the third study; in addition, 2 men and 2 women were the subject of a more intense interview process.

The results of these studies lead Gilligan to claim there exists a dominance of the care orientation in women whereas men opt for a more rule-oriented morality. Borrowing upon recent revisions in psychoanalytic thinking, Gilligan weaves together a feminine view of morality which values connectedness, places emphasis on interpersonal relationships, and adopts a caring stance towards the needs of others. By contrast, she notes that the male view of morality is oriented towards separation, sensitivity towards rights and duties, and the just resolution of competing interests. Gilligan has noted

The moral imperative that emerges repeatedly in interviews with women is an injunction to care, a responsibility to discern and alleviate the "real and recognizable trouble" of this world. For men, the moral imperative appears rather as an injunction to respect the rights of others and thus to protect from interference the rights to life and self-fulfillment. (p. 100)

In addition to her claims of male-female moral orientations, Gilligan charges that developmental theorists (e.g., Kohlberg) have unfairly advocated a male oriented view of morality which, in effect, has undervalued the female moral orientation that prizes

care and connectedness. In this respect, the female orientation has been unfairly viewed as simply a deviation of the male oriented justice view of morality. In reality, what is needed, says Gilligan, is a blending of these two perspectives ("voices") in each person thereby transforming morality in a way that neither perspective could envision separately.

Colby and Damon (1983) have noted "this book [Gilligan's] has created an unusual excitement within and beyond the field of psychology, no doubt because it is full of exciting ideas" (p. 473). Yet a close scrutiny raises questions, state these two critics, as to the adequacy of Gilligan's claims. Colby and Damon note that studies documenting sex differences are mixed. There is some evidence which suggests male-female difference regarding some aspects of social behavior and occupational choice. However, other areas of development, specifically cognitive maturation and aspects of personal behaviors, show no differences. Colby and Damon remark that "the available research data, therefore, do not reveal a clear picture of global dichotomy between the life orientation of men and women" (p. 476). They cautiously add, however, that ambiguous conclusions regarding sex-differences do not necessarily undercut Gilligan's assertions. In a related vein,

Nunner-Winkler (1984) reports limited research findings which point to strikingly similar moral reasoning patterns between males and females thus questioning Gilligan's claim concerning sex differences in moral orientation.

Kohlberg (1984) has provided the greatest challenge to Gilligan's thesis of differing moral orientations in males and females. He readily acknowledges that his moral judgement theory was originally based on empirical findings utilizing only male subjects. He accedes to Gilligan's contention that there exists an ethics of care orientation, and maintains such a perspective "usefully enlarges the moral domain" (p. 360). What he does challenge is Gilligan's claim that there exists sex differences when Kohlberg's scoring format is utilized. Although Gilligan (1982) does not report a summary of quantitative data, another report by Gilligan and her colleagues (cited by Kohlberg, 1984) offers findings on male-female responses to Kohlberg's justice dilemmas. Gilligan claims the data support the conclusion that a bias against the female moral orientation exists in Kohlberg's moral theory. Kohlberg (1984) responds "we totally disagree with this conclusion and that it is unwarranted, given their own findings" (p. 342). Kohlberg goes on to critique Gilligan's assertions and

points out the following shortcomings in her conclusions: lack of test-retest reliability, utilization of a scoring format at variance with Kohlberg's own measure and which he claims sacrifices the conceptual integrity of the individual's moral developmental stage, and psychologically (clinically) insignificant differences between males and females. Although Kohlberg admits that the charge of sex bias might be germane in regard to his original stage scoring formulated in his 1958 dissertation, he strongly refutes the assertion that the currently revised scoring format fosters a sex bias. Kohlberg proceeds to review a substantial body of literature which focus on male-female moral reasoning differences. He finds that where dissimilarity exists, it can be attributed to educational and vocational differences. Further, his longitudinal study of kibbutz males and females report "no significant mean sex-differences" (p. 348). He concludes: "studies comparing the sexes in justice reasoning stage either report no sex differences or report sex differences attributable to higher education and role-taking opportunity differences related to work" (p. 348). Colby and Damon (1983) offer essentially the same critique when, after reviewing the available literature they conclude: "while her [Gilligan's]

portrayal of general sex linked life orientations in intuitively appealing, the research evidence at this point does not support such a generalized distinction" (p. 479). Kohlberg resolves the tension of an ethic of justice versus an ethics of care by interweaving these two perspective into his own justice orientation.

Kohlberg maintains that principled morality is concerned with the rights and duties of every person whereas a care orientation stresses the bondedness and connectedness one maintains with the entire community; in effect, both orientations champion mutual care and respect towards life. In sum, Kohlberg credits Gilligan with enlarging "the moral domain beyond our focus on justice reasoning" (p. 358). Nonetheless, he disallows her claim that there exist two moral orientations and prefers to view the justice orientations as conceptually adequate to accommodate an ethics of care.

Moreover, a close reading of Kohlberg's recent reformulation shows that Kohlberg is attempting to acknowledge the importance of a care ethics, yet preserve the priority he assigns to the justice orientation. Accordingly, although Kohlberg argues that justice and care share a similar focus with respect to responsible concern towards humanity, a closer examination of the origin of justice in Kohlberg's

theory reveals a distinctive bias towards a cognitive emphasis of morality thereby favoring the justice orientation. That is, the cognitive emphasis associated with moral judgment reasoning, in effect, subordinates the more affect-laden response of care and benevolence to the cognitive view of justice.

In earlier writings (Kohlberg, 1981) emphasized the need for "role-taking" to develop moral judgment. Yet, present throughout his writing there exist an appreciation and concern for the welfare of others which he views as inherent in the cognitive-developmental approach. Thus he writes that moral judgments entail "a concern for welfare consequences" (p. 143) and that "the psychological unity of empathy and justice in moral role taking is also apparent at the very start of the moral enterprise" (p. 143). Furthermore,

Psychologically, both welfare concerns (role taking, empathy) and justice concerns, are present at the birth of morality and at every succeeding stage and take on more differentiated, integrated, and universalized forms at each step of development. (p. 175)

And

The centrality of role taking for moral judgment is based on sympathy for others, as well as in the notion that the moral judge must adopt the perspective of the "impartial spectator" or the "generalized other." (p. 141)

In essence, Kohlberg views the sympathetic,

affect-laden empathic dimension as originating at the earliest stages of moral development. Still, he consistently views the cognitive dimension of role-taking as the means for advancing moral judgment and little mention is made of a more sympathetic arousal to the plight of others (e.g., empathy) as a means for fostering stage advancement.

In light of the foregoing, it is instructive to note that not all role-taking leads to beneficial results. For example, Pritchard (1981) maintains that role-taking might serve to reinforce one's "resentment" towards those who are more adequately endowed; that is, experiencing an awareness (role-taking) of another who is better off might arouse an internal condition of jealousy towards the other rather than serve as a catalyst for advancing moral judgment. In addition, Kohlberg does not address the issue of empathic overarousal. Thus, if one is more empathically aroused towards the plight of others, then such empathic arousal might well supersede any cognitive role taking experience thereby giving greater support to an affective dimension for morality.

In addition, many theorists have questioned whether morality can be so easily identified with a cognitive orientation. For example, Haan et al. (1985) argue that

emotions are integral to any moral understanding. Whereas Kohlberg would view a moral problems in terms of the moral agent's dispassionate rise above the contradictions and emotional turmoil engendered by the moral problem, Haan et al. (1985) would see emotion as an integral component in the obtainment of a moral solution.

Emotions accompany and enrich understandings, and they convey far more authentic information about a person's position in a dispute than any well-articulated thoughts. In ordinary circumstances, emotions instruct and energize action. In situations of great moral costs, emotions can overwhelm and disorganize cognitive evaluations. (p. 147)

Relatedly, it is likely that a person's investment in a meaningful everyday moral encounter is likely to elicit ego-defensiveness. In other words, everyday life situations which present moral difficulties for an individual are likely to evoke a variety of affective responses which are proportional to the situational meanings such encounters hold for the individual; in contrast, Kohlberg's hypothetical dilemmas are far removed from ego concerns and thereby enlist little ego involvement (Haan 1977; Haan, et al., 1985). Consequently, as Villenave-Cremer and Eckensberger (1985) assert



Whether a subject is able to apply his or her moral competence to a real-life context seems not only to be a structural problem but rather a problem of affectively dealing with personal needs and self-interests in a situation. (p. 176).

Interestingly, the researchers entertain the notion that the prevalent and consistent finding that adults score at a conventional level might suggest, that individuals are more inclined, from an emotional standpoint, to adopt a societal perspective rather than to confront the emotional strain of justifying a position of individual rights which represents the more advanced stage 5 thinking.

Consequently, inasmuch as Kohlberg (1984) identifies morality as the justice principle, little emphasis is given to the role of affect. In the latest revision of his theory (Kohlberg, 1984), the stark primacy of cognition can still be viewed.

Just as the strength of the emotional component is irrelevant to the theoretical importance of cognitive structure for understanding the development of scientific judgment, so also is the quantitative role of affect relatively irrelevant for understanding the structure and development of justice reasoning. (p. 292)

Kohlberg views emotions as "part" of moral development yet "they do not tell us anything directly about the specifically moral development of the subject" (p. 293). All in all, Kohlberg's position endorses the primacy of cognition over affect. As a consequence, an

ethics grounded in affective responding (e.g., empathic arousal) and the consequent behaviors (prosocial responses) is accorded ancillary status.

Given the foregoing tenets of Kohlberg's theory, an ethics of care orientation must look elsewhere for its foundation. Relegating emotion to a secondary status in moral development, however, is clearly at variance with the historical traditions of many religiously oriented ethical approaches. The accentuated nature of a cognitive approach to morality, as exemplified in Kohlberg's theory, undermines the prosocial dispositions accorded more normatively based traditions. Not surprisingly, critics of Kohlberg (e.g., Ellrod, 1980) have underscored this point. Heretofore, religious educators (e.g., Moran, 1984) as well as theologians (e.g., Conn, 1983; O'Connell, 1978; Spohn, 1984) have maintained that emotion exercises a critical role in human moral experience. Similarly, in psychological circles, the role of emotion has received support not only from researchers advocating empathy and prosociality as a basis for morality (e.g., Hoffman) but also from other theorists who view emotion as the foundation for morality (e.g., Kagan, 1984).

4. The inability of the justice orientation to sustain a value content for moral decisions.

A fourth criticism leveled against Kohlberg's moral theory is the absence of a value content for moral development. As noted previously, Kohlberg's moral theory arose from the disillusionment emanating from the "bag of virtues" approach to morality. In the sixties Kohlberg (1981) disassociated his own theory from a content-laden approach which advocates distinct values and normatively based ethical guidelines. "In my view a culturally universal definition of morality can be arrived at if morality is thought of as the form of moral judgments instead of the content of specific moral beliefs" (p. 300).

Although Kohlberg continues to advocate a content--free view of moral development, he has modified somewhat his original statement regarding the value-free nature of moral development. After working in several experimental educational settings, Kohlberg, in 1975, altered his absolute prohibition of value content and admitted the necessity of some content acquisition by students.

I realize now that the psychologist's abstractions of moral "cognition" (judgment and reasoning) from moral action, and the abstraction of structure in moral cognition and judgment from content are necessary abstractions for certain psychological research purposes. It is not a sufficient guide to the moral educator who deals with the moral concrete in a school world in which value content as well as structure, behavior as well as reasoning must be

dealt with. In this context, the educator must be a socializer teaching value content and behavior, and not only a Socratic or Rogerian process-facilitator of development.

Kohlberg goes on to state that

I no longer hold these negative views of indoctrinative moral education and I believe that the concepts guiding moral education must be partly "indoctrinative." This is true, by necessity, in a world in which children engage in stealing, cheating, and aggression and in a context wherein one cannot wait until children reach the fifth stage to deal directly with moral behavior. (1975, p. 14)

Still, such normative criteria bear resemblance to the "bag of virtues" approach which he has disclaimed. More importantly, however, Kohlberg appears to see the need to set forth some culturally universal behaviors which are requisite for nascent moral development.

In order to accommodate normative values and behaviors, Kohlberg has discussed the ethics of benevolence. In contrast to the justice principle which is defined by its focus on equality, equity, and fairness, the principle of benevolence is associated with "Christian ethical teaching" or "agape" and the religiously held notions such as "charity," "brotherhood," and "community." Further, he admits that "the principle of care or responsible love has not been adequately addressed in our work" (p. 227). Nonetheless, even though he makes this admission, he still places questions of care under the mantle of

cognition. Kohlberg contends that the justice ethic, which embraces the "concepts" of reciprocity and contract, is capable of handling the situational realities (e.g., relationship and personal conflicts, prosocial responses) raised by an ethic of benevolence. Yet he also contends that another meaning of moral, which he terms "special" obligations and relationships, is also capable of resolving difficulties arising out of particular relationships. Although Kohlberg acknowledges, in effect, two uses of the word "moral"--one embracing the justice ethic and the attributes of impartiality, universalizability, and consensual dialogue in contradistinction to a second approach defined in terms of caring and altruistic responses accorded special relationships and obligations to family and friends--he points out that the latter is relative and culturally determined. Moreover, Kohlberg maintains that an ethic of care is best viewed as a "personal" sense of the word moral whereas the justice orientation is moral because of its impartiality and universal application. Kohlberg contends that these two meanings of moral are best viewed as contrasting dimensions of morality. Yet he clearly favors the "moral" labeling of justice because the two dimensions do not share equally in "generality" and "validity."

The cognitive-developmental approach advocated by Kohlberg leaves unanswered several questions. First, the principle of justice is unable to account for situations where the issue is not the violation of rights but the question of fulfilling values associated with prosocial responding. Many human situations are typified by instances of prosocial dilemmas wherein specific individuals decided the allocation of resources or the expenditures of personal energies for altruistically based ends. A justice orientation fails to appreciate other rationales for behavior such as those based on a theistic value system (e.g., Gelpi, 1978) as suggested by Bergin (1980). Furthermore, Kohlberg's identification of principled reasoning with morality unfairly abrogates the religious dimension of human experience. Moran (1984) argues that separating morality and religion obscures what is commonplace for most peoples' lives; for a large segment of people, the separation of morality and religion is not acceptable. In a similar vein, Hauerwas (1981) has noted that the concept of "moral development" has been unduly circumscribed by Kohlberg's justice interpretation. Moral development, according to Hauerwas, includes a level of growth not based on an advancement of stages, but is more aptly characterized as a continuous and deepening

commitment to values associated with an ethics of care orientation. To summarize, notwithstanding the principled perspective of morality advocated by Kohlberg, for many theorists there exists a content-laden dimension of morality that receives little attention in Kohlberg's theory. Kohlberg does accept some indoctrinative features for morality. Nonetheless, the mantle of the justice orientation is unable to accommodate the presence of prosocial behaviors which are commonly accepted by a theistic value system. Consequently, what is needed is a consideration of morality that allows for the incorporation of a religious dimension which is absent in Kohlberg's theory.

5. Kohlberg's emphasis on moral reasoning rather than moral behavior.

The final criticism of Kohlberg stems from the absence of behavior as an essential component for morality's meaning. Kohlberg adheres to a formalistic principled morality which undercuts the historically significant role that ethics have accorded behavior when defining morality. As Staub (1978) has pointed out, morality is usually centered on personal actions which conform to either internalized moral norms which one has adopted or to socio-cultural norms

accepted by the individual. Thus, morality seems to entail both valued personal beliefs as well as behaviors which conform or deviate from the norms of society (Rest, 1983).

In contrast to this more conventionally held definition of morality, Kohlberg situates morality in a formalized abstraction termed the justice principle. Moran (1983) summarizes Kohlberg's position in this regard by stating that "Kohlberg wishes to leave behind the social (person in interaction) for a philosophical ideal" (p. 71).

As noted previously, Kohlberg (1984) defines moral reasoning as the awareness and resolution of moral conflicts which lead to the development of a stage sequential theory of moral development. Kohlberg (1975) has stated that although moral reasoning is only one factor in determining an individual's moral behavior, it "is the single most important or influential factor yet discovered in moral behavior" (p. 672). For this reason Kohlberg has advocated a moral reasoning approach to moral education for public school. Practical applications of Kohlberg's approach (Kohlberg, 1980; Kohlberg & Wasserman, 1980) based on student and staff responses have reported a greater level of fairness and sense of community among school members. In addition,



Kohlberg (Kohlberg & Candee, 1984) has shown that advancement in moral reasoning stages leads not only to increasing acceptance of moral principles (which answer the question what is moral) but also increased judgments of responsibility (which lead one to accept the responsibility to carry out the moral action). These results are in line with earlier review of moral judgment which show positive correlations with behavior (e.g., Blasi, 1980)

This movement of Kohlberg's thinking towards behavior undercuts the charge by Moran that Kohlberg is uninterested in moral behavior and that he is willing to sacrifice the person's behavior for the ideals present in philosophical discourse. Still, the priority in Kohlberg's thinking remains the reasoning component which enables individuals to resolve conflicting claims and duties.

Kohlberg's increasing willingness to consider behavioral linkages to moral reasoning stages in all likelihood should allow for some rapprochement with educators who favor focusing on behaviors and content-laden approaches (values and virtues). Nonetheless, Kohlberg's disavowal of the "bag of virtues" approach confirms his disinclination to view moral development in terms of approaches he terms

"indoctrinative."

On the other hand, recent reanalysis of the original Hartshorne and May data shed new light on the behavioral aspects of values and suggests that Kohlberg's dismissal of this classic study is inappropriate. Rushton (1980, 1981) reanalyzed the Hartshorne and May data and has found the original conclusion of situational specificity to be more one of long standing error. Basically, Hartshorne and May compared scores on individual tests rather than combined test scores. Individual test comparisons led to an inflated error variance which is reduced in test battery comparisons. For example, Hartshorne and May compared single situation tests of altruism separately rather than combining them into a single battery for comparison with other batteries. Rushton points out that a single situation is equivalent to one item on a paper and pencil test battery. Combining these single items into batteries led to battery correlations in the .50 to .60 range. Furthermore, teacher rating correlated .80 with these battery scores. These reanalyzed findings led Rushton (1980) to conclude that although situations do influence behavior, there does exist a consistent moral self and that "the evidence is very solid that there are quite stable and consistent patterns of individual

differences across situations" (1980, p. 64). Based on these findings, Rushton goes on to describe what he terms the altruistic personality. Such people are

more motivated to engage in altruistic acts. He or she has internalized higher and more universal standards of justice, social responsibility, and modes of moral reasoning, judgment, and knowledge, and/or he or she is more empathic to the feelings and suffering of others and able to see the world from their emotional and motivational perspective. On the basis of such motivations, this person is likely to value, and to engage in, a great variety of altruistic behaviors--from giving to people more needy than themselves, to comforting others, to rescuing others from aversive situations. Altruists also behave consistently more honestly, persistently, and with greater self-control than do nonaltruists. (p. 84)

Thus, according to Rushton, individuals can subscribe to a distinctive value system and reflect this value system through behaviors that are consistent across a variety of situations.

Rushton's reevaluation of the original Hartshorne and May data gives considerable weight to a conception of morality associated with commonly agreed upon prosocial values. More recently, Small, Zeldin, and Savin-Williams (1983) note that behavioral observations of adolescent males showed a consistent altruistic trait across time and a variety of situations.

Moreover, religious values and beliefs have been shown to be excellent predictors of behavior. For

example, Strommen, Breke, Underwager, and Johnson (1972) discovered that religious values were frequently better predictors of people's attitudes and behaviors than commonly used variables as age, occupation, level of education, or financial status. Strommen (1984) reports three national studies covering three random samples totaling over 27,000 secondary school students. In these studies Strommen states that the single, best indicator of high school students rejection of alcohol and drug usage is the value they place in religious faith. Relatedly, Benson and William (1982) in an empirical analysis of a random sampling of members in the 96th Congress, found that religious beliefs and values predicted voting behavior patterns to a degree commensurate with party affiliation. The value stances of lawmakers could account for up to 40% of the variance on some issues. Further, when the elected official's values stance was combined with party, up to 70% of the variability in voting records could be explained.

Strommen (1984) maintains

In several of our major studies we were able to probe people's religious beliefs and values as well as their psychological, sociological, and demographic dimensions. In each case, these studies have shown that religious variables rank high as predictors of behavior.  
(p. 153)

In sum, Kohlberg's resolute resistance and unyielding criticism of a "bag of virtues" approach to morality are open to serious questioning. Research has documented in many cases the significant role that values can exercise in fostering a distinctive set of behaviors.

#### A Summary

In sum, Lawrence Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental view of moral development has provided developmental psychology and education with a rich reservoir of empirical data. Nevertheless, sufficient questions regarding Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental view exist to warrant consideration of other approaches. More specifically, the questions related to the purpose and function of a sixth stage, the applicability of a justice ethic in everyday life, the subordination of an ethics of care to an ethics of justice as well as the diminution accorded the affective domain of morality, the refusal to consider a value content dimension to morality, and the question of a behavioral dimension for morality render Kohlberg's approach to morality as questionable when the focus is on a morality for everyday life. By contrast, viewing morality from a foundational perspective of empathic development leads to an understanding of morality sufficiently at variance with Kohlberg's perspective to warrant detailed

investigation. This latter approach to morality, likewise, is consonant with a morality focused on everyday life events.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ROLE OF EMPATHY

Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory remains the dominant perspective from which to view a psychology of morality. Nonetheless, the limitations of Kohlberg's perspective as well as the complexity of the nature of morality have engendered both variations of Kohlberg's theory as well as competitors. Among the variations to Kohlberg's cognitive developmental view are transactive induction processes (Berkowitz & Gibbs, 1983); the distributive justice paradigm (Damon, 1975; Enright, Enright, & Lapsey, 1981); the retributive justice orientation (Lapsey & Quintana, 1985); and prosocial moral reasoning (Eisenberg-Berg, 1977, 1982).

More significant differences exist when the question moves from cognitive-developmental approaches to the issue of the origin of morality. Kohlberg has argued for an ontogenetic understanding of the justice principle as a basis for morality. Other researchers have maintained that it is possible to look for an affective source for morality (Kagan, 1984; Rest, 1983). The most promising source for this view of morality is empathy.

## The Meaning of Empathy

The idea that empathy is essential for morality has a rich heritage in Western thought. "For at least 300 years philosophers in the Anglo-American (or utilitarian) tradition of ethics have assumed that man has an innate social sensitivity which plays an important role in moral development" (Hogan, 1973, p. 222). Historically, philosophers such as David Hume and Adam Smith as well as social scientists such as George Herbert Mead have accorded a significant role for empathy in their own theories (Hoffman, 1981b, Hogan, 1973).

The origin of empathy is derived from the German word *Einfühlung* which is most aptly translated as "feeling into" (Gill, 1982). The word *Einfühlung* was introduced into psychological literature by Lipps in his discussions of aesthetic perception. Originally, Lipps viewed the person as projecting him or herself into an object; as a consequence, the perceiver developed a far deeper appreciative understanding of the object at hand. Later, Lipps widened his definition to include people as the objects of empathic focus. The notion of empathic understanding arose from the observer's reaction to the observed person's behavior. In effect, the perceiver provided cues which served as signals for



his or her newly found understanding of the other person. In 1910 Tichner translated the word Einfühlung as "empathy" (Goldstein & Michaels, 1985).

At the beginning of this century empathy was first used to describe an aesthetic experience which arose while viewing a piece of art. By mid-century, however, clinical uses of empathy became prominent. For example, Rogers (1957) has suggested that empathy was best viewed as a necessary ingredient for successful therapeutic interaction between therapist and client. Recently, therapy studies have deviated from Roger's phenomenological definition of empathy and have considered empathy more as a "process" of responding to the client's experience rather than as the vicariously aroused state of the therapist (Hackney, 1978). Surprisingly, although empathy is a richly nuanced term having great import for human relationships and social well-being, Clark (1980) has criticized the dearth of theoretical and empirical studies regarding empathy in social science literature.

A problem arises in empathy research because there exist numerous definitions. Hackney (1978) has noted there are at least 21 empathy definitions in the therapeutic literature alone. This plethora of definitions notwithstanding, two salient characteristics

often appear in empathy discussions. These characteristics are: (a) an awareness of another's situation (cognitive component) and (b) an arousal to another's plight and distress (affective component).

Studies cited herein focus on these two characteristics. Several instruments for measuring empathy (e.g., Hogan, 1969; Mehrabian, 1972) have interspersed both cognitive and affective dimensions within the measure. According to Davis (1980), however, the limitation of the aforementioned instruments are their reliance on a single empathy score thereby bringing affective and cognitive components of empathy into a unidimensional framework. Utilizing factor analysis, Davis has developed the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) which is capable of delineating affective (concern) and cognitive (perspective taking) components. In addition, Davis was able to identify two other dimensions--a fantasy dimension and a distress dimension. Within this study, Hoffman's definition of empathy (which is stated below) is utilized.

#### The Human Capacity for Altruism

Martin Hoffman has proposed the most integrated and sophisticated theory of empathic development. Accounting for physiological, affective, and cognitive development, Hoffman (1981, 1982, 1983) has posited an

affective basis for morality directly challenging the view of morality set forth by cognitive-developmental theory.

Empathy's importance is best viewed when considering its role in the development of altruism (Hoffman, 1975, 1981a). At this point it is important to clarify the two most commonly used words in psychological literature that are associated with caring for others-- "prosocial" and "altruism" (although other words such as "positive behavior" are frequently found). The psychological literature usually delineates these two terms in the following way. "Prosocial" is used when the behavioral act benefits another, although the person might receive some reward for his or her action. On the other hand, "altruism" is used for those acts which are done selflessly and for which one derives no benefit to speak of. In fact, one might actually suffer (self-sacrifice) when engaging in the altruistic act or encounter some personal risk when engaging in the act. There is, of course, a "fine" line between these two terms and the research literature reflects this thinking (e.g., Staub, 1978). Hoffman does not directly address this distinction. He utilizes altruism as defined above and focuses on the concern (as demonstrated by affective arousal) that the empathizer

has for the other. For the sake of variety, prosocial is used interchangeably with altruism, and both terms will reflect Hoffman's understanding which focuses on a selfless care towards the other.

Anthropological evidence indicates that prehistoric individuals encountered an adverse and hostile environment. As a consequence, social cooperation would maximize survival. However, since the unit of reproduction is the individual rather than the group, some anthropologists have argued for an egoistic view of the human person. According to Hoffman, evolution has provided two motives which enable the human species to survive. On the one hand, there exists an egoistic motive which motivates the person to engage in actions for self-protection or the enhancement of one's own condition. On the other hand, there exists an independent altruistic motive which promotes the other's welfare "without conscious regard for one's own self-interest" (1981a, p. 124). Hoffman envisions empathy as the source of this care for others.

Accordingly, both an egoistic motive and an altruistic motive are necessary as both motive systems allow for an optimal level of human adaptability and, therefore, human survival.

The tension between an egoistic and altruistic basis for human nature can be resolved, says Hoffman, if evidence can be found for some prosociality which also enhances individual fitness. Hoffman finds support for such thinking in Trivers' view of reciprocal altruism. Essentially, Trivers uses a "rescue model" to demonstrate that natural selection must favor altruism, even between non-related individuals. The inclusion of non-related individuals is at variance with other theories such as kin selection which argue for an "inclusive fitness" which means an organism's tendency not only to favor offspring but also the fitness of other relatives who share the same genes (Hoffman maintains that this latter view of kin selection also favors a biological disposition towards altruism). In short, Trivers' model asserts that if there are two individuals (called X and Y) and X is in serious need, the model assumes that the cost to Y is less than the gain for X and that there exists a high likelihood that roles will be reversed in the future. As Hoffman (1981a) notes, "it is, in other words, in the individual's long-term selfish interest to take the relatively low risks associated with helping others in danger" (p. 124). That is, ultimately it is to the

benefit of each individual if everyone responds prosocially.

An objection to this evidence for biological altruism comes in the form of gene benefit; in other words, the person's genes ultimately prosper because of such role reversals. Hoffman asserts that such a view would render the whole notion of altruism useless because all behavior would be reduced to selfishness. In addition, Hoffman points out that this debate is the result of differing levels of conceptualization. That is, one must look not at individual genes but at the total organism who encounters the challenges and adversities of the environment. Citing Gould (1977), Hoffman notes "selection simply cannot see genes and pick among them directly....Selection views bodies. It favors some because they are stronger, better insulated, etc." (p. 24). Or, as Hoffman (1981) states, "it is the total organism or body that confronts the persistent ecological pressures and is directly involved in the struggle for existence" (p. 123). He thus concludes that a minimum level of prosociality is necessary in order to insure human survival. This being the case, he asks the question as to the origin of this altruistic response. He finds that the human mechanism for this response is rooted in the human experience of

empathy. Over time, empathic interactions fostered the social bonding necessary for community survival.

The validity of an independent altruistic motive, says Hoffman, comes from research which documents individual's spontaneously helping others, particularly when they are the only persons available to aid the distressed person. Furthermore, if the basis of altruistic responding resides in egoism, then one would expect individuals in need of social approval to help more than others who feel satisfied with their level of social approval. In fact, the research supports the opposite conclusion; that is, individuals who are satisfied with their own social approval are most likely to engage in altruistic acts. A likely reason for this phenomenon is that individuals who are dissatisfied with their social standing are most likely to be "needy" emotionally. Therefore, they adopt ego defensive strategies and utilize their psychic energies to deal with feelings of inadequacy. Consequently, they are less likely to be attentive to the needs of others having focused their psychic energies on their own troubled emotional states.

Finally there exists biological evidence to support the idea of an altruistic motive. Citing studies by MacLean which focus on the limbic system's effect on

expressive and feeling states, Hoffman (1975) notes that part of the limbic system appears to be related to prosociality and the development of social bondedness with others. MacLean reports that one area of the limbic system is associated with emotions which foster self-preservation. On the other hand, MacLean maintains another area of the limbic system is predisposed to sociability. Citing MacLean (1962), Hoffman (1975) notes "in the complex organization of the phylogenetically old and new structures under consideration we presumably have a neural ladder for ascending from the most primitive sexual feeling to the highest level of altruistic sentiments" (p. 300). In addition, the biological study of the brain appears to sustain the biological possibility for altruism. MacLean has shown a neural connection exists among the primitive limbic cortex, the hypothalamus (which integrates somatic experiences and feeling states) and the prefrontal cortex (which fosters insight and an awareness of others' needs). Says Hoffman (1975)

In other words, the brain structures required for affective involvement with objects in the external world, including people, were apparently present early in man's evolution. The more recent addition of newer brain structures along with the acquisition of connective neural circuits have made it possible for such affect to be experienced in conjunction with a cognitive, increasingly



sophisticated social awareness or insight into others--and all of this appears to be independent of the neural base for egoistic, self-preserving behavior. In brief, the neural basis for a primitive empathy was apparently present early in man's evolution. (p. 610)

Clark (1980), likewise, has argued that altruism necessitates advanced neurocortical development and adequate limbic system functioning.

Taken together, Hoffman believes that the varying pieces of evidence lend support to an altruistic motive in human social exchanges. Given that this is the case, Hoffman inquires as to what is the mediator or mechanism which fosters altruistic behavior. Hoffman maintains that empathy is the most likely mediator for an altruistic response.

#### The Components and Modes of Empathy

Hoffman (1979, 1980, 1981b, 1982) has elaborately detailed the nature and development of empathy. According to Hoffman (1982), empathy is a vicarious affective response to another's situation. Unlike other definitions of empathy which stress the emotional arousal of the individual, Hoffman's definition focuses on the appropriateness of one's response to another's experience rather than on one's internal feeling state. This "appropriateness" is derived from the cognitive component of empathy which allows for an accurate interpretation of another's state. Furthermore, in

addition to affective arousal, empathy appears closely linked to a naturally induced state to respond altruistically to another's distress.

Hoffman (1981b, 1982) maintains there exists six modes of empathic arousal. From a developmental perspective, these modes appear in the following order.

Reactive Newborn Cry. Developmental studies demonstrate that even three day old infants utter reactive cries upon hearing the cries of other infants. Although it is impossible to state whether such reactions are learned or innate, it has been shown that infants respond to the distressed cry of other infants. "This reactive cry must therefore be considered as a possible early precursor of empathy, though not a full empathic response because it lacks any awareness of what is happening" (1981b, p. 45). In other words, Hoffman observes that, developmentally, the newborn lacks the ability to comprehend the actual situation of the other.

Classical Conditioning. Soon after the experience of the reactive cry, the infant can view the distress of another at the same time that he or she is experiencing distress. Conditioning results from the fact that "distress cues from others become conditioned stimuli that evoke feelings of distress in the self" (p. 45). Hoffman offers as an example the tenseness of a mother

who, upon holding her child, conditions an anxious state in the child. At a later time, the mother's facial or verbal cues which accompany her distress (conditioned stimuli) engender distress in the child even in the absence of physical contact.

Direct Association. A more general type of conditioning exists through an association. This third mode of empathic arousal is contingent upon the past experience of the empathizer. In other words, the distress cues of another evoke in the child his or her past experiences of distress which in turn induce an empathic response.

The feelings of distress that accompanied those past experiences are then evoked by distress cues from the victim that call up any of them. It is thus a far more general mechanism than conditioning, one which may provide the basis for a variety of distress experiences with which children and adults as well may empathize. (p. 46)

Mimicry. In this mode of empathic arousal a person imitates the facial and posture of another person. This imitation in turn leads to "inner kinesthetic cues" which aid the observer in understanding the other and allow for the feeling of similar emotions. Heretofore, this mode of empathy has been passed over because of its instinctual overtones; however, Hoffman maintains it is a plausible empathic experience.

Symbolic Association. A more advanced mode of empathic arousal is associated with symbolization. In this mode a person becomes aware of another's distress through symbols (e.g., reading a letter). Thus, language mediates between the empathizing observer and the distress of the victim.

Role-taking. Empathic experiences associated with the previous five modes requires only minimum cognitive effort. Role-taking, on the other hand, the most developmentally advanced of the empathic modes, requires an individual to imagine how he or she would feel in the other's situation. This imaging of the other's situation leads one to "experience some of what the other person is feeling" (p. 47).

Hoffman does not view these six modes as equally utilized in everyday life situations; rather, reactive crying terminates with maturation whereas role-taking is infrequently utilized. The four intermediate modes are used intermittently throughout the life span and require a variety of situational cues for their activation.

Hoffman (1980) maintains that empathy has two components: cognitive and affective. In addition, there exists what might be termed a motivational component derived from empathic affect. This three-

fold delineation is crucial inasmuch as most definitions of empathy (Clark, 1980; Goldstein & Michaels, 1985) underscore cognitive and affective dimensions yet fail to focus on subsequent behaviors which reduce the plight of the distressed person.

### The Development of Empathy

Hoffman (1979, 1980, 1981b, 1982) maintains that the cognitive transformation of empathy transpires developmentally. Hoffman's theory sets forth four developmental levels of empathic distress.

Global Empathy. Essentially, before the year one, the child lacks the capacity to differentiate the self from others. Thus the child, upon viewing the distress of the other, is unable to construe the distressed person's plight as separate from his or her own and, therefore, he or she acts accordingly. This empathic response is termed global because the child fails to differentiate between the discomfort of others and his or her own distress; thus, distress is experienced as a diffuse and generalized state encompassing both the distressed person as well as the infant.

"Egocentric Empathy". Having obtained "person permanence," the child is capable of differentiating the self from others thereby understanding that the distress of the other is not one's own. At this stage a child is

most likely to respond to the other's distress by sharing an object or engaging in a behavior which relieves the child's own distress. Thus Hoffman cites as an example the 13 month old child who, upon seeing the distress of the adult, offer the adult his favorite doll. Hoffman places quotations on the word egocentric to point out this reference is not entirely accurate; that is, he does not view the child's behavior as selfish. Insofar as egocentrism is present, the child does confuse actions which offer relief to the other with actions which mitigate the child's own distress. Nonetheless, both the affective tone of the child's utterances and his or her facial cues as well as the behavior itself points to a developmentally appropriate altruistic response.

Empathy for Another's Feelings. Although at first rudimentary, the inception of role-taking allows the 2 or 3 year old child to begin to appreciate the others's feelings and interpretations of events as separate from his or hew own. At the same time, the child's language development allows for an inner awareness and sensitivity to the feelings of others. Finally, with development, the child becomes increasingly sophisticated at differentiating the feeling of others and empathizing simultaneously with several feelings.

Although not directly addressing the question of empathy, recent developmental research demonstrates that very young children show a remarkable level of prosociality, thus lending support to Hoffman's contention of an altruistic dimension to human nature (Bridgeman, 1983; Hay & Rheingold, 1983; Radke-Yarrow, Zahn-Waxler, & Chapman, 1982). These findings run contrary to earlier theoretical speculations (e.g., Freud) which frame an egocentric focus for the child. Apparently earlier interpretations of child development eschewed the prosocial nature of children and adopted instead a non-social egocentrism (Hay & Rheingold, 1983). In fact, some theorists (e.g., Bridgeman, 1983) conclude that prosociality is possible even in 2 year old children. Given these developmental features of childhood, Hoffman would view the child capable of moral acts (if prosociality is accepted as the basis for morality). In fact, given the possibility of prosociality even among young children, it can be concluded that empathy theorists would argue that even very young children are capable of a moral response. True to the nature of developmental thinking, empathy theorists would ultimately maintain that although the young child is incapable of sophisticated moral explanations of his or her action, the fact that he or

she responds at whatever level of empathy is developmentally appropriate points to a moral response.

Empathy for Others General Plight. By the later childhood years, a young person or early adolescent is capable of understanding that other people possess independent life histories, that immediate feelings are oftentimes transitory, and that the other person has feelings beyond a particular situation. Thus, at this level, a child can imagine the situation of the other beyond the situation at hand (e.g., the child realizes that an economically deprived peer might be joyful over receiving a birthday gift, yet that this child is still disadvantaged). This final level elicits a more sophisticated response from the observer which balances immediate reactions to the other's plight with a fuller understanding of the other's existential situation.

Hoffman (1981b) concludes:

To summarize, empathy is the coalescence of vicariously aroused affect and a mental representation of the other, at whatever level the observer is capable. Individuals who progress through the four stages become capable of a high level of empathic distress (p. 50).

Although not considered a level, Hoffman maintains that a more advanced understanding of "Empathy for Another's Plight" allows the older child or adolescent



to empathize with entire classes of people (e.g., the poor, the oppressed, a racial or political group). This wider domain for empathizing results from the abstractive and hypothetical abilities engendered by formal operational thinking (e.g., Elkind, 1975).

### Empathy As a Motive for Altruism

Empathic distress has so far been viewed as having both a cognitive and an affective component. The interplay of these two components is discerned when Hoffman (1981b) notes that the affective and cognitive components are "derived from the observer's cognitive sense of the other" (p. 51). Equally important, this enhanced cognitive capacity, in addition to fostering empathic distress, fosters in the observer a feeling of sympathetic distress (or what is generally termed compassion). The end result of the observer's awareness of the other and sympathetic distress is an inclination to respond prosocially.

In addition to the cognitive and affective components of empathic distress and the concurrently felt state of sympathetic distress, Hoffman asserts that guilt exercises a special role in influencing the child's prosocial nature. In order to understand the child's guilt experience, the relationship of empathy and socialization requires brief discussion.

Hoffman notes that parental socialization is a primary influence on children's empathic reactions. Hoffman (1980) has summarized research on parental discipline into three broad categories: power assertion, love withdrawal, and induction. Power asserting techniques are utilized when the parent attempts to influence the child through their physical strength or control over the child's possessions. Examples of this approach include physical force and control over choices (e.g., refusing to grant permissions). Love withdrawal takes place when the message in the parental technique is separation or the threat of abandonment. Examples of this technique include isolating the child, threatening to leave the child and refusing to speak to the child. Whereas these first two approaches have a highly punitive quality, induction techniques provide the child with reasoning or focus on internal processes which the child might already be utilizing. Examples of this technique include pointing out to the child the consequences of his or her actions on others or appealing to the child's pride, ability to master situations, or concern for others. "These techniques rely less on fear and more on the children's connecting their cognitive content with his own resources for comprehending the requirements of the

situation and controlling his behavior accordingly" (p. 322).

In short, inductive techniques allow the child to focus on and to attend to the hurt they have caused others thereby activating empathic arousal to the distressed person's plight. In reality, Hoffman asserts that delineation of parental discipline techniques into one of the three categories above is often not possible; in other words, discipline often shows aspects of all three approaches. For example, the punitive nature of power assertion may be necessary in order to gain the child's attention. Nonetheless, the presence of an inductive dimension in the discipline triggers empathic arousal and allows the child to focus on the consequences of his or her behavior.

Hoffman (1970) has demonstrated that older children socialized to induction parenting techniques (being made aware of the consequences of one's actions) are more inclined to behave prosocially than children socialized through methods of love withdrawal and assertion of power techniques. More recently, Zahn-Waxler, Radke-Yarrow, and King (1979) have shown this same result for younger children. Utilizing such inductive techniques fosters the child's awareness of the consequences of his or her actions (e.g., hurting the

other). Most likely, this experience, says Hoffman, causes a guilt reaction and leads to helping behaviors. In all likelihood, a cognitive component is integral to the guilt response. Cognitive transformation enables the child to develop more sophisticated guilt responses. That is, cognitive maturation allows the child to view how his or her actions might be the source of another's injury. Thus, even younger children can feel guilty over the observed physical hurt that they cause the other. However, a more developmentally advanced form of cognition is necessary to attribute self-blame to one's own actions or feel guilt over the anticipation of hurting the other. Furthermore, "another important cognitive dimension of guilt is the awareness that one has choice and control over one's behavior" (1982, p. 299). Although the evidence on choice is minimal, a plausible explanation, says Hoffman, is the child's realization of his or her omnipotence. In turn, this omnipotence gives way to a sense of helplessness and eventually to an understanding that he or she has the ability to control (to various degrees depending on the situation) most of his or her actions.

It seems plausible tentatively to assume that there is an early developmental progression from a sense of omnipotence, to a sense of helplessness, and finally to an awareness of having some but not total control over one's actions. (1982, p. 300)

Another cognitive dimension of guilt arises when the child comes to understand the moral norms of society, specifically the norm against harming another. The child, socialized to this norm, will experience guilt when he or she engages in or contemplates actions discrepant from the norm.

A more developmentally advanced form of guilt which often occurs in adolescence is existential guilt (Hoffman, 1980). This guilt response is classically portrayed by the late adolescent (college freshman) who enters college and is exposed to information and philosophical ideas which are at variance with and call into question his or her middle class or upper class background. As a consequence, the student experiences a sense of guilt; that is, the late adolescent comes to believe that his or her privileged position is accountable for the distress and plight of others. Having been made aware of others' impoverishment and distress, the late adolescent is capable of empathizing with these disadvantaged while simultaneously feeling guilty over his or her privileged state thus leading to an existential crisis.

In sum, the attribution of guilt necessitates a distinction of self from others, an awareness of one's actions towards the other, and understanding of one's own choices and responsibilities.

Paradoxically, Hoffman notes that guilt, albeit really the result of non-prosocial action, in turn leads one to act prosocially. Further, the separateness between empathic distress (observing the hurt of the other) and guilt (perpetrator of an action injurious to the other) necessitates close scrutiny.

The line between empathic distress and guilt thus becomes very fine, and being an innocent bystander is a matter of degree. To the degree that one realizes that one could have acted to help but did not, one many never feel totally innocent. This is another way of saying that empathy and guilt may be the quintessential social motives, because they may transform another's pain into one's own discomfort and make one feel partly responsible for the other's plight whether or not one has actually done anything to cause it. (1981, p. 59)

#### Empathy: Altruistic or Egoistic?

Hoffman (1975, 1977, 1981a, 1981b) appears particularly sensitive to the charge that relieving empathic distress through prosocial responding is actually more in line with egoistic than altruistic motivation (e.g., Piliavin, Rodin, & Piliavin, 1969). A review of Hoffman's writings shows that he flatly rejects this idea. A summary of these findings follows.

For one, even though prosocial behavior might reduce empathic distress, the aim of the prosocial action is the aid of the distressed person. Hoffman maintains that critics fail to distinguish between the consequence and the aim of an action. Second, when individuals, including young children, are queried about their aid of distressed others (e.g., Eisenberg-Berg, & Neal, 1979; Latane & Rodin, 1969), they answer in terms of the other's plight rather than their own distress. Third, although some theorists (e.g., Bandura, 1977) suggest that individuals engage in prosocial acts for self-reward, Hoffman argues that it is neither likely that the misery of others would engender self-reward nor that satisfying self-reward would be dependent upon helping someone in distress. This is the case because "there is nothing intrinsically prosocial about self-reward, as there is about empathy" (1981a, p. 134); furthermore, self-reward is too contingent upon cultural factors and too variable to serve as an evolutionary criteria for an altruistic human nature. Fourth, sympathetic distress is aroused by hurt experienced by the other rather than distress arising from one's own personal experience. Fifth, gratification for helping the other depends on the alleviation of the other's plight, rather than focusing

on one's own welfare. And lastly, all motives have the potential for satisfying the person; as this is the case, such satisfaction cannot be used to define a distinctive class of motives (e.g., altruistic or egoistic motives). Furthermore, such an inclusive interpretation renders as useless the very idea of altruism. However, one must question the logic of this last argument. That is, if all motives are self-satisfying, then forming an independent group of motives which are non-self-satisfying is questionable. Hoffman does appear to be walking a thin tight rope in his attempt to establish an independent altruistic motive. On the one hand, he appears to accept the satisfaction which goes with all human actions. On the other hand, he wishes to establish the viable nature of an altruistic response. In sum, Hoffman appears to recognize the satisfaction that prosocial actions have for the person, yet he maintains that empathy serves as a distinctly prosocial action which supports the view of an altruistic human nature. Thus,

it is more appropriate to designate empathic distress as an altruistic motive (perhaps, with a quasi-egoistic component) than to group it with such obviously self-serving motives as material gain, social approval, and competitive success. (1981a, p. 134).

### Empathic Overarousal

If empathy is integral to the formation of



altruism, then a legitimate question becomes the degree of one's empathic arousal. Thus, can one conclude that the more empathy one experiences, the more altruistic one becomes?

Hoffman does not believe the relationship of empathy and prosociality is monotonic. Too little arousal to the distress of another lessens sympathetic distress. Equally important, however, empathic overarousal impedes prosocial responding. Thus, Stotland, Mathews, Sherman, Hanson, and Richardson (1979) demonstrated that health care professionals (nurses), even though they desired to help, found it difficult to remain the same room as terminally ill patients. More recently, (Shelton, 1985; Shelton & McAdams, in press) reported that whereas perspective-taking and empathic concern were significantly related to a self-report prosocial measure, empathic distress (overarousal to distress) was unrelated to prosociality. Interestingly, Hoffman (1981a) surmises that the lack of relationship between empathic overarousal and helping most likely aided evolutionary survival; that is, overarousal is often associated with severe if not hopeless situations which enable the observer, therefore, to conserve energies and interventions for more hopeful helping situations.

### Evidence Supporting Empathy as a Basis for Altruism

A large amount of empirical evidence has been gathered to support Hoffman's view that empathy is a basis for altruistic action. The five major texts on positive social behavior published in the last decade (Bridgeman, 1983a; Eisenberg, 1982a; Rushton & Sorrentino, 1981; Staub, 1978, 1979) devote considerable space to empathy as the affective mechanism (component) responsible for prosocial behavior. Based on extant research, Staub (1978), in a comprehensive review of positive social behavior, has stated that although "it is difficult to demonstrate convincingly the mediating influence of empathy on helping" (p. 146), a cumulative review of the research does "suggest that empathy is a likely determinant of helping" (p. 148). Rushton (1980, 1981) has maintained that empathy is a critical ingredient in the formation of the "altruistic personality" and has cited numerous studies to substantiate this claim. Eisenberg-Berg and Mussen (1978) have reported that empathy is positively related to helping behavior in adolescents. Buckley, Siegel, and Ness (1979) found that children who were altruistic scored significantly higher on empathy measures than their peers while Ornum, Foley, Burns, DeWolfe, and

Kennedy (1981) reported this same relationship held true for college students.

At the same time, although researchers generally conclude that empathy is a vital component for prosocial responding, the relationship between empathy and prosocial behavior is complex. Thus, inconsistencies are found in empathic experiencing in children whereas a more uniform picture emerges for adults. Most likely differences among children are due to developmental stages because children are less likely to cognize accurately or lack the awareness required for implementing prosocial behaviors.

Furthermore, empathy alone is not sufficient to account for prosocial responding. Although numerous researchers have linked empathic development and prosocial responding, no theorist has maintained that empathy alone is sufficient to bring about prosocial behaviors. In this regard, Eisenberg (1982b) has noted that the adolescent can justify his or her personal behaviors (or lack thereof) by a diverse array of reasons ranging from hedonistic desires to internalized moral principles and that "in real life, situations that call for prosocial actions vary across many dimensions" (p. 241). And Hoffman (1982) has stated that "although one's empathic proclivities may make one more receptive

to certain moral values, empathy alone cannot explain how people formulate complex moral ideologies and apply them in situations" (p. 310).

In addition, situational variables appear to occupy a role in the activation of an empathic response; consequently, even empathic arousal is not likely to be triggered in all situations (Feshbach, 1982). From another perspective, researchers must carefully scrutinize the intensity of the affective component of empathy as well as mood states accompanying the arousal of empathy (e.g., Cialdini, Kenrick, & Baumann, 1982; Eisenberg, 1982).

As the above discussion suggests, the question for researchers is not whether empathic arousal is linked to prosociality but under what conditions is empathy most likely to induce a prosocial response.

#### Sex Differences in Empathy

If empathy is posited as integral for morality, then a salient issue must be the question of possible gender differences. Clearly, the presence of sex differences poses ethical and philosophical problems for an empathically based morality; in short, such inequality relegates the disadvantaged sex to a condition of moral inferiority.

Maccoby and Jacklin (1974), in an extensive review of the literature on empathy, have reported no significant differences exist between the empathic experiences of males and females. Hoffman (1977) has labeled this conclusion "premature" (p. 713). Examining closely the specific studies reviewed by Maccoby and Jacklin, Hoffman has stated that only six of their studies can be classified as true measures of vicarious affective arousal to another's experience (Hoffman's definition of empathy). In all six of these studies, says Hoffman, females obtained greater levels of empathy than males. Hoffman has noted that combining other studies which recognized another's distress "masked" the true differences that do exist between males and females.

Hoffman's (1977) own review of the literature has led him to conclude that differences between males and females do exist. He has stated "what is most striking about the empathy finding...is the fact that in every case, regardless of the age of the subjects or the measures used, the females obtained higher scores than did the males" (p. 715). In an examination of 16 recent articles, Hoffman has found that in all 16 studies females reported higher empathy scores than males. The random chance of such a uniform confirmation on 16

independent samples, says Hoffman, is 1 in 64,000. He has concluded that

although the magnitude of the difference may not have been great, the finding overall clearly provide a stronger case for the proposition that females are more empathic through the life cycle than that no sex differences exist." (p. 715).

Feshbach's (1982) extensive analysis of empathy differences in children has supported Hoffman's conclusion. She adds, however, that in children numerous and complex factors account for male and female differences.

Scales to measure empathy have also supported differences between males and females. Mehrabian and Epstein's (1972) scale for empathy measurement differentiated at a significant level between males and females. These findings were supported by Davis' (1980) multidimensional approach to empathy wherein among all four dimensions (empathic concern, perspective-taking, personal distress, and fantasy) females scored significantly higher than males ( $p < .001$ ).

Further, it is noteworthy that an analysis of Davis' findings supports Hoffman's argument for empathic differences. Hoffman (1977) has stated that although there is clear evidence for differences between males and females regarding the level of affective arousal,

(measured by the empathic concern subscale), no such consistency can be found with more cognitively oriented measures, such as perspective-taking. Davis (1980) has noted that his own research results show that although perspective-taking is highly significant, male and female differences are lowest for this subscale thus lending support to Hoffman's conclusion that perspective-taking is a less discriminant measure of male-female differences.

Besides the cognitive dimension (perspective-taking subscale) and affective dimension (empathic concern subscale), Davis' multi-dimensional approach identifies two other subscales--personal distress and fantasy.

The personal distress subscale measures extreme emotional arousal to another's distress. In other words, this scale appears to be a more extreme dimension of affective arousal to another's plight. This dimension is important because Hoffman (1981, 1982) has noted that affective overarousal can attenuate helping behavior in individuals who are exposed to another's distress.

Davis' (1980) finding that females experience significantly more distress at another's plight could result from several factors. First, the affective arousal evinced by women on the empathic concern

subscale and supported by Hoffman's (1977) findings might carry over to a more extreme response leading to affective over-arousal. Second, Hoffman has suggested that males are oriented to a more "instrumental" role which implies an active mastery of the world and social competence. Extending this thinking to the present question, if females are less socialized to initiate behaviors to relieve the distress of another, then it is plausible that their affective arousal to another might well lead to personal distress.

Davis' fantasy subscale measures an individual's tendency to imaginatively take the role of another. Several items on this subscale were taken from an earlier scale developed by Stotland et al. (1978). Unfortunately, Stotland et al. reported no findings from their data regarding sex differences for their scale. Staub (1978) has reported that a difficulty with fantasy research that relates to empathy and helping behaviors is the question of external validity; in other words, real life situations are often inherently more complex than the "imagine" conditions developed in experimental settings. Hoffman (1977) has suggested that females are more apt to imagine themselves as another. This predisposition is the result of affective arousal, socialization experiences, and an inner sense of self



which seeks interaction with others. Staub (1978) gives indirect support to this conclusion; he has noted that females are more inclined to attend to the feelings of others and place greater value on being considerate of others. Gilligan (1982), moreover, has argued that females place greater emphasis than males on the values of care and intimacy.

In addition, the statements on Davis' fantasy subscale have a distinctly empathic focus which emphasizes consideration and awareness of others. In light of the above, his findings of a high statistical significance ( $p < .001$ ) between males and females are most likely the result of the sensitivity of the measure to the value females place on personal attentiveness towards others.

More recently, Eisenberg and Lennon (1983) have undertaken an exhaustive analysis of the extant literature in order to ascertain whether there does indeed exist sex differences in empathy. The researchers note that a variety of constructs have been utilized to measure empathic responses (e.g., infant crying, self-reports, observer ratings). Utilizing meta-analytic techniques, they report the following findings: (a) Females exhibit more reflexive crying than males, yet methodological considerations

limit what can be concluded about sex differences. (b) When picture/story measures of empathy were reported females had a slight advantage, but this finding is unclear due to the fact in all cases where females scored significantly higher than males a female experimenter was employed while, conversely, in all studies where males scored higher a male experimenter was used. (c) In studies where self-report measures were utilized after viewing simulated emotional situations, the "limited data" led Eisenberg and Lennon to conclude there exists a "tendency" for females to respond more empathically, yet this conclusion is compromised, say the researchers, by the inconsistency noted when subjects are rated on other measures (e.g., facial cues) which render any conclusion suspect. (d) When physiological response measures were employed the researchers concluded that "there is little evidence of a sex difference in physiological response to another's emotional distress. (e) The use of facial, vocal, and gestural features do not produce sex differences. In studies where children's reactions to another's distress were unobtrusively observed, no sex differences were reported. (f) Self-report measures of empathy (e.g., the Mehrabian empathy measure) show extremely high significance findings favoring females.

Eisenberg and Lennon report that for adults some levels of significance were beyond  $p < .000000001$ .

The researchers state

Indeed, according to the meta-analysis computed for these studies, the finding of a sex difference favoring females is  $Z = 18.35$ ,  $p < .0001$ , with a mean effect size of .99. According to the fail-safe statistic, 2,534 studies with a finding of no sex differences would be needed to reduce the  $Z$  to below significance at the .05 level. (p. 116)

All in all, Eisenberg and Lennon conclude that gender differences regarding empathy are a function of the methodology employed. Use of self-report measures most consistently show sex differences, but such self-presentations are most likely to be explained by influences such as cultural stereotypes and societal expectations. Thus the overwhelming conclusion that can be drawn from self-report measures is that there exists a clear difference between the capacity of males and females for empathy. However, interpretations of this finding must be made cautiously. In sum, Eisenberg and Lennon state that any conclusions drawn from the extant empirical research must be "circumscribed and tentative" (p. 126). They conclude that "indeed, at the present, all that can be concluded with confidence is that many important issues concerning sex differences in emotional empathy are, as yet, unresolved" (p. 126).

In sum, taken together, studies show that the relationship of empathy and prosociality is accepted by researchers. However, the multidimensional nature of empathy as well as the methodological issues involved render suspect any conclusive statement as to the presence of sex differences.

#### Limitations of an Empathic Morality

Although Hoffman (1984) maintains that empathy allows for a moral orientation fundamentally distinct from Kohlberg's justice orientation, he does not believe that empathy resolves all moral issues and problems. Below are areas where an empathy based morality is problematic.

Empathic Overarousal. There appears to be an optimal level wherein empathic arousal induces sympathetic distress. On the one hand, too little arousal lessens the likelihood of a prosocial response. On the other hand, too great arousal may encourage an egoistic concern for one's own welfare thereby weakening the likelihood of a prosocial response.

Other Moral Issues. A second limitation for an empathy based morality is the nature of the moral problem. An empathic morality is most likely to be utilized in situations calling for actions of benevolence or agape. Moral issues focusing on limited resources and

conflictual rights are less likely to be resolved within the domain of an empathic morality. For example, an employer might be sympathetic with the plight of an unemployed. However, how many unemployed workers are hired and the wage they are paid is contingent upon other factors (e.g., the financial situation of the company, the financial obligations owed current employees). Furthermore, empathic arousal might lead the empathizer to accept uncritically the distressed person's point of view or to lose sight of long term solutions. In effect, empathic arousal is vulnerable to a "situational immediacy" wherein the moral concern at issue is unduly influenced and potentially subordinate to the immediate emotional turmoil experienced by the empathizer.

The Lack of Directional Focus. Hogan (1973), although endorsing the critical importance of empathy in morality, notes that empathic experiences "can produce an equivocating jellyfish as well as a compassionate person with a broad moral perspective" (p. 224). In the case of an empathy based morality, there exists no guiding principle which allows the empathizer to evaluate his empathic inclinations or direct his emotional arousal. Thus, the individual can become overly biased in favor of the distressed person or the

"equivocating jellyfish" and paralyzed with inaction and equivocation.

#### A Final Comment

In sum, examination of Kohlberg and Hoffman's accounts of morality show merits and limitations. Recently, Gibbs and Schnell (1985) have set forth the need to consider both perspectives when discussing questions of morality. More specifically, they underscore the use of affect and cognition in both Kohlberg's moral development approach and in what they term Hoffman's socialization approach. Still, such consideration does not erase the priority each theorist proposes. Nonetheless, there most likely exists a good measure of truth to their urging to consider both approaches.

It is probably that both cognitive and affective sources of motivation are usually required for the accomplishment of good and fair behavior in the face of narrowly egoistic impulses. An action that is fair or that rectifies an injustice is especially likely to be completed if its cognitive motivation is enhanced by empathy or empathy-based guilt.

## CHAPTER IV

### TOWARDS AN EVERYDAY MORALITY

The issue of morality has received increasing interest in the public arena. Social philosopher Michael Novak has remarked that "the nation's return to this discussion [morality] is one of the decisive events of the last twenty years" (McBee, 1985). A 1984 Gallup poll suggests that the overwhelming majority of American parents support the discussion of morality within the American school system (Solorzano, 1985). Higher education has also attempted to respond to this renewed interest. Currently, in any given year, America's institutions of higher learning offer 11,000 courses in areas of applied ethics over a wide variety of disciplines (McBee, 1985).

The renewed interest in morality arises in part from recent disclosures of questionable moral practices. Recently national attention has focused on corruption of major officials in government (e.g, Chicago, New York); in business (e.g., E. F. Hutton); and in education (cheating scandals at Stanford University, the University of Southern California, sports scandal at Tulane University). Furthermore, according to a

national Roper poll survey, one of four Americans admits cheating on his or her income tax returns. Resultant lost revenue to the federal government is estimated at well over 135 billion dollars. In addition, in the private sector it is estimated that employers lose 160 billion dollars annually from individuals who misuse work time (Hassett, 1981; McBee, 1985).

In light of the above, the question of honesty, the nature of helpfulness, and a basic orientation that limits egoistic concerns and the desire for personal aggrandizement are issues of significance for American society. In essence, the positive behaviors studied in the now classic Hartshorne and May research are questions of increasing relevance.

#### The Definition of Everyday Morality in the Context of Contemporary American Culture

The definition of morality provided herein is one attempt to answer Haan's challenge to psychology to rethink the meaning of morality and to conceptualize a morality appropriate for "everyday" life. Based on the research cited thus far, three points are crucial. First, Hoffman's research on empathy pinpoints the universality of and the capacity for an awareness and vicarious experience of another's needs. Second, the unanimity accorded the significance of prosocial



behaviors for both relational and social functioning as well as the necessity for a behavioral dimension highlights the need to incorporate prosocial behavior as an integral factor in any definition of morality. Third, the fact that moral agents must strive to find meaning and value as they encounter a complex array of realities and situations necessitates a multi-visioned approach to morality that is sensitive to the personal, interpersonal, and social dimensions of human experience.

Everyday morality is defined herein as, simply stated, behaviors that aid others in the context of daily human social exchanges. In effect, morality is viewed as distinctly prosocial behaviors which occur within a person's daily life.

This view of morality is similar to Damon's (1975) view of positive justice which is concerned with problems associated with prosocial responding. In his own research (Damon, 1975, 1980), Damon has shown a sequential development of childhood views regarding positive justice. It is only with adolescence, however, that integration of moral principles and the self is accomplished (Damon, 1984).

In addition to this general definition of everyday morality, it is also asserted that this morality can

best be understood within the context of three dimensions (or as discussed herein--three "visions"). These visions are: the personal, the interpersonal, and the social. Given the definition of morality described above, personal morality is defined as an anonymous (on the part of the agent) prosocial response or a response that benefits a person(s) unknown to the moral agent. The classical image of this type of person is the Good Samaritan. Interpersonal morality is defined as a prosocial response directed towards a person known by the moral agent. Social morality is defined as behavior which fosters the eradication of social injustice or attempts to aid those who suffer from this injustice (e.g., discrimination, inequality). The argument for three discrete visions of morality offers a maximally useful strategy for understanding the "specificity versus generality" controversy regarding moral behavior. As noted previously, Rushton's reanalysis of the Hartshorne and May data led him to argue for an "altruistic personality" or what he termed a general moral orientation predisposed towards altruistic behavior. Yet, no theorist contends that one's behavior is always moral. It is unlikely, moreover, that an individual's actions are uniformly moral across all situations particularly when the individual's actions

are occasioned by a vast array of interpersonal complexities, situational cues, and diverse if not contradictory informational data. As a consequence, viewing morality from one of these three visions provides insight into prosocial responding. Use of personal, interpersonal, and social dimensions provides a way for understanding how personhood is constituted. For example, one scholastic definition of person is "a separate being subsisting in an intellectual nature" (*distinctum subsistens in natura intellectuali*). Within this context, a human person was viewed as someone unique. Framed in contemporary terms, philosophical psychology views this uniqueness as shown in the form of purposive behavior. That is, the human person, from the nature of consciousness can intend to aid others and help those in distress. The human person has, in other words, a conscious sense of self-definition ("I am a caring person") which provides a psychic context permitting one to aid others (for a discussion of the philosophical perspective and its relation to psychology see Howard, 1985; Howard & Conway, 1986; Manicas & Secord, 1983). A second way of viewing the human person is relational or, as designated herein, interpersonal; a person is defined in-relation-to others. The dialogal understanding of person has found emphasis

in the writing of contemporary theologians who understand the person as relational. That is, an individual does not exist in isolation from the community. He or she develops sustaining and nurturing relationships which are fundamental for psychological health (e.g., Erikson, 1963; Heath, 1965). Finally, a third view of personhood has received significant attention in current writings which focus on the social dimension of humanity. Contemporary writing in Marxism and recent theological writings have explored this understanding (e.g., political theology, liberation theology). Thus, the individual is not simply defined in terms of personal relationships to others in society; rather, there is a societal need for some honoring of the "common good" that requires commitment from all of society's members.

A wide variety of writings provide a conceptual understandings to the three-fold delineation of everyday morality. The following brief discussion is meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive, of these writings. A considerable body of literature has viewed the individual's moral self as inherently linked to the capacity to make private moral decisions based on personally meaningful value systems (e.g., Conn, 1981; Nelson, 1973). These values systems stand as a monitor

of the "quality" of one's relationships with others. This quality is exemplified by one's conduct and the meeting of obligations within relationships. Albeit discussions on the moral self are sometimes controverted, there exists general consensus that a privately held and internalized value system is an essential factor for healthy and growthful human experiencing. For example, Rokeach and Regan (1980) have argued that successful therapeutic outcomes can be facilitated by focusing on the client's contradictory behaviors which create "a state of self-dissatisfaction"; in other words, the client's realization of the failure to live up to a private moral ideal creates an ensuing dissatisfaction which in turn fosters changes in behaviors thus making "them all more integrated with the person's self-conception as a basically moral and competent person" (p. 580). Professional organizations (e.g., the American Psychological Association, 1981) recognize the importance of a private value system; this professional body explicitly mentions "conscience" as an important ethical guide for the psychologist to consider when conducting research. Finally, research on the mature personality supports the importance of a private moral self. Heath (1965, 1980) has stated that an autonomous and stable

value system is integral to healthy and mature functioning. After reviewing several developmental and personality theorists, Blocher (1974) has pointed out that commitment to personal values is an essential component of the "effective personality." In sum, the thread that weaves consistently through these writings is the relationship of self to personal values. Some of these personal values no doubt influence one's conduct or behavior towards others. In terms of the present discussion of morality, the individual responds prosocially to the distress and needs of others. The thrust of this vision of morality is the popularly understood image of the Good Samaritan; aiding one unknown to the person.

The argument for an interpersonal morality needs little introduction. Historically, ethical guidelines (e.g., the Ten Commandments) insist upon the intrinsic unity of ethical ideals and interpersonal behaviors. The capacity to engage in meaningful human relationships is integral to mature conceptions of the person in developmental literature (e.g., Erikson, 1963). Finally, two recent critiques of academic psychology have raised the possibility for an interpersonal morality that is prosocial in nature. Bergin (1980) has challenged what he terms the clinical-humanistic bias of

contemporary psychotherapeutic theorizing and argues that consideration must be given to a value system that allows for commitment and self-giving in relationships. More recently, Wallach and Wallach (1983) have viewed psychology in general and psychotherapy in particular, as dominated by an egoistic frame of reference; they offer as an alternative a psychological view of the human person which is interpersonally oriented.

Unlike personal and interpersonal morality, the viewing of a social morality is a more recent phenomenon. Groome (1980) has fashioned an approach to religious education which takes on a distinctly social character whereas Hauerwas (1981) has argued for a social ethic that is sensitive to the social needs of society; he situates this ethic in the context of symbolic and story forms of social theorizing. Finally, psychology is not immune from the challenge to consider a social morality. Current questioning of psychotherapeutic practices and social values reflects the need for mental health professionals to address the concerns of social morality. For example, Eldridge (1983) has argued that professionals can integrate social actions strategies into their professional practices. Butcher (1983) has reviewed the literature concerning the mental health practitioner as a change

agent (one who actively attempts to influence and change social structures) and argues that change agency is a necessary and inevitable role for the mental health professional in today's complex society. Perhaps the most enlightening statement on the role of psychology and social morality comes from Bandura (1974) who has stated "if psychologists are to have a significant impact on common problems of life, they must apply their corrective measures to detrimental societal practices rather than limit themselves to treating the casualties of these practices" (p. 86).

Using the Visions of Morality Scale (VMS), Shelton (Shelton, 1985; Shelton & McAdams, in press) presented evidence which showed construct validity among research findings and this three-fold understanding of everyday morality. This instrument is a paper and pencil measure used to assess a secondary school adolescent's response to the three fold dimensions of morality discussed above. The instrument provides the adolescent with the opportunity to respond to a series of daily life situations in terms of the likelihood of engaging in a prosocial response. All three samples (combined male-female, male, female) obtained their highest mean on the interpersonal score. This finding is expected inasmuch as interpersonal morality is defined as



prosocial behavior which benefits someone the moral agent knows. Characteristically, individuals are most apt to behave favorably towards those individuals who are friends or personal acquaintances (e.g., Staub, 1978). Conversely, the greatest variance in scores occurs with the social morality subscore. This type of morality is the most complicated in terms of issues and most potentially divisive as the result of political and social ideologies which can be interjected as a rationale for deciding what is an appropriate behavior. As expected, both males and females scored lowest on this dimension of morality. Furthermore, two other findings are of interest. First, interpersonal morality correlates most strongly (.45) with perspective-taking (an empathy subscale of the IRI measure developed by Davis). This is a persuasive finding because one would be most apt to be sensitive towards those one knows. Second, the morality subscale measures (personal, interpersonal, and social) are positively correlated least frequently with the distress empathy subscale measure. This finding is supported by Hoffman's assertion that empathic overarousal (distress) inhibits prosocial responding. Furthermore, a regression analysis failed to find distress as a predictive

variable for everyday morality. Most likely, distress leads one to focus inwardly in psychically defensive ways thereby lessening the ability to recognize or respond to the needs of others.

Several reasons exist as to why an understanding of everyday morality as defined above is significant for theorists and researchers. First, an everyday morality that is defined as prosocial responding appears compatible with individual's actual understanding of morality. For example, Colangelo and Dettmann (1985) asked a sample of over 300 elementary school students to write a story depicting what they viewed to be a moral problem. Unlike Kohlberg's dilemmas which commonly understood moral problems in terms of public welfare concerns, the overwhelming majority of students described personal and practical concerns with almost half describing relationship issues (peers and family). "The characteristics of the problems generated by these students, however, differ considerably from Kohlberg's hypothetical dilemmas" (p. 270). Yussen (1977) found a similar tendency among adolescents.

A second reason for social science investigation of an everyday morality arises from widening public interest in positive behaviors. As noted previously, a large majority of Americans favor school interventions

which delineate moral standards. More recently, U.S. Secretary of Education. William Bennett has endorsed character education as a goal for public education. A sign of this upsurge of interest is seen in the shifting focus accompanying the teaching of values. In the 1960's the demands for tolerance and appreciation of diverse lifestyles led educators to adopt value neutrality regarding questions of morality. Currently, a growing emphasis in school districts is encouraging the teaching of nonsectarian values such as compassion and honesty (Solorzano, 1985).

Moreover, an issue of Daedalus published in the early nineteen eighties which focuses on American elementary and secondary education features articles highlighting the necessity of positive social behaviors among students. Sociologist Gerald Grant (1981), commenting on the character of the American school, notes that the emphasis placed heretofore in value neutrality has led to a crisis in American education. "The crisis of authority in the American school is that in many places we no longer have any agreement on what that provisional morality ought to be" (p. 146). By provisional morality Grant means a socialization to "some set of standards, beliefs, and values about what it means to be a human being" (p. 146) which can be

reevaluated by the child when he or she reaches adulthood. The point to be made, though, is Grant's belief that the educational system is unable to reach consensus on what such a morality might be. As a consequence, schools have for too long avoided moral content and fostered a value neutrality. As a solution, Grant advocates a re-commitment to a provisional morality which distinctly champions positive behaviors associated with the everyday morality described herein. He argues that a provisional morality must "express some of the conscious beliefs of a democratic pluralist society" (p. 147). Characteristics of such a morality include

the minimal order required for dialogue, the willingness to listen to one another, respect for truth, the rejection of racism (or openness to participation in the dialogue), as well as those transcendent values that shore up the whole society--a sense of altruism and service to others and respect for personal effort and hard work. Without such an agreement, one does not have a public, but a kind of radical, relativism; not pluralism but mere coexistence. (p. 148)

In a similar vein, Jerome Kagan (1981) has maintained that the American school exercises critical function for the American community. He argues that a responsibility of the school is to develop a "dimension of character" among students. He notes the characteristics critical for such character dimension.

Thus I borrow from both the moral absolutists as well as the utilitarians in suggesting the dimensions of character to be celebrated at least until the balance is restored. Kindness, restraint on aggression, honesty, and a reasonable blend of pride and humility stand at the top of my list for several reasons. First, the community currently needs more citizens to practice these standards, and many youth are dissatisfied with the callous acts of privacy, cheating, lying, and, on rare occasions, destruction of a peer's notes they are forced to in order to survive in a system that can award special merit to only a few. But my observations of children persuade me that kindness and control of aggression have a natural priority in development. Three-year-olds spontaneously offer toys to peers in distress and are reluctant to strike another, unless the latter intrudes or threatens. (p. 163)

In a related event, two recent books published by psychologists underscore the renewed emphasis on positive behaviors in academic circles. Psychologists Lickona (1985) and Schulman and Mekler (1985), in books expressly written for parents, maintain that it is an important enterprise for parents to encourage moral behavior in their children. While eschewing a morality based on religious beliefs, the overriding theme of both works is that morality which is defined in terms of prosocial values (compassion, care, kindness, respect, helpfulness) and behaviors is a legitimate enterprise to be taught to children and adolescents.

The Advantage of an Everyday Morality in Light of  
Current Moral Discussion

Alasdair MacIntyre (1981) has characterized the current state of moral thinking as one of moral disarray. He notes that the contemporary state of morality is one "of grave disorder." According to MacIntyre, culture lacks a consensual understanding of morality and thereby provides no uniform rationale for deciding moral disputes. "For what analysis of A's and B's position reveals once again is that we have all too many disparate and rival moral concepts" (p. 235). In essence, the idea of a moral community has been lost and opposing views of justice (to take an example) vie for dominance, each with his or her own adherents.

This fragmenting of community, which MacIntyre discusses in terms of moral philosophy, is taken up by Bellah (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler & Tipton, 1985) and reframed in light of sociological insight. Commenting upon the ethical quandary which exists today, Bellah notes

Now if selves are defined by their preferences, but those preferences are arbitrary, then each self constitutes its own moral universe, and there is finally no way to reconcile conflicting claims about what is good in itself....In the absence of any objectifiable criteria of right and wrong, good or evil, the self and its feelings become our only moral guide. What kind of world

is inhabited by this self, perpetually in progress, yet without any fixed moral end? (p. 76)

Historically, says Bellah, the dominant ethos in American culture has been the focus on "individualism". In short, individualism in both its utilitarian (the personal maximization of goods) and expressive (the primacy of self-actualized feelings) forms has sundered the individual from his or her historically felt rootings in community. Consequently, Americans remain deeply ambivalent about their individualism.

The inner tensions of American individualism add up to a classic case of ambivalence. We strongly assert the value of our self-reliance and autonomy. We deeply feel the emptiness of a life without sustaining social commitments. Yet we are hesitant to articulate our sense that we need one another as much as we need to stand alone, for fear that if we did we would lose independence altogether. (pp. 150-151)

The philosophical quandary and social strains emanating from disparate moral positions and the dominance of selfhood in American culture will not be resolved within these pages. Yet, the definition of everyday morality set forth herein offers the potential for a unifying vision among diverse and disparate moral views.

In other words, empathic experiences which induce prosocial behavior provide a consensual basis for morality as well as the bridging theme among diverse

moral beliefs and autonomous human behaviors. That is, although individuals reason to conflictual moral views and subsequently engage in contradictory if not opposing behaviors, all individuals are endowed with an empathic sense (Hoffman, 1975, 1977) and a commonly agreed upon consensus is that a minimal level of prosocial behavior is requisite for personal and societal functioning (Rushton, 1980). Thus, an everyday morality that is empathy based offers the opportunity for personal understanding and consensus as well as opportunities for social discourse.

Bellah's discussion of how Americans understand and express their prosocial behaviors provides insight into how empathy might provide increased moral understanding. American life is best characterized as "a society in which the individual can only rarely and with difficulty understand himself and his activities as interrelated in morally meaningful ways with those of other, different Americans" (p. 50). As such, individualism is "the dominant ideology of American life" (p. 302). A consequence of individualism's dominating presence is the relegation at times of even prosocial behaviors into some form of enlightened self-interest. That is, the ethos of individualism encourages one to respond to the another's needs if and only if, all things considered,



such actions benefit oneself. Equally important, explanations for such behaviors, as pointed out by Smith (1986), are often expressed in "cost benefit" terms; this phenomenon results from the paucity of an adequate moral language. Because empathy (as defined by Hoffman) entails cognitive and affective dimensions which in turn induce a behavioral response, it is reasonably likely that prosocial behaviors engendered by empathic arousal provide an optimum forum both for encouraging social interaction and allowing for self-insight into the motives for one's actions. All in all, given proper social reinforcement and environmental supports, empathic expressions would provide a useful antidote to the impoverished understandings of prosocial inclinations which Bellah maintains are commonly expressed in American life.

#### Foundation for An Everyday Morality

It is maintained herein that empathy is a foundation for everyday morality. As previously noted, the argument that empathy is a basis for prosocial behaviors has been suggested by numerous psychologists (Batson and Coke, 1981; Coke, Batson, & McDavis, 1978; Hoffman, 1980; Rushton, 1980, 1981; Staub, 1978). In order to ascertain the relationship of everyday morality and empathy Shelton (Shelton, 1985; Shelton & McAdams, in

press) developed the Visions of Morality Scale (VMS). Briefly stated, this scale described 45 everyday life situations in which secondary school adolescents responded in a Likert scale format as to their likelihood for engaging in a specific prosocial response. The criterion used for constructing the 45 situations was the following: The author had observed each situation occurring among adolescents he had either taught or counseled, or he had been informed about the incident through personal contact with an adolescent who had experienced the situation. The opportunity for this contact with adolescents occurred while the author was an instructor and counselor at a college preparatory school in Denver, Colorado during the late seventies. Utilizing one or the other of these criteria insured the construction of prosocial situations which are commonly experienced by adolescents in everyday life. In a preliminary study, the VMS successfully discriminated ( $p < .001$ ) between students engaged in voluntary school and community service projects and a control group of students.

Overall, a highly significant relationship emerged between the total empathy score and the total morality VMS score ( $.42, p < .001$ ). Although a cautionary note is warranted given the correlational nature of the data,

the highly significant correlation combined with the large body of supportive psychological literature lends reasonable support to the conclusion that empathy is integral for prosociality. In addition, a multiple regression analysis found perspective-taking (the cognitive component of empathy) and empathic concern (the affective component of empathy) to be significant predictors of an everyday moral orientation. Moreover, research supports the efficacy of paper and pencil measures in predicting prosocial behaviors (Eisenberg-Berg & Mussen, 1978; Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972; Rushton, 1981). Finally, a broad range of studies have linked empathy as a motivational force for fostering positive behaviors (e.g., Goldstein & Michaels, 1985).

The use of empathy rather than justice (Kohlberg) as a foundation for morality provides an alternative view of morality advocated by some philosophers (e.g., Puka, 1985). These critics, essentially, have posed the question of how morality can be conceptualized with reference to values such as compassion and love. Moreover, moralities based on justice or prosociality have both strengths and weaknesses.

It is important that we assess the merits and demerits of a love or altruism rationale against those of justice structure. Just as altruism may have difficulty resolving

conflicts of interest, justice may have difficulty (if it has anything to say at all) prescribing ideals of character and community. (A mixed or complex conception of love or altruism could deal with both issues). Where love may sometimes be nondiscriminating regarding who gets what or whether anyone gets the goods, justice may be unacceptably indifferent as to what goods people should pursue. (Puka, 1985, p. 197)

Furthermore, an empathy based morality finds support in the psychological view of morality proposed by Kagan (1984). According to Kagan, the potential for a set of feeling states "is a nonrelative platform upon which a set of universal, or principled, moral standards can be built" (p. 123). Kagan offers the example of considering whether to hurt someone to illustrate his point. Rationalists (e.g., Rawls) would object to harming another and base such refusals on Kant's ethical imperative or the principle of the priority of human life. Notwithstanding these rationalist objections, Kagan maintains that individuals refrain from such behaviors primarily because of their emotional reactions; it is their need for standards which leads individuals to develop rational justifications. Optimally, the strongest moral convictions are likely to be those that arouse one's emotions as well as satisfy rational argumentations.

Perhaps each of us is persuaded of the moral rightness of an idea by two different, incommensurate processes. One is based on feelings; the other, on logical consistency with a few deep premises. When a standard derives its strength from either foundation, we find it difficult to be disloyal to its directives. When it enjoys the support of both, as it does for torture and unprovoked murder, its binding force is maximal. (p. 124).

In other words, some human acts are so morally repugnant that they shock basic moral sensitivities and invite a deeply felt emotional response. When in addition such actions are devoid of any rational explanation (e.g., mass murder of a family) they induce the strongest objections; that is, they are viewed as violations of one's deepest moral convictions.

Paralleling this emotional reaction is the child's development of standards. Kagan observes that empathy provides one of several sources for standards; that is, the child's feelings of discomfort, by age two, allows for the inferences that another child who undergoes the same experience will feel in a similar way. This inference based on one's own distress implies the violation of some standard. In sum, the capacity for certain emotions and the corresponding needs for standards emerge as the foundational soil for the rooting of moral reasoning and ethical understandings.

#### Influences on an Everyday Morality

Everyday morality is not uniform across all

situations. Notwithstanding the presence of a general moral orientation (e.g., Rushton, 1980), a variety of factors influence an individual's inclination to respond prosocially. In short, even though a general moral orientation may be a valid construct, specific developmental, situational, and social variables must be viewed in order that everyday morality is not simply an abstract understanding of morality but rather a morality situated in the context of everyday life events. The following is a concise survey of salient factors which affect prosocial tendencies.

### Sex

Behaviors which benefit others have generally been defined in the literature as generosity (giving material aid to another person), being helpful (aiding another when he or she needs help), and bystander rescue (intervening when another individual is in an emergency situation) (Staub, 1978). Underwood and Moore (1982) have noted that the results of studies regarding sex differences are mixed. In terms of generosity and helpfulness, the consistent finding is that females demonstrate more positive behavior than males. The researchers state that there does exist a sex difference, albeit small, in the prosocial responses of males and females; yet, this sex difference does not

always occur. For example, there does exist evidence to suggest that in some emergency situations, males are more likely to intervene and aid the distressed person than are females. Staub (1978) has suggested that perhaps the male-female differences exist because males are more concerned with equity and keeping their personal freedom; these tendencies, consequently, might lead them to be less helpful than females. Thus an individual in need might elicit a negative reaction from the male who values independence and is dependent upon a high level of status. Staub notes, however, that interpretations of male-female differences regarding prosocial acts are complex due to the limitations of the experimental studies and the numerous and at times contradictory interpretations which can be given the research findings. In addition, Staub (1978) has questioned Maccoby and Jacklin's (1974) conclusion that there exists no differences in the helping behaviors of males and females. This lack of differences, says Staub, might be due to the types of studies they examined. For example, in their discussion of rescue studies, the researchers failed to note male tendencies towards competence which might have led them to intervene as much as females. Staub (1978) has noted that

under certain circumstances females may be more helpful than males, because they are competent in a particular area, because being helpful is more socially appropriate for them, or because certain characteristics they acquired (or tend to possess by heredity) make them more likely to be helpful. (p. 254)

From another perspective, the values prized by females might support a greater tendency for females to act prosocially. Rokeach (Rokeach 1973, Rokeach and Regan, 1980) has suggested that values represent ideal end states which serve as evaluative standards for personal actions. Bearing this in mind, Feather (1980), in a discussion of adolescent sex differences in value orientation, noted that females are socialized to place more emphasis on "communal" values and concerns which favor caring behaviors whereas males are more likely to adopt values which sustain independence and competitive strivings. Relatedly, Shelton (Shelton, 1985, Shelton & McAdams, in press) has found that female adolescents consistently favored an everyday morality across personal, interpersonal, and social dimensions when compared with their male counterparts.

#### Group Size

A consistent body of research has documented the presence of others as having an effect on prosociality. Latane, Nida and Wilson (1981) note



There is little doubt that an individual's likelihood of giving help decreases as the number of other bystanders also witnessing an emergency increases. The evidence for this group size effect is vast, remarkably consistent, and is comprised of studies involving a wide variety of experimenters, experimental situations, and participant populations. (p. 309)

A limitation of group size studies is their emphasis on emergency situations which, for the most part, are not characteristic of everyday prosocial responding. Everyday situations rarely require the urgent response that is characteristic of emergency situations. Still, these bystander rescue studies offer a necessary understanding to prosocial research, and, relatedly, everyday morality which in turn must be considered. Latane, Nida, and Wilson (1981) reviewed 56 published and unpublished studies in which subjects prosocial responses were measured. The independent variable in these studies was the subject alone or in the presence of others (or the subject knew others were observing the same situation). In sum, 75% of people tested alone helped, but fewer than 53% of those tested with others helped. In 48 of the 56 studies subjects exposed to group conditions helped less. The chances of such findings over this range of studies occurring by chance is one in 51 million. Speculations as to why individuals respond prosocially when alone include adherence to internal norms of responsibility, guilt,

and empathic arousal. On the other hand, three factors might explain the reduction in inclination to initiate helping while in the presence of others. First, audience inhibition refers to how individuals might be embarrassed if they deviate from their normal public behavior. Thus an individual might believe that he or she could become embarrassed through misinterpreting the emergency or intervening in a way that others consider foolish. Social influence is a second factor. Individuals look to others as measures for appropriateness concerning their own behaviors; consequently, the disinclination of other to offer aid most likely influences one's decision to offer help. Finally, diffusion of responsibility offer a reason for refusing to aid others. If alone, the burden of responsibility is solely one's own. However, in a group, responsibility is shared thereby lessening one's own feeling of personal responsibility.

As noted above, group size investigations must be interpreted cautiously for confirmation of any thesis on everyday morality due to the "emergency" nature of the situational variable. Nonetheless, in terms of everyday morality, it is likely that group influences are likely determinants in commonplace prosocial responding.

Mood

A variety of studies have investigated the role of emotions in helping. In general, positive mood states foster positive social behaviors; in this regard, experimental findings are relatively straightforward. On the other hand, negative mood states are more complex. Thus, guilt appears to induce prosociality whereas sadness and failure, to a great extent, appear to inhibit prosocial responding. Numerous explanations are offered for this finding. One of the most persuasive explanations appears to be the shift of attentional focus from the distressed person to oneself thus lessening concern for the other (Rosenhan, Salovey, Karylowski, & Hargis, 1981). Cialdini, Kenrick, and Baumann (1982) shed light on the influence of negative mood states. These researchers offer a negative relief state model to explore the relationship of prosocial responding and mood. According to these researchers, a prosocial act becomes a source of self-gratification thus serving the function of reducing one's negative mood state. All in all, these researchers view prosocial responses in light of negative mood states as serving an instrumental function; that is, they are directed to altering one's mood. On the other hand, helping behaviors carried out when experiencing

positive mood states are viewed as "by products" of the positive mood; in other words, these states encourage one to like others, be optimistic about future events, and focus on positive memories. Thus, positive mood states serve as a foundation upon which prosocial response naturally thrive and often occur.

### Socialization Factors

A variety of socialization factors have been linked to prosociality. Among these are: modeling, attribution, exhortation, reinforcement, punishment, and verbal instruction (Goldstein & Michaels, 1985; Grusec, 1981, 1982; Staub, 1978, 1979). Staub (1981) has attempted to apply these factors in working with school age children. According to Staub, effective socialization to prosociality focuses on the significance of reinforcement whereas Hoffman (1979) advocates the use of gradual insight which comes with inductive techniques. More recently, psychologists have attempted to translate these ideas into practical applications for parents (e.g., Schulman & Mekler, 1985). It follows that exposure to these factors, over time, encourages the development of prosocial responses. Conversely, limited experience with the above factors most likely makes one less receptive or at least limited in one's capacity to respond prosocially.

### Other Influences

The amount of factors affecting one's inclination to respond prosocially are immense. In addition to factors cited above, a variety of researchers (Bridgeman, 1983a; Eisenberg, 1982a; Rushton & Sorrentino, 1981; Staub, 1978, 1979) have provided evidence for a multitude of variables that are linked to prosocial responding. Among these factors are: decision-making skills, one's level of perceptual awareness, cognitive factors, internal mediators such as devaluation of others and just world conceptions, situational factors, and feelings of personal competency.

To summarize, an empathically based everyday morality is most likely influenced by numerous factors operating within a multitude of relationships and situations. Consequently, although the everyday morality described herein is in some sense an abstract concept, focus and attention to influences provides recognition as to the complexity of morality as it is experienced in daily life.

### Norma Haan's Interactional Morality

Norma Haan has set forth an interactional view of morality which offers similarities to the empathy based everyday morality described herein. The following is a

brief discussion of Haan's understanding of morality. Haan (1982) has disputed the disjunction between social science inquiry and the study of morality. In essence, says Haan, the function of social science (she focuses on psychology in particular) is an impartial explanation of facts. However, if social science attempts to be value free then it inexorably fails for such a view of science is no longer tenable (Haan, 1982; Haan et al., 1985; Manicas and Secord, 1983). On the other hand, social science is "scientific" when it examines facts impartially.

To answer the question I initially posed, moral research cannot be "scientific" if this means being value neutral, but it can be "scientific" in the sense of impartially submitting all formulations to the full reality of people's moral consensuses and interactions in everyday life. (pp. 1103-1104)

Haan criticizes Kohlberg's theory because it proposes an understanding of morality that is unencumbered by the situational realities individuals must confront in everyday life.

In everyday life, the dialectic between self and other interests seldom leads to perfect solutions but instead to compromises, to discoveries of mutual interests, to choices of the lesser of two evils, or to ways to rectify temporary inequalities by future action. In contrast, traditional theories define moral

situations as adversarial and hold out the promise of perfect solution: One party is wrong while the other is right. These solutions strain relationships. (p. 1103)

Haan has described her view of morality as "everyday morality" (because it is focused on morality as it is commonly experienced in everyday life) and "practical morality" (because it is a morality that people actually use) before settling on the term "interactional morality". Haan favors what Packer (1985) has termed the hermeneutic approach to psychology. As conceived by Packer, this approach studies what people actually do in their everyday lives. Moreover, it is questionable whether human can be studied simply as properties subject to causal interpretations as in the physical sciences. Manicas and Secord (1983) maintain that the problem of consciousness--the intentions, meanings, and understandings humans give to everyday life encounters--place limitations on or call for expansion of the scientific approach. Instead, these researchers argue that attention must be given to ideals and purposes which motivate people in their everyday lives. Haan (1982), in turn, appears to accept this view.

To elucidate the contingently enacted moral forms of everyday life is surely a task for social scientists; however, enacted moralities cannot be understood if separated from their cherished forms. Therefore the kinds of

analyses typically performed by philosophers are an essential part of the empirical search. Naively empirical studies cannot reveal morality's nature because morality is flavored by cherished meanings. (p. 1103)

According to Haan, the social scientist's study of morality should assure several goals: First, any study of morality by scientists already assumes the adoption of a value which she terms "the moral ground"; that is, every morality must adhere to some essential ingredient as the core experience of morality (e.g., for Kohlberg this moral ground is "justice" whereas for Haan it is "equality"--one's moral concerns are taken seriously and treated in a respectful manner by others). Second, social scientists must move beyond the empirical fallacy (that the entire truth is contained within measurable facts). "Cherished moral ideas have the power to move history, so it is clear that social scientists need to take more than observable morality into their accounts" (p. 48). Third, special emphasis must be placed on the need to take into account moral action. Fourth, although important, the study of action must be complemented by what might be. There appears to be, in other words, a call by Haan for social scientists to examine the significance of moral imagination--ideals which are inspirational for peoples' lives (e.g., Martin Luther King's speech "I Have a Dream"). Fifth social scientists



must be willing to embrace their peers in other disciplines; in effect the study of morality must be transdisciplinary. All too often, says Haan, psychology has narrowly focused on the individual while eschewing the influences of sociopolitical contexts within which moral actions transpire.

Haan openly admits that her thinking is "controversial" since it fails to follow traditional understandings of morality. In pointing out her challenge to psychology and other social science disciplines, she pinpoints six "irreverent" theses germane to her thinking. Because these irreverencies concerning the nature of interactional morality help to portray her thinking, they are presented below.

1. It [interactional morality] is irreverent toward moral philosophy in reasoning that fresh, clarifying insights may come out of attempts to understand the moral psychology of ordinary people.
2. It is irreverent toward research psychology by arguing that valuing cannot be denied so the cherished morality of people and researchers should be openly brought into account.
3. It is irreverent to the academy in general in contending that vested boundaries among the disciplines of social sciences and philosophy hinder our coming to understand the moral basis of life.
4. It warns citizens not to accept too easily psychologists' and sociologists' "scientifically based" claims about morality, as truth without dross.

5. It is irreverent toward old beliefs that the educationally, politically, and economically advantaged are morally superior and that the disadvantaged's complaints are merely envy and therefore without moral merit.

6. It is irreverent toward the theory and work of the pioneer psychologist, Lawrence Kohlberg, who stirred philosophy when he added the idea of development to classical moral theory, but who stopped short, in our view, of apprehending the promises and emendations that lie in practical inquiry. (p. 4)

In her study of morality Haan has attempted to bring together both the cognitive-developmental view of Kohlberg (which emphasizes reasoning) and social learning accounts of morality (which stress the importance of societal and environmental influences). By focusing on everyday life contexts, Haan contends that her own interactional view of morality blends these two approaches together. Given this blending of the two approaches she maintains that

in this formulation, morality is action. People with moral dilemmas are actors involved in real or imagined dialogues and negotiate moral claims so that balanced, equalized relations with others can be achieved or reestablished. In other words, when people make moral choices, they interact with others and within a given situation. (p. 38)

Haan asserts that eight conclusions can be drawn from an interactional approach to morality. These eight conclusions are listed below.

1. Moral decisions are created and jointly achieved in actual or imagined dialogues instead of being drawn by single persons from principles or learned generalizations.

2. The reasoning involved is practical, not formally logical.

3. General self-interest is always a legitimate part of dialogue, although a particular self-interest may or may not be found legitimate in particular dialogues.

4. Moral decisions are not always expected to be perfect, absolute solutions; they are often compromises or choice between the lesser of two evils.

5. Young children are not seen as moral primitives; they engage in moral dialogues at a very early age and make self-chosen decisions.

6. Moral skills, but not moral concern, develops gradually rather than by stages.

7. All aspects of people's functioning, including thought, emotions, and motivations, are brought into play during the dialogue and influence eventual decisions.

8. The adequacy of moral actions can vary, depending on the contents or dilemmas and demands and stress of immediate social contexts. (p. 39)

An implicit assumption in Haan's theory is the centrality of equality in the moral dialogue. That is, Haan states that, above all, individuals place priority in their need to have their moral concerns heard and considered by others. "The cherished value is that participants' claims--interests in terms of facts, needs, and contributions--are considered, understood, and weighed" (p. 40).

There are several similarities between interactional morality as described by Haan and an everyday morality. First, both moralities give recognition to the role of affect. However, for interactional morality affect is viewed more as an adaptive and coping device that influences moral action whereas for everyday morality affect represents the foundation on which morality is constituted (although as already noted empathic distress lessens the probability of moral action). Second, interactional morality has as its moral ground, equality; on the other hand, everyday morality views the moral ground as prosocial action. Third, both moralities leave open the possibility for examining the role of values and their impact on moral action. Likewise, both emphasize action--what the individual does. In addition, both moralities are sensitive to the context of everyday life events in which moral actions transpire. For interactional morality this involves some type of consensual dialogue and negotiation whereas for everyday morality such context is centered on the possibility of responding prosocially in daily life. Finally, both moralities are addressed to educators. Haan et al. (1985) has noted that interactional morality is addressed "with professional social scientists in mind, but the primary

concern is to address educators and parents" (p. 9).  
Everyday morality, on the other hand, is an attempt to  
conceptualize a morality that is sensitive to educa-  
tional concerns, and, in particular to the current  
interest in awakening students to the need to exhibit  
prosocial behaviors (see Solorzano, 1985).

## CHAPTER V

### TOWARDS A MORALITY OF THE HEART

At this point it is helpful to recapitulate the conceptual perspectives that this study incorporates. Kohlberg's approach to morality is deemed inadequate when attempts are made to address everyday morality (prosocial behavior in daily life). If Kohlberg's approach is not acceptable, then what approach can adequately address the concerns of a morality centered on prosociality? We have concluded that Hoffman's perspective of an empathy based morality is a viable way to conceptualize a prosocial morality. Still, utilizing empathy presents a far too general construct which inadequately addresses the multifaceted nature of morality. This complexity of morality is nicely delineated by Rest's use of four components. When applied to everyday morality, Rest's model allows for distinctive constructs which together form what is termed in this chapter a morality of the heart. It is a morality of the heart which allows for an understanding of the adolescent's everyday morality.

In this chapter, Rest's component process model will be examined and his understanding of morality will be explored in order to set forth what he terms a "fully developed morality." After a discussion of Rests' approach we move to a conceptual framework which allows for a discussion of everyday morality. In this regard, the "heart" will be used as a metaphor to capture the adolescent moral experience. More specifically, the metaphor will be extended to apply to each of the components that Rest sets forth. Thus, the metaphorical framework will include four dimensions: the sensitive heart, the valuing heart, the discerning heart, and the committed heart.

### The Rest Model

Rest (1983, 1984, 1985; Carroll & Rest, 1982) has provided a framework for viewing morality which attempts to capture all relevant dimensions. According to Rest, psychological criteria for defining morality have included: norms, behavior, reasoning, and internal mechanisms (e.g., guilt). Psychologists have tended to view morality solely from one of these perspectives. Yet each of these criteria at some point fail to address the complexity of morality. Thus, Rest (1983) maintains that "we need to attempt a fuller, more complicated, more integrated picture of morality and to envision how

the part processes are organized" (p. 558). Rest (1985) notes that "the four components are not presented as four virtues that make up an ideal person; rather they are the major units of analysis in tracing how a particular course of action was produced in the context of a particular situation" (p. 14). For moral behavior to occur, all four components must function adequately. Rest believes that popular moral theories (e.g., Kohlberg's) address issues germane only to one or two of these components, but that no research focuses sufficiently on all components. For example, Rest views Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental approach as situated within the framework of Component II. "In short, it [Rest's model] claims that to a large extent, the major theoretical approaches have bypassed one another in attending to different aspects of the phenomenon of morality" (Rest, 1984, p. 25).

Component I is best termed the sensitivity component. More specifically, this component focuses on the ability to recognize--to be aware that there exists a situation calling forth some level of moral response. A variety of factors exist that have the potential to obfuscate the sensitivity component. Among these factors are ambiguity of the event, the interpretation of the situation, and emotional arousal to the situation



(for an extensive treatment of these factors see Staub, 1978). According to Rest, to respond morally one must first recognize that a moral response is required. Rest notes Hoffman's discussion of empathy as a primary candidate to be studied as a Component I process. He argues that empathy is a significant factor in recognizing the moral element in situations. At the same time, he elucidates three reservations concerning empathy's role. First, empathy is limited to select situations; thus, under many circumstances, empathy is not the most adequate rendering of morality (Rest cites the biblical story of Solomon where his wisdom was more aptly translated as fairness). Second, over-empathizing with another might unduly sway one in a prejudicial way; for example, a judge who over-empathizes with a contestant might unfairly favor that contestant. Third, some situations require a wider social context such as institutional involvement whereas empathic responding is most likely associated with one on one personal encounters.. To illustrate, one might be upset over individuals who are placed in a state institution; however, given the number of indigent individuals or the realities of state budgetary restraints, the state's course of action might be the most appropriate response. Rest (1983) notes

Any paradigm of morality that neglects the societal-historical context of human interaction is likely to underestimate institutional and programmatic ways of meeting human needs and one's duties and rights within a set of ongoing social arrangements. Sometimes a person charged with the responsibility for a social organization must act in opposition to his empathy for specific people. (p. 561)

On the other hand, Rest's reservations do not disclaim the significance of empathy. Situations calling for fairness do not preclude a viable role for empathy (cf. Gibbs & Schnell, 1985). Further, to over-empathize is a question as to the extent of one's empathic response rather than a question of empathy's merits. Even Hoffman has addressed this concern in his cautionary note regarding empathic overarousal (too great an empathic response to the other diminishes the altruistic response). Finally, although institutional contexts might alter the role of empathy even these wider social contexts require basic empathic components (e.g., perspective-taking). For example, Shelton (1985) found a significant relationship between empathy and social morality which suggests some consideration can be given to empathy even when addressing complex social system concerns. In addition, essential empathic responses (empathic concern) might well act as an inhibiting agent to impersonal decision making which is commonplace in social-bureaucratic structures.

Whereas Component I focuses on the realization that a moral concern exists, Component II centers on the ideal one envisions as central to the moral concern at hand. In other words, that there is a moral concern now becomes: "What am I now to do in light of this concern?" "Component II involves determining what course of action would best fulfill a moral ideal, what ought to be done in the situation" (Rest, 1983, p. 561).

Rest explores how psychologists have dealt with this ideal. One tradition, says Rest, focuses on social norms such as equity and social responsibility. In contrast to this line of research, a more popular way to conceptualize morality is the justice principle set forth in Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental view. Much of Rest's own research has been within this tradition (e.g., his research with the DIT--Defining Issues Test). Thus, it is understandable that Rest discusses Component II primarily in terms of Kohlberg's research. As a consequence, in the Kohlbergian tradition, a psychologist concentrates on the moral reasoning responses that articulate the responder's understanding of justice. As noted previously, although Kohlberg would deem his understanding of morality as satisfying all four components, Rest views the Kohlberg

paradigm as falling under Component II. Rest gives little attention to other approaches which might incorporate other dimensions (e.g., values).

Even though one might know what one ought to do, one still must choose to do it; this choice is the essence of Component III. Damon (1977) demonstrated that children's moral ideals (what they said was just and fair) could be discrepant from their actual behavior (self-interest led them to give a disproportionate share of candy to themselves). Damon's findings, says Rest, point out the need to investigate what leads one to actually choose to behave morally.

Rest (1983, 1984) notes that a variety of moral motivational theories exist (the choices one makes to behave morally). These include biological, social, and psychological elements. Rest states that research gives only limited support to any theory of moral motivation and that "an enormous amount of work" needs to be done on this component of morality. No one would deny that the complexity of morality necessitates on-going research. At the same time, it is questionable whether Rest's statement as to little support for these research traditions is sustainable. For example, the cognitive-developmental view of Kohlberg (Chapter II) and the empathy perspective of Hoffman (Chapter

III) have generated a large body of studies and a significant amount of research support.

Rest devotes the least attention among the four components to Component IV. The most likely reason for this is the psychological nature of Component IV and the fact that this component is least likely to be associated with morality. In other words, Component I focuses on recognizing a moral situation and Component II addresses what ideals are relevant. In turn, Component III views the moral choices which must be made. All three of these components address relevant moral concerns--recognition, ideals, and choices. In contrast, Component IV is defined as the executing component--to carrying out one's moral action. An apt image for this component is some sort of executing mechanism residing within the person which fosters the carrying out of one's moral choice. As such, this component has the "potential" for being sterile; embracing a cold, calculating efficiency (thus a sociopath could score very high on Component IV). Although Rest admits this possibility if Component IV is viewed in isolation from the other components, he favors viewing this component in terms of some type of "inner strength."

Rest (1983) quotes St. Paul's famous statement "the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Romans 7: 19) to point out the pitfalls associated with executing moral actions. The resolution to carry through on one's moral intentions is essential; simply stated, moral choices are not adequate, one must also follow through on one's moral ideals. His emphasis on a fourth component blends with his understanding of morality (Rest, 1983) which stresses "that behavior can be called moral only on the basis of knowing both the observable behavior and the processes giving rise to the behavior" (p. 569). Finally, Rest notes that this component has received little attention in psychological research.

One significant limitation of Rest's component process approach is the lack of a developmental focus. For example, there is no attempt to integrate his components with the "adolescent experience". Accordingly, the adequacy of various theoretical moral approaches in terms of the adolescent experience need consideration. In this way, pertinent factors which influence the adequacy of Rest's four components can be addressed.

#### The Adolescent Experience

In order to understand the adolescent experience,

attention will be given to short accounts of two dominant focuses for adolescent morality--the psychoanalytic and cognitive developmental views.

The psychoanalytic interpretation of adolescent morality has been set forth by several writers (Blos, 1962, 1967, 1973; A. Freud, 1958; Settlege, 1973; Wolf, Gedo, & Terman, 1972). According to this tradition, the superego emerges as the "heir to the oedipus complex." The child's object attachment to the parent must yield to the social and interpersonal realities which now surround him/her. To allay fear of parental displeasure and punishment and to control the massive repression needed to contain libidinal urges, there emerges the superego. During the latency period the consolidation of ego and superego psychic structures transpires. Thus,

the superego can be traced from early infancy through its many precursory stages until it assumes the definitive structure of a psychic institution at the decline of the oedipal phase. Its origin, or better, its formation, is due to the settlement or the Pyrrhic victory which brings the oedipal struggle to a close. (Blos, 1962, p. 184)

However, with puberty, sexual urges again gain ascendancy and the adolescent must now defend against the re-emerging oedipal struggle. As Anna Freud (1958) notes in her comment upon this adolescent phase of life

Threatened with anxiety by the drive development, the ego, as it has been formed in childhood, enters into a struggle for survival in which all the available methods of defense are brought into play and strained to the utmost. The results, that is the personality changes which are achieved, vary. Normally, the organization of ego and superego alter sufficiently to accommodate the new, mature forms of sexuality. (p. 124).

Ideally, the adaptive functioning of the ego in adolescence coincides with a flexible superego thereby allowing for a gradual disengagement from parental ties and a growing attachment (cathexis) to others. Blos (1967) notes that the resolution of adolescent intrapsychic conflicts generates character formation which is typified by increasing self-esteem, a growing sense of one's ego identity, and the management of emotional turmoil.

Blos (1962) states that the ego ideal takes on a significant role during the adolescent period. According to Blos (1962), the ego ideal is formed separately from the superego. Unlike the superego whose structure is set with the ebbing of the oedipal phase, the ego ideal is consolidated only with the advent of early adolescence. In essence, the ego ideal attains its definite organization only belatedly at the decline of the homosexual stage of early adolescence. The psychic institution of the ego ideal continues to integrate during adolescence an ever variable content; its structure, however, remains constant and permanent. (p.184)



In effect, the ego ideal provides the adolescent the opportunity to develop object attachment to others. Moreover, the decathecting of libidinal ties signals the potential for narcissism as well as object attachment beyond earlier parental attachments. Blos (1967) notes "the love of the infant's parents is, partially at least, replaced by the love of self or its potential perfection" (p. 252). Unfortunately, as Anna Freud (1936) has pointed out, the disengagement from parental object attachments can foster such narcissism.

The adolescent is in danger of withdrawing his object libido from those around him and concentrating it upon himself; just as he has regressed within the ego, so he may regress in his libidinal life from object love to narcissism. (p. 121)

The significance of the ego ideal lies in its capacity to effectuate the movement from narcissistic centering to outer-directed object attachments thereby fostering growing psychic stability through an increasing incorporation of significant others and cultural norms. In sum, the ego ideal eases the process of parental object disengagement and provides a bridge for channeling libidinal energies towards developmentally appropriate objects.

More specifically, growing exposure to diverse attitudes and values leads the adolescent to become, through object attachment, "what he/she would like to

be". Blos (1962) views the ego ideal as an agency for solidifying interpersonal attractions. Moreover, the shedding of parental attachments leads to a growing shift in psychic energy resulting in increasing bonding to others and the development of social roles.

The libidinal model of "I love what I would like to be" establishes narcissistic completeness; this was described above in terms of the homosexual phase of early adolescence. The heir of this phase is the ego ideal in its final organization. Thus, the ego ideal advances to the status of an ego institution by the transformation of homosexual object libido into ego libido, and in the concomitant state of sexual completeness to be found in heterosexual polarity. (p. 185)

The psychoanalytic account of adolescent morality has been criticized for its lack of empirical research as well as its inability to explain how the superego can so readily incorporate numerous attitudes and values. More importantly, however, the question remains how the ego necessarily responds in a moral (prosocial) sense when, in fact, the ego is inclined to immoral as well as moral ends. That is, what human experience orients the adolescent to behave morally (Hoffman, 1980)?

The dominant theoretical mode for viewing adolescent morality has been Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental approach. Because Kohlberg's understanding of morality has been described in detail in Chapter II, only brief mention will be given here.

However, time will be spent examining its applicability to the secondary school experience. In regards to the adolescent's moral reasoning, the thinking of Kohlberg on this subject can best be characterized by the word "retrenchment." The alteration in Kohlberg's thinking on adolescent morality is best viewed by examining Kohlberg's (Kohlberg & Gilligan, 1971) now classic (and now acknowledged idyllic) article which portrayed the adolescent's moral experience--"The Adolescent as Philosopher: The Discovery of the Self in a Postconventional World." Kohlberg relates the adolescent's struggle to find meaning within a society whose norms and values are increasingly held suspect, as the germinal period for postconventional thinking.

The postconventional level is first evident in adolescence and is characterized by a major thrust towards autonomous moral principles which have validity and application apart from authority of the groups of persons who hold them and apart from the individual's identification with those persons or groups. (pp. 1066-67).

Kohlberg recognized that the acquisition of formal operational thinking created a fertile field for the transition to truly principled thinking. A key to this transition is the adolescent's experience of relativism which allows for the questioning of society's norms and values while still uncommitted to moral principles. Moreover, Kohlberg viewed the adolescent questioning and

rejection of conventional understandings of justice as allied with the growing mass social movements which critically challenged American cultural norms (e.g., protest movements of the late sixties).

In contrast to this optimistic view of moral reasoning advancement, Kohlberg, by the late seventies, stated that postconventional thinking was only possible with the passing of the adolescent years. In his article published in 1980, "Educating for a Just Society: An Updated and Revised Statement," Kohlberg shed his hopeful view of the early seventies. No longer viewing adolescence as the harbinger for postconventional thought, he saw high school youth as wedded to conventional thinking.

In summary, my 1976 lecture on education for justice stressed a retrenchment from my 1968 Platonic stage 6 to a stage 5 goal and conception of justice. The present paper reports a further retrenchment to stage 4 goals as the ends of civic education. It discusses my civic educational efforts for the last four years at Cambridge high school's alternative Cluster School. Our Cluster approach is not merely Socratic and developmental, it is indoctrinative. Its goal is not attainment of the fifth stage but a solid attainment of the fourth stage commitment to being a good member of a community or a good citizen. (pp. 458-459)

Central to Kohlberg's current thinking is the importance of a communal atmosphere where students actually experience a sense of justice in peer and

teacher student relationships. A community for Kohlberg represents a forum for shared decision making, thereby allowing students the opportunity to experience justice issues first hand. This community also provides opportunities for the discussion of conflicting arguments as well as exposure to more advanced levels of moral reasoning. Kohlberg has reported (Kohlberg, 1984; Higgins, Power, and Kohlberg, 1984) success in developing the good citizen among secondary school students. He now views principled thinking as beyond the reach of secondary school youth. For such thinking to take place, students are in need of on-going life experiences which challenge them to re-examine their own beliefs and invest themselves in deepening commitments (e.g., leaving home, vocational choices, etc.) (Kohlberg, 1984).

Hoffman has admiration for the empirical rigor exemplified in the cognitive-developmental approach. Yet, he finds missing in the moral reasoning approach a motive force that orients the person to actually pursue moral ends. Hoffman (1980) states "in short, what seems to be missing in the psychoanalytic account, as in the cognitive-disequilibrium view, is a concept of a mature motive force that may underlie moral action" (p. 307). It is with an eye towards rectifying the void in these

accounts of morality that Hoffman has stressed the human experience of empathic arousal.

### A Morality of the Heart

Wicker (1985) has argued that psychologists must break from their "conceptual ruts" through the use of metaphors which expand awareness and lead to increased understanding of psychological processes. Because there exists no adequate psychological understanding of the adolescent's everyday moral experience, notwithstanding the component processes set forth by Rest, it is helpful to offer a metaphor which elucidates a framework for an everyday morality. I propose that an apt metaphor for such a morality is the "heart." Haan (1982; Haan, et al., 1985) has warned psychologists that the psychological study of morality must move beyond statistical findings. To fail to do this, says Haan, is to commit the "empirical fallacy." The empirical fallacy is the mistaken assumption that the total understanding of a phenomenon is gathered through empirical data. On the contrary, morality is a richly nuanced construct which has "cherished meanings." Psychologists must be open to unraveling these meanings to fully understand the significance of morality for peoples' lives. Moreover, the word "heart" resonates with the prosociality described within these

pages. The heart is a cherished meaning that cannot be explained totally by physical or empirical data. It is what Rahner (1974) terms a "primordial word."

It [heart] cannot be defined, cannot be composed of better known words, because its meaning is an original unity and totality. For this reason it occurs in all languages and belongs to the primitive patrimony of man's speech. It is one of the words in which from the beginning man has already ascended beyond the superficial experience of daily life (including that of anatomy and of purely physiological sensations of the body), without becoming abstract and losing touch with the corporeal and tangible. It is one of the words in which man, knowing himself, expresses the mystery of his existence without solving that mystery. When a man says that he has a heart, he has told himself one of the crucial secrets of his existence. (p. 323)

Rahner's understanding of heart attempts to link the bodily existence of personhood with the capacity to find meaning beyond the isolate self. This understanding blends nicely with everyday morality which posits a visceral arousal that is focused on the other's experience (e.g., the distressed person). In effect it is a transcendent experience for it renders, through arousal, a bonding to and reaching out beyond the self. As Feshbach (1982) notes "in essence, empathy is the vicarious sharing of another person's experience" and "empathy entails an internal representation in one person of a psychological experience taking place in another person" (p. 319). Psychiatrist Robert Jay

Lifton in The Broken Connection, his provocative study of life and death imagery, reflects this bonding capacity of empathy when he notes

the quality of that access to another's experience, physical and mental, is also specifically human. It is what makes possible the intense level of caring that can develop with love. That is why human being can express and experience love in letters, on long-distance telephone, during and after prolonged physical separations, while being mostly indifferent to others immediately around them. (pp. 123-124)

In order to capture the meaning of the word heart for a psychology of morality, it is helpful to view a different metaphor which characterizes the cognitive-developmental perspective and to explore briefly its implications as a way of contrast. What metaphor might fit the cognitive-developmental view of morality? An apt metaphor might be that of a "negotiator".

Chapter II explored Kohlberg's understanding of the "moral point of view" as the justice principle, a principle most fully demonstrated through stage six moral reasoning. Although Kohlberg gives a variety of justice definitions, he consistently views justice as capable of negotiating the rights and claims of individuals. According to Kohlberg, one must be an "impartial spectator", judiciously capable of taking the role of every other person.



This impartiality is most fully discovered in the context of stage six (the morality which Kohlberg labels as truly "moral"). Only at this stage can one clearly glean and clarify issues and concerns of others as legitimate rights which must be respected. Yet, as the critique of Kohlberg's theory (Chapter II) points out, other perspectives on morality call into question the view of morality as negotiation. Moral concerns (e.g., whether to act prosocially) in everyday life are not solely amenable to negotiating rights and claims. Such a perspective points to a sterility and dispassionate view of life that is far removed from bonded relationships with significant others.

The Heinz example illustrates this point. The Heinz of stage six would view the conflicting claims of life and property and discern the clear priority of the value of human life as the ultimate value and act accordingly. However, Kohlberg fails to stress adequately what is absolutely central for the human being in any actual life context. Heinz is not only a citizen, he is a husband. One cannot speak of a spousal relationships without thinking of emotional bonding, commitment, and cherished meaning. The sterile nature of negotiating rights and claims is inadequate for the marital bond. In other words, to view morality simply

as rights and claims renders Kohlberg's Heinz existentially impossible. A spouse's reactions to the distress of the other spouse are more than rational calculation. Even the legal system, the ultimate source of impartiality, admits this fact. For example, a spouse cannot be forced to testify against his or her partner. Accordingly, the experiences of everyday life lead us to look elsewhere for a morality.

Hans Walter Wolff (1974) has shown in his analysis of Old Testament literature that the "heart" is a richly nuanced term. He notes that "the most important word in the vocabulary of Old Testament anthropology is generally translated 'heart'" (p. 40). Wolff has shown that in the Hebrew Old Testament the heart includes meanings associated with feelings, wishes and desires, reason, and decisions of the will. The decisions of the will include not only planning and choosing but the actual carrying out of one's actions. He notes it is "difficult to distinguish linguistically between 'perceiving' and 'choosing', between 'hearing' and 'obeying'" (p. 51).

Given the highly nuanced meanings of the word "heart", this word can be used to capture the essential components of morality set forth by Rest. Consequently, in order to incorporate the symbolism of the heart,

the four components discussed herein are termed the sensitive heart (Component I), the caring heart (Component II), the discerning heart (Component III), and the committed heart (Component IV).

In order to explore an adolescent everyday morality in terms of the perspective of the heart, each will be examined separately.

### The Sensitive Heart

A morality of the heart must first be activated. What mechanism undergirds this caring response? What sensitizes a person to the plight and distress of others? Or, from another vantage point, what is the constitutive element within human experiencing that orients one to be aware of the needs of others? Thus the thematic expression of this sections is, simply, within what does the sensitive heart consist?

Because a sensitive heart denotes a recognition and awareness of another's experience, it is proposed that empathy is an integral feature of the sensitive heart. Although a delineation of empathy has already been undertaken in Chapter III, it is important to explore how empathy is integral for the sensitive heart's functioning. Thus, references will be made to both Hoffman as well as other researchers' work which points to this sensitivity. The sensitivity one has to the

need (plight, distress, etc.) of another is for Hoffman primarily an affective response. Although Hoffman does speak of a cognitive component (1982) and a behavioral component for empathy (1980), the primary thrust of Hoffman's framework for empathy is the affective element. Hoffman's focus on affective arousal appears to represent his desire to set forth a "moral motive force." As stated above, he finds the psychoanalytic and cognitive-developmental view as lacking this moral basis. According to Hoffman, it is this affective arousal which engenders the prosocial response (behavioral component).

The primacy of the affective component can be viewed in Hoffman's delineation of the inchoative nature of empathic arousal. This rudimentary level of empathic arousal (termed "global empathy") is essentially a response to the distress of another. Only with advancing cognitive sophistication, however, does self-other differentiation take place thereby allowing an accurate perception of the other's situation and the possibility of a prosocial response which can alleviate the other's plight. This explanation captures the meaning Hoffman (1979) gives to one succinct relationship between empathy and cognition--"the experience of empathy depends on the level at which one

cognizes others" (p. 962).

As can be seen from the previous discussion, empathy is a multi-dimensional experience which incorporates several components. Within this context, the sensitive heart is best viewed as an affective experience wherein increasing levels of cognitive maturation allow for greater awareness of moral concern and increasing likelihood of an appropriate response.

Although Hoffman has presented the most sophisticated explanation of empathy, his approach to empathy is not the sole conceptualization. Norma Feshbach (1982) has argued that for empathy to occur, three components are necessary. First, the capacity to perceive accurately the affective state of the other person. Second, the ability to take the role of another (the capability to comprehend a situation in the way the distressed person understands the situation). Third, the capacity to respond emotionally must exist; in other words, one must be able to experience the feelings of another. The first two components are cognitively based whereas the third component is affective. Although Feshbach's model stresses two cognitive components, her discussion of empathy, like Hoffman's, views empathy as primarily an affective response. Moreover, Feshbach believes "that it is just this vicarious emotional

reaction that separates empathy from the general area of social cognition and role-taking" (Goldstein & Michaels, 1985, p. 19).

To summarize, one aspect of the sensitive heart is the emotional arousal engendered by the need or distress of the perceived person. Still, for this emotional arousal to be activated there is need for a cognitive component which represents some perceptual accuracy and understanding for the empathizer. It is this two-fold perspective which reflects the essence of the sensitive heart.

Goldstein and Michaels (1985) have argued that any cognitive component of empathy must be examined closely in order to delineate its dimensions. Several researchers (e.g., Staub) have noted that the cognitive element of empathy is best described as a two-fold dimension. The first entails role-taking or what Goldstein and Michaels term "perspective taking ability." This process allows one to recognize that another person is distressed. The second dimension is labeled "affective role taking" and focuses on an accurate interpretation of another's feelings. Gove and Keating (1979), for example, demonstrated that children's ability to interpret the feelings of another is contingent upon their ability to interpret

situational cues; that is, children must first be able to construe accurately a situation before they can correctly interpret internal psychological processes (the other's feelings). Thus, it is possible that one may not recognize distress in another if a situation is misinterpreted. A more suggestive finding of this research is that one may indeed recognize the distress of another and could conceivably still misrepresent the other's internal psychological state. Utilizing the framework of empathic development formulated by Hoffman, this growth in cognizing from situational to internal psychological states is compatible with his level of empathy termed "empathy for another's feelings". This level of empathy allows the child to develop, over time, an accurate representation of another's plight which employs both perceptual accuracy of the situation as well as increasing understanding of internal psychological processes.

Underwood and Moore (1982b) have provided an exhaustive analysis of the relationship between perspective-taking and altruism. Their analysis sheds light on the dimensions of the sensitive heart and support the scrutiny needed when addressing this component of everyday morality.

These researchers delineated a three fold

understanding of perspective taking. Their expanded discussion of perspective-taking includes three forms: (a) perceptual ("to predict the literal visual perspective of another"); (b) social-cognitive (to identify another person's thoughts, intentions, motives, or social behavior); and (c) affective ("to infer another's feelings, reactions, or concerns" p. 144). These researchers utilized a meta-analytic technique to examine perceptual, social-cognitive, and affective dimensions of perspective-taking. In regards to perceptual perspective taking, meta analysis reveals a highly significant relationship between perceptual perspective-taking and altruism ( $Z_{ma}=4.63$ ,  $p < .000005$ ). However, the entire list of studies is limited to elementary school children and no studies were found that examined adolescents' perceptual perspective-taking abilities.

In regards to social perspective taking (which includes a range "from the ability to predict and understand other people's thoughts and actions to the ability to communicate with another person in a nonegocentric fashion," p. 150), Underwood and Moore noted that there existed "a reliable positive relation between social-perspective taking and altruism ( $Z_{ma}=7.64$ ,  $p < .000000001$ ). Again, there exist no



studies which examine adolescents as subjects; all subjects in these studies were children. An examination of partial correlations suggested a possible causal relationship between social-perspective taking and children's altruism whereas for perceptual perspective-taking such causality could not be established.

Underwood and Moore defined two kinds of affective perspective-taking. One should note that Underwood and Moore differentiate this type of perspective-taking (affective perspective-taking) from perceptual perspective-taking that is discussed above. The first type of affective perspective-taking is a recognition of another's response, the second is actually experiencing the other's affective response. Underwood and Moore state "we follow convention by referring to this vicarious affective arousal as empathy and distinguish it from affective recognition, which we label affective perspective-taking" (p. 159). These researchers found only two studies dealing with "affective recognition" and significance did result from their analysis ( $Z_{ma}=2.25$ ,  $p=.02$ ). However, the researchers found "somewhat less encouraging" results for empathy and altruism. The researchers speculate that reasons for weak results between empathy and altruism result both

from flawed instruments used to measure empathy as well as children's inability to adequately process situations and their own empathic arousals (see Hoffman, 1981a for a critique of such studies). More importantly, Underwood and Moore cite more recent studies using more advanced measurement techniques and note highly significant results. Further, experimental rather than correlational studies tend to support a significant relationship between empathy and altruism. All in all, based on these findings Underwood and Moore (1982b) conclude "we feel that there is good reasons to believe that empathy plays a causal role in its relationship with altruism" (p. 166). One finding stressed by these researchers is that the most solid evidence for relating empathy and altruism is with adults. They note, speculatively that it is possible "there is a relationship between empathy and altruism and that it develops over time, so it is not present during childhood; it is present only partially or unstably during adolescence, and it emerges as a stable positive relationship only during adulthood" (p. 164). Even so, the researchers state they are "uneasy" with this explanation because of the small number of studies in the adolescent and adult age group.

Karniol's (1982) approach to cognitive processes

and altruism is instructive for the sensitive heart although it differs dramatically from the developmental perspectives discussed thus far. For Karniol, an information processing approach is adequate to explain what is traditionally termed empathy and role-taking. She argues that these constructs need to be recast as attempts to retrieve and gain access to stored knowledge from memory. "Our contention is that the inference of need in others does not depend on role-taking activities but on information retrieval processes that are initiated by situational stimuli" (p. 256). In other words, as a person interprets an event, he or she attempts to join currently interpretable data with prestored knowledge. To illustrate, the recognition of situational cues calls forth a set of "situation related scripts"; these scripts contain material relevant to the current situation. Thus, "understanding is a process by which people match what they see and hear to prestored groupings of actions that they have already experienced" (p. 257). In order to respond prosocially, the observer activates "inducement networks" which allows one to fit the distressed person's inferred emotional state with the given situation. In sum, it is this situational retrieval of stored knowledge and the activation of inducement networks which allows for the recognition of

prosocial situations.

Equally important in examining the role of cognition is the presence of the prosocial act. Karniol applies information processing to prosocial action in the following way. Having recognized the need of another, motivation to aid the other arises from the activation of self-schemas. A self-schema is a cognitively based self-generalization which monitors information relevant to the self. Thus, if one has a self-schema for being a "kind person", then an interpreted situation calling forth a helping response would allow one to relate the currently perceived need situation to one's "self as a kind person" and foster a helping response.

Karniol's explanation of the role of cognition is subject to criticism. For example, experimentally induced emergency situations demonstrate that individuals often respond instantaneously to emergencies (Hoffman, 1977; Staub, 1978) thus offering little time for processing and retrieval of scripts. Moreover, a more pointed criticism is the issue of self-schemata saliency. That is, what actually leads one to activate a kindness script rather than a script of non-involvement, etc. What is the motivation that pulls for kindness rather than contempt? In short, the

question for information processing understandings of prosociality resembles the challenge Hoffman levels against psychoanalytic and cognitive-developmental accounts: What is the motive force that necessitates moral action? Neither an ego, a reasoning perspective, nor an accessed script necessarily orients one to respond prosocially whereas the distress accompanying empathic arousal focuses one on the plight of others and the ensuing "sympathetic distress" channels one's energies to respond prosocially.

Notwithstanding this criticism of an information processing perspective of prosociality, this approach does demonstrate the importance of interpreting correctly the situation. Moreover, for a sensitive heart accurate cognitive interpretations are essential. These interpretations include both situational understanding as well as accurate interpretations of the other's affective state. Additionally, the cognitive interpretation must parallel affective arousal which is at the heart of both Hoffman's and Feshbach's theories of empathy. The sensitivity one shows another's needs, then, is supplemented by a cognitive component which initiates the affective response. In sum, Karniol has shown that cognitive factors exercise a crucial role in determining awareness of a moral situation (e.g.,

focusing on situational cues, accurately interpreting the situation). Equally important, other theorists (e.g., Hoffman, Feshbach) have demonstrated the significant nature of the affective dimension of empathy. Thus, the sensitive heart must be construed in such a way that it is capable of embracing what is typically viewed as empathy (e.g., Hoffman's definition) as well as cognitive factors which are essential indicators for appropriate empathic arousal. Eisenberg (1982) succinctly points to the sensitive heart's need for both the primacy of affection yet the necessity of cognition.

Just because an individual understands another's perspective does not mean that he or she will act in a manner consistent with the other's needs. The individual must be motivated to act in ways consistent with one's understanding of the situation. Often the core of this motivation is affective. Thus, it is important to consider affective motives as well as cognitive motives in the development of prosocial behaviors (p. 12).

### The Adolescent's Sensitive Heart

Research on adolescent empathy and prosociality is limited. The general thrust in research does show that, with increasing age, children do respond more prosocially (Green & Schneider, 1974) and that the incidence of prosocial responding tends to be greatest in the adult years (Underwood & Moore, 1982a, 1982b). Adolescents appear to respond more prosocially than .

children but with less consistency than adults; unfortunately, psychologists have not theorized to any great extent on why this might be the case.

By the adolescent years, empathy has reached its most sophisticated expression; that is, the ability to embrace social systems perspectives. As noted in the Underwood and Moore research, studies focusing on empathy and prosociality in adolescence are meager. Eisenberg-Berg and Mussen (1978) found that adolescent males who engaged in a prosocial act were significantly higher in their empathy score than males who did not help; on the other hand, this relationship did not hold for females. For both sexes empathy was significantly related to prosocial moral reasoning. Finally, females were more empathic than males ( $t=6.81$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Although no explanation was given for the lack of significance in the empathy score between prosocially and non-prosocially oriented adolescent females, it is possible that the greater homogeneity in scores (less variance) accounted for the non-significant biserial correlation between empathy and helping behavior.

As reported in Chapter IV, Shelton & McAdams (in press) utilizing the VMS and the IRI noted significant relationships between various dimensions of empathy and

everyday morality. An advantage of their research in the use of an empathy measure (IRI) that delineates four dimensions of empathy. Their findings show that a significant relationship exists between prosociality and the empathy dimensions of empathic concern and perspective-taking.

### Factors in the Adolescent Experience That Inhibit the Sensitive Heart

If, as the research suggests, the adolescent is less inclined to behave prosocially (or at least with less consistency than adults), what psychological experiences during the adolescent years might account for this diminished prosociality? There appears to be no differences in the adolescent as opposed to the adult's level of empathic development (this is consistent with Hoffman's assertion that adolescents are capable of experiencing the highest form of empathy). However, there are factors within the adolescent experience that predispose the adolescent to be less sensitive to the needs of others. We now examine two factors which most likely diminish the adolescent's capacity to develop the sensitive heart.

The first factor centers on the cognitive transformations transpiring during this age period. A large body of writing has been produced on the subject



of adolescent thought processes (Elkind, 1978, 1980; Inhelder & Piaget, 1958; Keating, 1980; Piaget, 1968). A primary focus of these writings is the adolescent's experience of egocentrism. Egocentrism in childhood refers to the inability of the child to take the perspective of another. Research suggests that this inability restricts the child's capacity for responding prosocially. Thus, Buckley, Siegel, and Ness (1979) found in a study of children 3 to 8 that children who responded prosocially scored significantly higher on empathy and perspective-taking measures than those who did not respond prosocially. This gives support to the view that inconsistency and lower scores among children in regards to prosocial behavior is at least to some extent due to their developmental level. Most likely, this egocentric response precludes the child from recognizing the need of the other. With time, cognitive advancement coupled with increasing peer interactions allows the child to understand the other's psychological processes thereby facilitating relational understandings and peer friendship formation. With adolescence egocentrism continues, but in a new form. Whereas childhood egocentrism is defined by the child's inability to take the perspective of another, adolescent egocentrism originates in the wedding of adolescent

thinking with the adolescent role. Inhelder and Piaget (1958) note the quality of the egocentric response.

Moreover, the adolescent manifestation of egocentrism stems directly from the adoption of adult roles, since...the adolescent not only tries to adopt his ego to the social environment but, just as emphatically, tries to adjust the environment to his ego. In other words, he begins to think about the society in which he is looking for a place, he has to think about his own future activity and about how he himself might transform this society. The result is a relative failure to distinguish between his own point of view as an individual called upon to organize a life program and the point of view of the group which he hopes to reform. (p. 343)

Adolescent egocentrism encompasses a fascination by the adolescent in his or her own thought. The realities of the world, in effect, yield to the adolescent's own idealized theories and understandings. Moreover, the adolescent not only adapts the self to adult roles but in an egocentric sense wonders how other adults and societal views can be subject to his or her own ruminations.

Elkind (1978, 1980), has contributed the most elaborate formulation of adolescent egocentrism. One of the most discernible qualities of such thinking is adolescents' preoccupation with their own thought. Correspondingly, "the adolescent fails to differentiate between the objects towards which the thoughts of others are directed and those which are the focus of his [the

adolescent's] own concern" (p. 1029). This self-focusing nature of adolescent thinking leads him or her to believe mistakenly that others are also preoccupied with his or her thoughts or behaviors. In effect, the adolescent "thus constructs an imaginary audience that is constantly monitoring his or her own behavior" (1980, p. 354). Unfortunately, or what Conger (1977) terms a "minor tragedy", this egocentric stance often precludes the adolescent from being aware of others.

Relatedly, Elkind offers a "corollary" to the imaginary audience which also originates out of the adolescent's egocentrism: the personal fable. Elkind (1978, 1980) suggests that the adolescent, because of an inability to differentiate between his or her own thinking and that of others, develops a sense of omnipotence or uniqueness. In other words, because others focus on "me", "I" must be someone special. Consequently, there is constructed a personal fable. Unfortunately, such thinking often engenders foolish and ill-fated risks whereby the adolescent erroneously views his or herself as the exception, the one who can disregard rules with impunity.

It is likely, too, that the adolescent's cognitive advancement is supportive of defensive psychic

functioning. Blois (1967) speaks of the adolescent's egocentrism as vital in warding off instinctual urges.

Infantile ego states are, furthermore, recognizable in the emotional state that is akin to merger. Such states are frequently experienced, e.g., in relation to abstractions such as Truth, Nature, Beauty or in the involvement with ideas or ideals of a political, philosophical, aesthetic, or religious nature. Such ego states of quasi-merger in the realm of symbolic representations are sought as temporary respite and serve as safeguards against total merger with the infantile, internalized objects. (p. 167)

Thus, if one explains defensive psychic functioning in psychoanalytic terms, the following is illustrative of its function for adolescent maturation. In effect, to invest psychically in objects in thought is to create forms of safe object attachments which are consciously under the adolescent's control. These cognitively based attachments offer a refuge from the reawakened infantile attachments that seek to threaten the embattled ego.

To date, there exists no psychological literature which examines the inhibiting tendencies of adolescent cognitive maturation on prosocial behavior. Yet, the need to recognize situational cues as well as the internal psychological states of others renders the introspective tendencies of adolescent thinking as a likely inhibiting event in the recognition of another's distress. Absorbed in his or her own thinking, the adolescent is more than likely to fail at consistently

attending to situational cues and the other's internal state. "It is perhaps one of the minor tragedies of adolescent life when these young people actually meet, each is likely to be more preoccupied with himself or herself than with observing others" (Conger, 1977, p. 184).

Keating (1980) has remarked that introspection is a salient feature for adolescents. "There seems to be a great fascination among adolescents for probing their own internal states, whether cognitive or emotional" (p. 215). Although there are reasons other than cognitive advancement for adolescents to explore introspectively their own self-understanding, an acknowledged catalyst for the intense introspection of adolescence is the need for adolescents to expand their own "horizon" and to seek a fuller and more adequate self-definition (Keating, 1980).

Thus, it is plausible that the cognitive advancement present in the adolescent years provides not only greater cognitive discriminations and broadened opportunities for insight into others' need states, but also the potential to misperceive the needs of others. In effect, adolescent cognitive maturation represents a double edged sword. On the one hand, it provides the necessary abilities requisite for advanced empathic

development--a social systems perspective. On the other hand, it offers a temporary respite from the outer world through retreat into self-examination thereby narrowing one's sensitivity towards others and subsequent recognition of another's need.

Relatedly, formal thinking makes provision for the adolescent to think about contrasts and what is possible. In other words, formal thinking provides the adolescent the opportunity to consider what might be as opposed to what simply is (Keating, 1980). Conger (1977) notes that it is this enhanced ability to imagine contrasts and possibility that can account for the handicapped adolescent, who in childhood appeared robust and happy, to suffer depressive episodes in adolescence. In childhood a person is cognitively constrained; he or she is not capable of fully understanding the various possibilities that "could be" Having come to realize that others do enjoy differing opportunities and seemingly unlimited possibilities, the handicapped adolescent is capable of a more meaningful realization which contrasts his or her own narrowing life options with those of peers.

It is likely that this capacity for thinking about alternatives (or possibilities at variance from one's current life situation), can lead one to diminished

recognition and attention towards others. In particular, what an adolescent might like to do might well be at variance with what the adolescent is actually doing; consequently, the adolescent might lose interest in the other's life situation. Evidence for this misattention is found in Csikszentmihalyi and Larson's (1984) use of the experience sampling method (ESM) to study the everyday lives of high school age adolescents. These researchers utilize the construct of "psychic entropy" to describe the lack of attention and focus that adolescent experience in their everyday life. More specifically, there exist significantly different findings between adults and adolescents in terms of several measures of cognitive efficiency (concentration, ease of concentration) and activation (alert, active). Further, these findings held across age, sex, and social class. These researchers speculate that adolescents are unable to choose goals that account for their diminished attentional focus. The possibility of future goals, in turn, necessitates a sufficient level of cognitive maturation that allows for the continual viewing of various options and future possibilities. Thus, these researchers state that adolescents

appear to be less able or willing to mobilize their psychic energy. These data suggest that they attend to the world less often and see it less clearly, because unless a person can concentrate on what is around him, unless he can actively focus his attention upon things, he is but a passive recipient of disordered information and stimuli. (p. 87)

### Loneliness and the Adolescent

A second phenomenon that acts as an inhibiting factor in the adolescent's development of a sensitive heart is the vicissitudes and emotional intensities which accompany the adolescent experience of loneliness. Loneliness can be viewed as an emotional experience which accompanies a relational deficit (Brennan, 1982; France, McDowell, & Knowles, 1984; Numerof, 1984; Peplau & Perlman, 1982). Although loneliness is evident in adult life, this experience takes on greater impact during the adolescent years due to intrapsychic conflicts and the newly experienced intensity of the adolescent's affective experience.

Adolescents may not be more lonely than people at other points of transition in their lives, but there are common elements to the adolescent process that give loneliness at this stage a specific quality. Characteristically, loneliness during adolescence is stamped with issues of mourning one's own identity as a child and giving up certain forms of childhood attachments and beliefs. The process of separating and maturing is tinged with loneliness. (Ostrov & Offer, 1978, p. 36).

A number of features might account for the intensity of adolescent loneliness. Brennan (1982) has



cited several experiences which predispose adolescents to the uncomfortable nature of their emotional state. Among these experiences are: cognitive development, separation struggles with parents and the need for autonomy, interpersonal concerns with peers, and the marginality of adolescents in society. Surprisingly, few studies have examined the nature of loneliness in adolescence. "Data from available studies consistently suggest that loneliness is an acutely painful and widespread problem among adolescents" (p. 271).

Adolescents appear to find solitude a more lonely experience than adults. In their discussion of adolescent solitude, Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) note that the adolescent's emotional state is unsettling. "The most extreme characteristic of solitude are feelings of loneliness and detachment" (p. 184). Adolescents, according to these researchers, find solitude an entropic experience which undermines the abilities to attend to other dimensions of their lives. They explain the dynamic in this way. The adolescent needs validation and recognition from others in order to confirm his or her own existence. When this recognition is not forthcoming (e.g., in the experience of solitude), the adolescent draws increasingly inward and focuses inordinate amount of psychic energy on the self.

To remain in an ordered state, the self requires others to confirm its existence. Unless others recognize me and my goals, I begin to doubt that there is such a thing as "I." These doubts demand turning increasing amount of attention inward to bolster the sagging self, leaving less attention to deal with other information. It is thus that the experience of loneliness takes hold, increasing emotional entropy in consciousness. (p. 187)

There is no evidence in psychological research to suggest how loneliness attenuates the adolescent's sensitive heart. To date, there is no literature available on the effects of loneliness on prosociality. However, there is evidence regarding mood states that address, at least in a suggestive sense, the adolescent's disinclination to be sensitive to others. A fairly reliable finding in the literature on prosociality is that positive mood states tend to foster prosocial responses (Rosenhan, et al., 1981). Interpretations of negative mood states are more problematic. In general, negative mood states (e.g., guilt) appear to foster prosociality. This has been explained by a negative relief state model wherein the prosocial response appears to lift one's mood. The negative mood of "sadness" has appeared, however, to have mixed results (Cialdini & Kenrick, 1976; Moore, Underwood, & Rosenhan, 1973; Thompson, Cowan, and Rosenhan, 1980). As loneliness to some degree is

compatible with feelings of sadness (e.g., Ostrov & Offer, 1974) it is conceivable that the effects of loneliness mirror those of sadness. In an attempt to explain the mood of sadness on prosocial behavior, Cialdini et al. (1982) note that a crucial distinction must be made between one's attention to another's distress (sadness resulting from viewing the other's situation) and one's attention towards one's own internal psychological state (sadness emanating from one's own self). Thus a review of the Thompson et al., (1980) study shows this to be the case. These researchers asked a group of college students (late adolescents) to imagine an extremely distressing event--their best friend was dying of cancer. One group was asked to focus on their friend's feelings whereas the second group was requested to focus on their own feelings. When asked to respond prosocially at a later date, the former group helped significantly more than controls whereas the latter group failed to respond more than controls. In commenting upon these findings, Cialdini, et al., (1982) note that "an inner focus may render an individual inattentive or insensitive to the gratifying nature of external events, such as the opportunity to help others" (p. 348).

The inward focus that loneliness fosters and the

accompanying negative moods suggests an inhibition in the perceptual understanding of another's situation and thereby weakens the possibility for empathic concern for another's plight. Because the experience of loneliness is a more intense experience during the adolescent years than at any other stage of life, the attentional focus surrounding emotional states renders the adolescent particularly vulnerable to a more inward focus thereby leaving less sensitivity for the needs of others.

As loneliness is experienced as a needy state by the adolescent, it is useful to explore the possibility that such adolescents might actually help others more in order to gain peer approval and, in effect, compensate for their felt interpersonal deficit. No studies report such findings with adolescents; however, several studies have focused on younger children who were emotionally needy (e.g., unpopular with peers). These studies (Mussen, Harris, Rutherford, & Keasey, 1970; Yarrow, Scott, & Waxler, 1973) demonstrate that such children are not more prosocially inclined than their less emotionally needy (and presumably less lonely) peers. Indeed, such children tend to provide lower prosocial responses. Although it is difficult to interpret why this might be so, it is plausible given the need for perspective and affective perspective taking as well as

accurate interpretation of situational cues that individuals who are focused on their own "needs" are less inclined to be aware of others' needs. Consequently, their capacity to accurately interpret of another's situation and their corresponding affective distress at another's plight are diminished.

To conclude, if the sensitive heart of the adolescent is to be present, there must exist an orientation towards others that contains both cognitive understandings and affective concerns. Given the nature of the adolescent experience, there exist developmental features of this age period which preclude the optimum awareness needed for sensitivity to the concerns of others. Two likely events which foster this diminished focus are cognitive maturation and the emotional impact of the experience of loneliness. It would seem likely, then, that enhancing the adolescent's sensitive heart necessitates addressing the consequences of these developmental realities.

### The Valuing Heart

Rest (1984) focuses on two "major research traditions" for understanding the second component--the moral ideal. The first tradition incorporates the emphasis psychological theorists, in particular social psychological theorists, have given to social norms.

Among the social norms that Rest notes are legitimate modes of inquiry for understanding the moral ideal are social responsibility and equity. Although Rest does make mention of these approaches, he gives little attention to them. His primary emphasis is on the cognitive-developmental perspective. In other words, for Rest, the moral ideal, from a psychological vantage point, appears best explained by one's developing structural understanding of morality rather than by the internalization of social norms. As noted previously, Rest's own research is within this cognitive-developmental tradition. Accordingly, in his explication of component two he gives considerable attention to the Defining Issues Test (DIT).

What is lacking in Rest's second component is another approach which we might term a value orientation; this approach emphasizes the role of values in morality. We have already noted in chapter two's critique of Kohlberg that values can be significant predictors of behavior. In the discussion that follows, we will focus on the valuing heart as the repository of values which reflect care and concern towards others while providing meaning for the recognition and sensitivity that is experienced by the sensitive heart. Furthermore, we will focus on the

process within which the adolescent orients him or herself to choose values.

Values have received less attention in psychology than other cognitive constructs, such as attitudes. Historically, psychologists have approached the study of values through an examination of one of two perspectives: behavioral values or object values. The former are "prescriptive guides" or what one "ought to do" whereas the latter are the values one gives to objects (McKinney & Moore, 1982).

Rokeach (1973) has focused on the behavioral approach for he notes it is more conducive to the study of social behavior. According to Rokeach, a value is "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence" (p. 5). Rokeach states that values contain several elements: (a) they contain cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions; (b) they state a preference for one course of action over another; (c) there is a degree of "oughtness" to them. Thus values allow one to set standards, foster decision-making, and sustain long term goals. Rokeach (1983) states that a person's values "are centrally, strategically located "deep structures" within one's

total belief system" (p. 172). Values are core beliefs which contribute to one's self-definition. Furthermore, they exercise a significant role in terms of one's self-identity and self-presentation to the world. In sum,

to say that a person has a value is to say that he has an enduring prescriptive or proscriptive belief that a specific mode of behavior or end-state of existence is preferred to an opposite mode of behavior or end-state. This belief transcends attitudes toward objects and toward situations; it is a standard that guides and determines action, attitudes toward objects and situations, ideology, presentations of self to others, evaluations, judgments, justifications, comparisons of self with others, and attempts to influence others. (Rokeach, 1973, p. 25)

### The Relation of Values and Behavior

The significance of a psychology of values for psychological research stems from the assumption of a consistent relationship between values and behaviors. "An implicit assumption among those who study cognitive concepts, such as beliefs, attitudes, and values is that there is some correspondence between behavior and these cognitions" (McKinney & Moore, 1982, p. 550).

Although many researchers have critically questioned the use of values as predictors of behavior (Kohlberg's use of the term "bag of virtues" is a classic example), a considerable body of research disputes this premise and maintains that beliefs (values



and attitudes) are good predictors of behavior (e.g., see reviews by Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Kelman, 1974).

The question as to whether values can predict behaviors is contingent upon the behavioral analysis employed. Ajzen & Fishbein (1977) state in order for the predictive utility of a cognition to be operative, four elements of behavior must be examined: (a) the specific action; (b) the target at which the specific action is directed; (c) the context in which the action is performed; (d) the time when the behavior transpires. For predictive accuracy to exist, the measurement should correspond to these elements of behavior. Thus, a generalized measure of a specific cognition (e.g., the value of honesty) would not be expected to predict a specific instance of cheating; yet, this same measure is predictive in general of honest behavior over time across a variety of situations (review and application of this approach is given extensive treatment in McKinney & Moore, 1982; Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). This method of analysis, for example, provides insight into Rushton's formulation of the "altruistic personality." Such an individual possesses a generalized trait of prosociality that predisposes him or her to respond prosocially. Rushton does not maintain that one would necessarily respond prosocially in a specific situation.

However, given any number of situations, the predisposition of the altruistic personality would show forth through behaviors which reflect a prosocial response.

The complexity of the predictive nature of values is brought to light in a now classic social psychological study that focuses directly on the issue of prosociality--Darley and Batson's (1973) experiment entitled "The Good Samaritan." Darley and Batson set up an experimental situation reminiscent of the Good Samaritan Bible Story "what is perhaps the classical helping story in the Judeo-Christian tradition" (p. 101). Forty seminarians who were paid volunteers were asked to give a talk on either employment prospects for seminarians (a secular topic) or on the parable of the Good Samaritan. The subjects were instructed to go to another building to present their talk. Half the subjects for each type of talk were told they were under time pressure and needed to leave immediately whereas the other half were under no such time constraint. Along the way all subjects encountered a distressed person. The independent variables were time and subject matter for the talk and the dependent variable was helping. Analysis of the data demonstrated that time was a significant variable in determining whether one would aid the person in distress. Thus, those under no

time constraints responded significantly more often to aiding the distressed person than those under time pressure. The type of speech given, however, had no effect as to whether one helped. Darley and Batson concluded "thinking about the Good Samaritan did not increase helping behavior, but being in a hurry decreased it" (p. 107). It could be assumed that these seminarians held values supporting prosociality. Still, situational pressures (e.g., time) inhibited the behavioral dimension of their values. However, a reanalysis of the Darley and Batson findings (Greenwald, 1975) has reached a partially different conclusion. Greenwald used a Bayesian analysis of the data rather than hypotheses testing. A Bayesian analysis is an approach to statistical inference based on a subjective definition of probability rather than the more commonly used relation frequency definition of probability. Greenwald concluded that it was highly probable that the seminarians who were to speak on the parable of the Good Samaritan were much more likely to aid the distressed person than those who were speaking on a secular topic. Moreover, given this reanalysis, the saliency of one's beliefs might well emerge as a significant factor in prosociality.

Three conclusions might be drawn from these

findings. First, it appears that a value orientation does not necessitate behavior consonant with one's values (e.g., the many seminarians who did not help). Furthermore, situational realities (e.g., time) can influence prosocial responding. Yet, a self-conscious saliency concerning one's values can predispose one to aid others. All in all, this novel experiment shows the complexity of linking values and prosociality.

### The Adolescent Experience of Values

The adolescent experience has provided a fertile ground for value research. Much research has attempted to capture the values of adolescents in terms of generational change (Jennings & Niemi, 1975); ideological thinking (Gallatin, 1980); and the prototypic or type of adolescent (Baumrind, 1975).

As might be expected, Feather (1980) has noted that value changes over time among adolescents mirror their internal psychological changes. For example, he notes that the relative importance of values (using the Rokeach Value Survey) shows greater importance given to values which are associated with self-autonomy. "There were signs that both sexes were increasingly valuing achievement, open-mindedness, responsibility, and self-respect as they grow older and downgrading modes of behavior connoting conformity to convention and

authority" (p. 262). Overall, however, value research has focused disproportionately on late adolescents (college youth) rather than students at the secondary school level.

Furthermore, little research exists concerning the relationship of values and prosociality during the adolescent years. Although not related specifically to prosociality, Rokeach (1985) reports significant differences in the value orientations of adolescent non-drug users and drug abusers. The former group placed greater emphasis on social values such as "world at peace" and "equality" whereas the latter group favored more personal and hedonic oriented values such as "an exciting life", "happiness", and "pleasure".

As noted previously, the issue of values and prosociality has received little attention in psychological research. Staub (1978) has reported findings for late adolescents (college undergraduates) which indicate that values such as "helpfulness" and "equality" differentiate helpers from non-helpers. Moreover, conducting such research is made difficult due to the contrasting generality of value instruments and the specific nature of prosocial experimental conditions. Utilizing the Fishbein model of attitude formation, exacting standards of specificity must be

employed for target values and behaviors or researchers must utilize general instruments measuring general value orientations and prosocial responses. At the same time, such a paucity of research does not preclude a reasonable speculation which considers empathy and other-centered values to be linked.

Exactly what link exists between the sensitive heart which is aware of the distress and needs of others and the valuing heart which reflects values consonant with this awareness of others remains a question. Most likely, psychological research has assumed that values focus on the "right action" that is a consequence of empathic arousal. Within this framework, prosocial responses are a direct result of empathic arousal. Rest's model of morality would differentiate between these two behaviors (the empathic arousal and the value orientation) through his unit analysis of discrete components. Such a "clean" differentiation is, however, not totally acceptable. Currently, psychological research has focused on cognitive interpretations which would include value orientations that generate emotional reactions. In effect, values not only provide an idealized sense for what one "ought to do" but most likely contribute to arousal. Although their role (values) might be ancillary to the role of empathy and

the corresponding correct interpretation of situational realities, a value orientation most likely exercises a collateral role in sensitizing one to the distress of others. Thus, "particular values and value orientations are likely to form a cognitive network; these interrelated cognitions are applied to the interpretation of the world" (Staub, 1978, p. 45). For example, a value orientation that favors values which focus on the concerns and needs of others is likely to engender empathic arousal and cognizance of what ought to be done to aid others.

#### The Ego Ideal as the Source for the Valuing Heart

If the valuing heart of the adolescent is oriented to a compassionate stance as regards to the welfare of others, then what psychic experience does the adolescent undergo that allows for this caring dimension to surface? That is, what psychological phenomenon during adolescent maturation can account for the experience of the valuing heart? Stated another way, if empathy resides as a central component for the sensitive heart, then what parallel experience within the adolescent fosters the valuing heart? Hoffman (1980) has rightly noted that the ego in general can be subject to immoral as well as moral ends and thus is an inappropriate subject as a source for morality. Yet, within the

psychoanalytic framework, there does exist a psychic structure, the ego ideal, which takes on great prominence and is predisposed to adopt values that reflect a prosocial dimension.

The ego ideal has received sparse attention in psychoanalytic literature. In discussions concerning any type of moral orientation, attention focuses on the superego. As Blos (1962) has noted, "the concept of the ego ideal has played of late a rather insignificant role in the psychology of adolescence" (p. 184).

Historically, the ego ideal has often been confused with the superego. The apparent reason for this confusion is the dual nature Freud gave to development of a person's moral orientation. That is, according to Freud, there exist two features necessary for the psychological development of personal morals: idealization and prohibition. Freud introduced the term ego ideal in 1914. At this early juncture the term was used to refer to an individual's attempt to maintain an infantile narcissism. Moreover, the term was kept distinct from conscience which monitored behavior and was self-punitive. By 1921 Freud's use of the term incorporated both a narcissistic element and a self-critical sense. Soon thereafter (1923) the term "superego" and "ego ideal" were used synonymously.



finally, in 1932 it appears Freud saw the ego ideal residing within the superego and reflecting the person's idealized parental introjects (Sandler, Holder, & Meers, 1963). Thus, Freud's final position on the source of intrapsychic morality was the incorporation of the ego ideal into the superego construct.

More recent psychoanalytic accounts have focused on delineating the concept of ego ideal from superego and pointing out the significance of the ego ideal for the adolescent period. Essentially, the ego ideal represents an attempt at wish fulfillment or the attainment of some desired state. To contrast, the ego ideal represents the self's wish to obtain a desired state whereas the superego's function resides in self-criticism and prohibition (Lample-DeGroot, 1962). As Blos (1973) has stated, "the superego is an agency of prohibition, while the ego ideal is an agency of aspiration" (p. 95).

The ego ideal's significance in the adolescent's years resides in its pivotal role in enabling the adolescent to shed reawakened libidinal ties to parents. Most psychoanalytic writing, however, has tended to focus on the internal psychic restructuring which allows the ego ideal to emerge as the natural successor to the narcissism of adolescence. That is, with adolescence,

the young person is submerged in a growing narcissistic presence. This newly discovered narcissism is rekindled by reignited oedipal feelings and the concomitant disillusionment resulting from parental inadequacies. The adolescent, troubled by the waning of parental ties, seeks refuge in an omnipotent self, fads and cursory interests, or peer group ideals in order to assuage a felt inner void. With time, this narcissism is shed through a growing adoption of personal values which reflects the adolescent's adaptation to the adult world.

If we follow the course which the ego ideal follows from infancy to adulthood, we can trace a continuous adaptation of its basic function to the increasingly complex value system as it accrues along developmental lines. Thus, the ego ideal gets further and further removed from those primitive efforts which aim at narcissistic restitution. (Blos, 1973, p. 95)

This internal focus (e.g. emphasis on cathectic shifts and object attachments) has preoccupied psychoanalytic writing to the detriment of viewing other aspects of the ego ideal which receive only sparse comment. More specifically, the focus on internal psychological dynamics precludes viewing the interpersonal and social nature of the ego ideal. Yet, it is this social nature of the ego ideal that reflects the value constellation which crystallizes during the adolescent period thereby providing a content of values

for the valuing heart.

The ego ideal is bonded with an ethical stance. In essence, a mature ego ideal is formed through gradual identification with values that lead to an increasing sense of autonomy. In the adolescent years what transpires in normal development is the shedding of idealized parental standards and the adoption of an increasingly personalized value system. The final stage of ego ideal formation occurs in adolescence and leads to the "formation of ethics and ideals as attainable goals after disillusionment by the idealized parents" (Lample-DeGroot, 1962, p. 99). The ego ideal emerges as a source for values whereby the adolescent gradually identifies with a personalized value orientation that in turn provides a greater adaptive capacity for the adult world. In the course of normal development, implicit in this value identification is the presence of societal norms and the significance accorded some minimum level of prosociality.

The ego ideal represents a unique psychic structure for value because of its aspirational drive to become something beyond the present. In essence, the ego ideal represents a striving for something yet-to-be-realized. The ego ideal possesses an aspirational quality which seeks to achieve the self's ideals. Blos (1973) hints

at this feature when he notes the ego ideal is an "agency of aspiration." Like values, the ego ideal to promote an "idealized end state".

The author experienced a situation while a secondary school classroom teacher which points out the aspirational quality of values. A high school junior, Jim, was periodically difficult during class. He displayed attention seeking behaviors and showed a strong need for adult approval. Jim came from a difficult home background. His father was an alcoholic and his mother was a dominating figure in his life. One day a classmate, John, was disrupting class. As the teacher I corrected John and requested he stay and see me after class. At the end of the class period John came to me quite upset. He accused me of not being fair. He stated I allowed Jim to get by with actions which I would not allow from him. He pointed out that I displayed a more tolerant attitude toward Jim. In effect, John was demanding that I be fair in my classroom discipline. As the teacher I was well aware of this discrepancy (although the disparity was most certainly overdramatized by John). I explained to John that as the teacher in the class it was important to be fair with students. At the same time I explained to Jim that as a teacher I also strived to understand my

students and desired to know "why" they acted as they did in the classroom. I simply asked John to reflect on whether he and Jim were the same. Thus, in this particular situation, I was attempting to go beyond fairness. I was appealing to a valued ideal in John which cherished sensitivity and compassion. Based on the discussion thus far, John would hopefully empathize with Jim's difficult situation at home. His own evolving moral identity and the significance of his own value system would allow him to view the need for sensitive understanding of Jim's situation and to aspire to a set of personal behaviors and openness that reflected this understanding.

In effect, the ego ideal can be depicted as providing the psychic energy for values. Values in turn are the expression of the ego ideal's attempt to engender an "idealized end state." In a sense, then, the ego ideal represents the psychic substratum for values. As noted above, the adolescent's need for such ideals is the result of the hiatus resulting from the gradual shedding of parental attachments and the concomitant need to internalize societal norms. This process of focusing on ideals becomes an integral feature in adolescent maturation or what Wolf, Gedo, and Terman (1972) term the adolescent's "transformation of

self"; it is the ego ideal's purpose to function as an integral fixture in the growing stabilization of the adolescent self which is increasingly removed from childhood.

To be sure, the values with which the adolescent identifies need not necessarily reflect a dimension of prosociality. Furthermore, ego ideal formation might well contribute in its own unique way to pathology (Blos, 1979). Still, the very nature of the ego ideal is characterized by a decidedly prosocial dimension which, in normal development, would reflect a minimum level of concern and care for others. This results from the nature of the ego ideal as a harbinger for adolescent adaptation to adult society and the adoption of a cultural ethos. Within such a context, societal norms and parental standards are more weighted to a decisively prosocial stance. In effect, for normal maturation to occur, the adolescent comes to adopt such standards as his or her own. Idealized norms in society such as compassion and care for others become significant ideals that the adolescent can strive to achieve. Even though peer group values and norms might delimit such idealized values, studies of adolescent values in relation to peer group and parental values demonstrate remarkable similarity between adolescents

and parents regarding significant life decisions and general attitudes and values. Disagreements and adoption of peer standards center more on stylistic concerns and personal behaviors (hair style, use of time) rather than on more general value orientations which focus on prosociality (Coleman, 1980; Newman, 1982).

### The Discerning Heart

If empathic sensitivity and the recognition of another's distress are necessary in order to view a moral problem, and values point to "what I ought to do," given this moral problem, then, following Rest's model, the course of action (given that the "moral ground" chosen is prosocial behavior) becomes the focus of attention. The discerning heart is the adolescent's choice to behave prosocially.

Given that a person is aware of various possible courses of action in a situation, each leading to a different kind of outcome or goal, why then would a person ever choose the moral alternative, especially if it involves sacrificing some personal interest or enduring some hardship? (Rest, 1984, p. 32)

In other words, why would one choose a particular course of action, especially if this course of action leads to a level of sacrifice, an experience often encountered in situations calling for prosocial response? From the vantage point offered here, the question can be

addressed as to why prosocial behavior is likely to be chosen by the adolescent as the appropriate action.

For the adolescent, the decision to choose some particular value over others, even to act at variance with one's self-interest, can be traced to the development of a "moral identity." According to Blasi (1984), every individual organizes a level of "self-related information" that

determines the order and the hierarchy among the characteristics that are included in the self, along such metaphorical dimensions as central peripheral, deep superficial, important unimportant, and so on. It also defines what could be called the essential or the core self, namely, the set of those aspects without which the individual would see himself or herself to be radically different; those so central that one could not even imagine being deprived of them; those whose loss would be considered and felt as irreparable. (p. 131)

Given this definition of moral identity, there exists not only a conscious awareness of "what I must do" but also the actual choosing of certain actions which reflect a basic self-consistency with "who I am". That is, there exists consonance between one's personal self-definition and action. Without this unity, a sense of self-discrepancy develops whereby at the core level of self one feels alien to who one truly is.

This self-consistency allows one to define the self as moral ("I am moral because I do what I believe to be the moral action"). Further, according to Blasi, there



develops a responsibility to act consistently in a manner that mirrors this self-definition..

There exists a high degree of congruity between Blasi's notion of moral identity and the more commonly understood view of identity as expressed in the writings of Erik Erikson (1956, 1968, 1980). Erikson's discussion of identity is elusive. Erikson (1956) himself admits that the term has been used interchangeably to refer to a variety of meanings for identity. Among these meanings are: a conscious sense of one's personal identity, a sense of on-going character which develops over time, the synthesizing aspects of the ego, and a solidarity with the ideals of one's own group. Although identity can take on a number of meanings, Erikson (1968) favors identity as an aspect of self-continuity. More specifically, then, identity formation allows one to connect a personal life history with the demands of the on-going present while preparing for the tasks that await one in the future. More than anything, identity produces an inner sense of continuity, a cohesiveness of self. Erikson (1956) states "the term identity expresses such a mutual relation in that it connotes both a persistent sameness within oneself (self-sameness) and a persistent sharing

of some kind of essential character with others"

(p. 179).

He writes elsewhere

An optimal sense of identity, on the other hand, is experienced merely as a sense of psychosocial well-being. Its most obvious concomitants are a feeling of being at home in one's body, a sense of "knowing where one is going," and an inner assuredness of anticipated recognition from those who count. (1968, p. 165).

According to Erikson, each stage has a particular virtue (he now uses the term "strength" to describe these virtues). They represent the successful resolution of the task essential for the stage. For adolescence, the stage of identity crisis, the positive feature corresponding to the successful meeting of identity issues is fidelity. "Fidelity is the ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of the inevitable contradictions and confusions of value systems" (Erikson, 1980, p. 25). It is, for Erikson, the "cornerstone" of identity. This definition of identity shows similarity to Blasi's use of the term moral identity. Both definitions point out the self's capacity for an inner directed consistency in action and the desire to direct the self towards ideals in spite of uncertainty. McAdams (1985) has presented a life story model of identity which addresses the ideals which form within the adolescent's life. This story is shaped by

an ideological setting (beliefs and values) as well as significant characters--idealized "images" of self (McAdams terms these imagoes). These imagoes serve as a foundation and directional focus for the adolescent's evolving self-definition which confronts on-going moral concerns and questions.

McAdams notion of a story as a context for an evolving identity is intuitively appealing. In the context of the present discussion what is suggested is that every life story has the potential for an image of self that is caring. Stated another way, a morality of the heart brings care to central images of self which all men and women come to develop in their life story. Thus "Hera" (utilizing McAdams' typology of Greek figures for imagoes), the loyal friend, as well as "Ares", the warrior, are images which are affected by this care. In the case of the former overt acts of care are most likely forthcoming whereas with the latter bonded loyalty and the desire to protect might be apt characterizations of a morality of the heart.

Support for the notion of an adolescent moral identity is given by Damon's (1984) study of child and adolescent self-understanding. Damon's understanding of self coincides with the notion of identity for he defines the self as a psychological construct "whose

domain is the individual's experience of personal identity" (p. 112). More specifically, and in line with moral identity, Damon is interested in exploring how morality relates to one's self-understanding. Damon utilized open ended question (e.g., "What kind of person are you?" "What do you want out of life?") and discovered gradual, schematic growth in self-understanding. This self-understanding in both childhood and adolescence incorporates knowledge of physical (Level one), active (Level 2), social (Level 3), and psychological (Level 4) aspects of the self. For example, in early childhood, self-understanding is associated with aspects of one's physical self (self-understanding in terms of physical characteristics). During the adolescent years, however, there appears the dominance of the social and psychological aspects of the self.

Moral self-statements are one signal of Level 4 and rarely appear in prior levels. The only real exception is some mention of reciprocal moral responsibilities sometimes made in the context of Level 3 social-relational self-statements. But morality does not become a dominant characteristic of self until Level 4, and Level 4 statements are not found in any frequency until middle adolescence. (p. 116)

Thus, children most often characterize themselves by physical and active selves; they are unable to articulate moral principles which are typically stated

by the psychological self in adolescence.

According to Damon, the adolescent self shows an increasing sensitivity towards the opinions and expectations of others as well as the realization that others expect certain behaviors from the adolescent. The adolescent understands that he or she must now take greater responsibility for personal behaviors and that this is an assumption that others share. Because of the presence of a "social network" in which the adolescent becomes actively engaged, he or she becomes aware of others' expectations, the needs of others, and his or her own role within the social group.

A second feature of adolescent morality is the ideological theme that is often present in adolescent thinking. With the advent of formal thinking, the adolescent discovers a fascination with ideas which provide a framework for reflecting upon and discovering ethical beliefs. From the perspective of society, ideology offers the initial underpinnings for entrance into the adult world. Although the formulation of ideology becomes more differentiated and personalized in late adolescence (the college years), the power of formal thinking allows the high school adolescent to examine inchoatively, if only in a rudimentary way, a variety of positions on various issues. As a

consequence, the adolescent develops numerous self-statements (e.g., "I am a Democrat," "I believe in God") which are seeds sown for further self-understanding in late adolescence. Damon notes the passionate nature of adolescent thinking when he says "perhaps at no other time in life, at least for most individuals, are such doctrines so extensively articulated and so purely held" (p. 119).

Damon states there are two significant changes in adolescent self-understanding which provide a base for "conceptual integration with adolescent moral thinking" (p. 119). The first shift is the development of a sophisticated Level 3 perspective on self--the social personality perspective. The adolescent now witnesses the self in a social context which he or she soon discovers is fraught with moral consequences. Thus, "being helpful, generous, open, suspicious all are morally relevant characteristics of one's social interactional self" (p. 119). The daily interactions of the self in interpersonal contexts naturally elicit moral questions and concerns which help the adolescent sort out personal moral views and ways to act which reflect personal beliefs.

A fuller understanding of the significance of the social-interactional self is given by Youniss (1980) in

his discussion of adolescent friendship formation. Borrowing on the work of Sullivan and Piaget, Youniss hypothesizes that adolescents come to engage in a "relation of cooperation" whereby they come to appreciate the thoughts and feelings of others and interact with peers in mutually supportive and healthy ways. Further, Youniss states "the psychologically healthy and morally mature personality" is derived from this "relation of cooperation." Such relations contain five characteristics: mutuality (give and take between peers which leads to compromise and mutual understanding); standards of worth (personal judgments based on interpersonal consensus); similarity between self and others (awareness of sameness which fosters an equality in the relationship); interpersonal sensitivity (awareness of the individuality of the self and the others and the acceptance of personal limitations); relational possibilities (the formulation of a self-definition that is derived from being in relation-with-others). In short, peers provide the adolescent the opportunity for increasing cooperation, developing self-insight, and accepting individuality. Peer friendships lay the foundation for future adult intimacy (Youniss, 1981).

This focus on interpersonal interactions finds

further confirmation in the work of Kegan (1982). His constructive-developmental view of human growth situates adolescence in the Stage 3 Interpersonal Self. The self at this stage is relationships. According to Kegan, the adolescent self is embedded within the interpersonal; he or she has shed the later childhood construction of the self as "need." In effect, the adolescent self no longer is its needs; rather, it has needs. Consequently, the adolescent self can now increasingly reach outward to others and come to regulate the self's needs through interpersonal interactions. The interpersonal consequences of moving the structure of needs from subject to object is that the person, in being able to coordinate needs, can become mutual, empathic, and oriented to reciprocal obligation" (p. 95). According to Kegan, with adolescence the self becomes interactional, it becomes a shared reality. This movement represents a transformation for the adolescent is now situated in a self-understanding that must recognize the needs of others in order that the self can be defined.

Interestingly, evidence suggests that such interpersonal interactions which typify the adolescent years are important for the adolescent's development of prosocial behavior. Adolescents tend to act more



prosocially towards their friends than peers; this behavior most likely reflects the increase in mutuality and equality within the friendship. Further, adolescents who respond prosocially towards their friends are more likely to respond in a similar fashion towards strangers. Although little research exists which discusses the relationship of friendship and prosocial behavior in either childhood or adolescence, it is possible that the experience of friendship and the accompanying prosocial responses directed towards friends do in turn influence the adolescent's behavior towards others (Berndt, 1982).

A second "developmental shift" in the adolescent self involves the increasing understanding of the self in psychological terms; this change allows the adolescent to define the self in the context of ideas and philosophical beliefs. "The system of belief [philosophical/ideological thinking] reflects the main organizing principle of the adolescent's self-conception" (p. 119). Such beliefs have moral consequences for they frame for the adolescent a distinctive set of attitudes and behavioral norms which influence the adolescent's behavior towards others.

Even though Damon (1984) does not set forth a definition of morality, the social interactional

perspective of self implies an awareness of and focus on the welfare of others; thus, there seems to be incorporated into Damon's thinking some level of prosocial response. Moreover, Damon's work which documents the interpersonal nature of the adolescent self ("How I act towards others is who I am") points to the interpersonal features of adolescent morality. There emerges within this interpersonal focus, a merger with the psychological understanding of self. Thus, through interactions with peers adolescent come to view their own behaviors as either consonant or at variance with their own self-understanding which is increasingly defined through rudimentary philosophical and ethical understandings. Correspondingly, behaviors which vary from increasingly proclaimed self-understandings ("I am a Christian," "I am honest") engender what Rokeach (1981) terms states of "self-dissatisfaction." In effect, such states are violations of the ego ideal.

The above findings drawn from Blasi, Damon, and Kegan suggest the possibility of a prosocial inclination with adolescence. The identity of the adolescent--an organizational system of self-understanding--is increasingly framed both in relationship and in terms of cognitive understandings of self that include value formulations. Because the identity of the

adolescent is in part a product of socio-cultural values (Erikson, 1968), prosociality emerges as a significant factor within which the adolescent can frame his or her own self-definition. Likewise, acting in ways contrary to one's self definition ("It is right to be kind to others," "I am loyal to my friends") engenders the self-dissatisfaction discussed by Rokeach (failing to have one's actions reflect one's values). A more adequate expression of this "self-dissatisfaction" is Hoffman's notion of "interpersonal guilt" which results from empathic distress. Unlike behavioral understandings of guilt which reflect fear of anticipated punishment, and Freudian guilt which is the product of repressed wishes, interpersonal guilt arises from feelings of empathic distress and the self-attribution of blame associated with the other's plight. Feelings of guilt initially arise in young children simply because of the awareness of empathic distress and the close proximity of this internal state to the child's personal actions. Thus, even though the young child might not be responsible for the plight of the other, he or she might still experience guilt. Later, the awareness of their own actions as causing another's pain is likely to lead to guilt. Even comparisons between one's own situation and that of

another can lead one to feel guilt, even though one has done nothing directly to hurt the other. Over time, empathic distress can elicit guilt even when one is not responsible for the plight of the other (the example of the Good Samaritan). "The line between empathic distress and guilt thus becomes very fine, and being an innocent bystander is a matter of degree" (1984, p. 289). The adolescent who develops a salient value system which is oriented towards prosociality is particularly likely to be subject to a sense of guilt. To violate one's internal values which are central for one's self-definition ("I am loving," "I am compassionate") leads to personal self-dissatisfaction which in turn fosters prosocial behaviors.

#### The Committed Heart

Whereas the first three components of Rest's model lead one to recognize the need for a prosocial response, clarify significant values which orient one to engage in a moral action, and lead one to choose the action, the actual execution of one's behavior is the domain of Component 4. Rest quotes St. Paul's famous passage in Romans to show the tenuous nature of moral execution. "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do" (7:19). The intention of the person often falls short of action.

Executing and implementing a plan of action involves figuring out the sequence of concrete actions, working around impediments and unexpected difficulties, overcoming fatigue and frustration, resisting distractions and other allurements, and not losing sight of the eventual goal. Psychologists sometimes refer to these processes as involving "ego strength" or "self-regulation skills." (Rest, 1984, p.33)

Evidence suggests that numerous characteristics exist that influence the actual carrying out of prosocial behaviors. For example, Barrett and Yarrow (1977) showed that among children who recognized the needs of others, those who were more assertive were significantly more likely to engage in prosocial behaviors. Rest cites evidence which shows that individuals at Kohlberg's Stage four level of moral reasoning who scored high on ego development showed less dishonest behavior than Stage 4 subjects low in ego development. Commenting upon this research, Rest notes "presumably those subjects with high ego strength had the strength of their convictions; whereas the Stage 4 subjects with low ego strength had such convictions but did not act on them" (p. 33).

What personal strengths enable one to implement one's chosen course of action? A likely candidate for fostering the execution of actions is found in maturity (see below for a definition). In all likelihood, those adolescents who evidence mature behavior are more likely

to carry out their intentions and sustain over time their behaviors in a consistent fashion.

Suprisingly, little research has been reported in the literature on the maturity of adolescents. What evidence that does exist is more focused on late adolescents (Heath, 1965, 1980) or is reported in conjunction with literature delineating clinical concepts of normality and psychopathology (Oldham, 1978; Offer & Sabshin, 1974). The most sophisticated attempt at exploring aspects of maturity for middle adolescence is contained in the writing of Greenberger and Sorenson (1974). Their model outlines a three dimensional focus for maturity. The underlying theme of their conceptual schema is the adaptational capacity of the adolescent in light of his or her meeting of specific developmental tasks. The first dimension is an adequate coping capacity and the ability to function in a growthful and adaptive way on one's own; this dimension is termed individual adequacy. This dimension is focused on the adolescent's capacity for self-autonomy, bringing clarity to his or her identity, and on-going commitment to growth in the development of personal talents and interests. The second dimension, labeled interpersonal adequacy, focuses on the individual's ability to relate interpersonally with

others. Major focuses of this dimension are the development of communication skills, a growing trust of others, and the gradual obtainment of roles. Finally, there is a social adequacy which is concerned with the adolescent's capacity to function in a wider social context; this dimension takes into account how the adolescent adapts to sociopolitical changes, functions within cultural norms, and is capable of identifying with and relating in wider social groupings. Aspects of this dimension include openness to change in the sociopolitical environment, a tolerance for contrasting ideas, and growing realization of the need to be a functioning member of the community. This three dimensional view of maturity is consonant with the fourth component of Rest. Moreover, Rest notes that "perseverance," resolution, competence, and character" are contained within Component IV. Maturity, as defined by Greenberger and Sorenson, relates to the adolescent's capability to function in a regard to individual, interpersonal, and social levels.

Utilizing this conceptual approach, Greenberger, Josselson, Knerr, and Knerr (1975) developed a maturity scale to measure the maturity levels of middle adolescents (secondary school students). Josselson, Greenberger, and McConochie (1977a, 1977b) report

findings for both males and females. These researchers contrasted high and low maturers of both sexes.

Two characteristics appeared in the description of low-maturing females. These students desired to possess material goods and have fun. The data identified two groups of low maturing females. The first group, reflecting the popular stereotype, were very active socially, attractive, and identified closely with the interests and preoccupations of peers. A basic self-centeredness and non-reflective manner was evident in this group of females. Their behavior was influenced more by external restraints than by internal goals. Another group of low maturing females were noted for the lack of enjoyment they experienced. These females had feelings of low self-esteem and inferiority, and they desired the care-free life of the first group of females. Also, their home lives were often conflictual. In both groups there was a tendency to show little self-awareness and the need for external controls to guide behavior.

In contrast to the low maturing females, high maturing females could be characterized as having multidimensional lives noted for their complexity. These females were not as absorbed in the present as the low maturing females and they presented a picture of



forward thinking which was concerned with future commitments. There was also evident a significant level of reflectivity and awareness of personal actions and their consequences. The peer pressures which dominated the thinking of low maturers were noticeably absent from high maturers. There was a good sense of interpersonal relatedness among this group and their relationships were characterized by awareness of the other and personal sensitivity. Finally, these females valued independence and enjoyed focusing on the future and influences that affected their lives beyond their immediate environments.

Similar characteristics were found among adolescent males. For low maturing males, there was a notable lack of self-reflection and awareness. They were more subject to external pressures than their high maturing peers and they were more preoccupied with the present than with the future. Relationships were problematic for low maturing boys. Their peer relationships lacked depth, and even making friendships was difficult. Aggressive impulses were also difficult to control. Friendship for these students was valued for what "was in it for me."

High maturing males are more difficult to characterize than their low maturing counterparts. They

are less subject to peer influences and their lives are noted for their diversity with school interests, religious practices, and personal hobbies occupying their time. There is a strong sense of individuality and an optimistic view of the future. They are capable of living with self-doubt and can effectively cope with personal concerns. They are goal directed and possess an adequate level of concentration to accomplish their goals.

For high maturing males and females there is a tendency to be more focused on others and less concerned with the influences and pressures of peers. Moreover, high maturing adolescents are capable of drawing upon inner resources thereby allowing them to accomplish personal goals and sustain their focus on future aspirations and commitments. Most likely, high maturers have less need to expend psychic energy on their own needs or to be defensive about their lives whereas low maturers must expend considerable energies attempting to contain inner impulses and to cope with personal feelings of inadequacy.

Moreover, the sense one is left with when viewing high maturing adolescents is that of resolute individuals capable of carrying out their intentions without being encumbered by the developmental exigencies

which preoccupy the lives of their peers. These adolescents successfully master their environment and there is displayed a "developmental increase in ego control" (Josselson, Greenberger, & McConochie, 1977a, p. 46).

What is proposed here is that adolescents who are found to be mature and who at the same time are found to experience empathy, other-centered values, and an articulated sense of their moral identities are more likely to exhibit most consistently a morality of the heart. Most likely, such expression reflects the mature adolescents' ability to respond appropriately to their own value systems while being aware of their environments (the needs of distressed others), and the parallel capacity to act resolutely on their own values without being overly burdened by peer pressures or personal shortcomings.

Rest (1984) correctly notes of all the components of morality, this component has a specifically "amoral" quality. That is, whereas Component I displays a moral sensitivity, Component II moral values, and Component III a moral choice, Component IV focuses on the execution of action. Thus, a mass murderer or a Nazi storm trooper can resolutely carry out an action in the same manner as a Good Samaritan. Although this might be

case, to frame Component IV in terms of maturity which is the development of ego strength as expressed through individual, interpersonal, and social adequacies adds a moral dimension. This arises from an examination of interpersonal and social adequacies. Interpersonal adequacy includes an essential trust in others and the capacity to relate interpersonally. Likewise, social adequacy necessitates a tolerance of others and identification with a larger social body. In both instances there exists the need for the adolescent to be aware of others' needs.

In this chapter we have examined the adequacy of Rest's component process model as it relates to the adolescent experience. In addition, specific features have been set forth for each component which together suggest that a fully developed morality that is germane to the adolescent's experience does exist. In sum, it is suggested that the empathic adolescent who is aware of and can accurately recognize the needs and hurts of others, who articulates a compassionate value system (adopts values of love, self-sacrifice, etc.), who expresses these values as essential features of his or her identity in a consistent fashion, and who exhibits mature behaviors is most likely to display a high degree of everyday morality.

## CHAPTER VI

### ADOLESCENT SOCIAL MORALITY

Social morality, as noted in Chapter IV, is the fostering of prosocial behaviors in order to eradicate social injustice as well as aid those suffering from this injustice (e.g., discrimination, inequality). This morality is related to developmental shifts which prepare the child for adulthood. Correspondingly, because this morality concerns issues beyond interpersonal concerns (personal encounters with others), questions of political socialization and understandings of social phenomena become significant. Recently, there has been increasing interest in discussions about the importance of social morality in education (e.g., Grant, 1981; Groome, 1980; Kagan, 1981). This chapter focuses on why the development of social morality is truly possible only with the beginning of the adolescent years. An examination will be made of specific developmental processes which influence the growth of social morality during the adolescent period as well as psychological perspectives on the formation of social morality. Attention will

then shift to utilizing a morality of the heart as the basis for discussion about the fostering of social morality during the adolescent years.

### Adolescent Development and Social Morality

From a developmental perspective, the capacity for a social morality resides in the adolescent's experience of formal thinking and the struggle for identity. Formal thinking allows the adolescent to comprehend complex forms of social stimuli as well as intricate understandings of abstractions, e.g., "justice" and "peace". Thus, Inhelder and Piaget (1958) have noted that "the notions of humanity, social justice...freedom of conscience, civic or intellectual courage...are ideals which profoundly influence the adolescent's affective life" (p.349). What is noted by these researchers is adolescents' new found capacity to fall in love with their thinking. Ideas are not merely comprehended, they are at times passionately felt. Understanding such concepts (e.g., peace) necessitates a capacity for abstraction, deductive thinking, and reflective thought which only emerges during the adolescent years. Consequently, when utilizing formal thinking, "the adolescent goes injecting himself into adult society. He does so by means of projects, life plans, theoretical systems, and ideas of political

or social reform" (Piaget, 1968, p. 67). These ideas are woven into a rudimentary yet personally meaningful theory of society. "These theories are often taken quite seriously, with the result being a new coherence of judgment and opinion, deriving from an arduously thought-out system of beliefs" (Damon, 1984, p. 119). With respect to the foregoing, however, attention must be given to the question of whether a social morality is universally obtainable in adolescence. That is, a considerable body of research has noted that formal thinking is not experienced by all adolescents (e.g., Elkind, 1975; Keating & Clark, 1980). This objection is answered by how social morality is defined. Although many adolescents might be unable to articulate a sophisticated understanding of the social system and base their behaviors on these understandings, the experience of empathic concern and the encounter with numerous opportunities for prosocial actions in both home and school environments allow virtually all adolescents to consider the possibility of engaging in behaviors which aid those suffering from social injustice.

It is unlikely, however, that this awakening concern for social morality can exist as isolated from the larger developmental needs of identity which are

salient issues for adolescent maturation (Miller, 1978; Marcia, 1980). Further, the linkage of psychosocial development and formal operational thinking is likely mediated by factors unique to the adolescent period (Rowe & Marcia, 1980).

Erikson (1963, 1968) has offered the dominant theory for understanding the adolescent's identity quest. This identity search, framed in the context of crises and commitment, has received operationalized success through the use of the identity status paradigm developed by Marcia (1966). Central to the adolescent's achievement of identity is the experience of an ideological crisis which necessitates the adolescent's successful negotiation of newly acquired ideas and values with formerly sacrosanct and unquestioned childhood beliefs. This potentially traumatic experience of reevaluation entails a fundamental reexamination of political, religious, and social beliefs.

Although the secondary school years represent a time when identity issues are initially considered, the extant research has focused almost exclusively on late adolescents (college undergraduates) (Marcia, 1980). Recently, attempts have been made to apply identity paradigms to secondary school adolescents (Mielman,



1979). Raphael and Xelowski (1980) have questioned the validity of such an approach. Characteristically, secondary school students are neither likely nor expected to have experienced the developmental concerns or the environmental situations which are requisite for the crisis and commitment struggles which may preoccupy the college age adolescent. Raphael and Xelowski argue that a more profitable approach to identity measurement during the high school years is to assess the adolescent's familiarity with salient issues as well as the openness the adolescent evinces towards new experiences. In this regard, a morality framed in terms of prosocial behaviors appreciates the age appropriate level of the secondary school student's identity search. The fashioning of morality in the context of everyday prosocial situations allows for a universal experience that is appropriate for the high school adolescent's initial exploration of social issues.

Thus the adolescent's awareness of the political world, engendered by cognitive maturation and developmental strivings, sets the stage for the initial yet tentative steps toward ideological commitment; on the other hand, failure to confront ideological demands relegates the adolescent to a confused and ambiguous state (Erikson, 1968). The presence of formal thinking

prepares the adolescent to attend to complex political stimuli whereas the capacity to reflect on a personal life history allows the adolescent to encounter a world that is both complex and changing.

It is only with increasing maturity that the adolescent becomes able to form generalized concepts, to understand the role of history and the impact of the present on the future, to get some feeling for social change and the possibility that man and social institutions may alter and be altered, to weigh up the wider costs and benefits of actions and decisions, and to develop principles and frameworks for judging particular events. (Feather, 1980, p. 281).

The acquisition of formal thinking also makes available to the adolescent a higher level of empathic experience. Hoffman (1980, 1984) has tied the adolescent's greater empathic sophistication to the ability to imagine the plight and suffering of wider social groups such as the poor, the retarded, and the oppressed. He has stated that "empathic affect combined with the perceived plight of an unfortunate group may be the most advanced form of empathic distress" (1979, p. 963). Clark (1980) has echoed Hoffman's assertion. While criticizing the dearth of research on the topic of empathy, he has stated that "the highest and probably the least frequent form of empathy is that in which the individual is compelled to embrace all human beings" (p. 189). In a particularly forceful passage he goes on

to state:

It is the level of empathy that when real and functional cannot be used to justify the naked use of power, tyranny, flagrant or subtle injustices, cruelties, sustained terrorism, killings, wars, and eventual extinction...This lack of simple expanded empathy is in the eyes of this observer the basis of social tensions, conflicts, violence, terrorism, and war (pp. 189-190).

During adolescence there develops what some researchers (Adelson & O'Neil, 1966; Leahy, 1983) term the sociocentric perspective. This perspective entails a widening understanding of social relationships. Leahy has noted that the emergence of an understanding of the concept of "social class" for example arises from these developmental changes. Initially, the child defines difference between "rich and poor" (social class) in terms of "peripheral" characteristics (e.g., physical characteristics, amount of wealth). By adolescence, these conceptions have become more sophisticated with descriptions of psychological features as well as sociocentric understandings (how social structures influence individuals). "Sociocentric concepts reflect a more abstract decentering in that they indicate a refocusing from individuals or groups to their relationships within a social structure" (Leahy, 1983, p. 97).

Relatedly, the entrance of socio-cultural factors in the adolescent's conception of social morality is mediated to a large extent by cultural attitudes and norms. Individuals are socialized to believe that "they can accomplish". "The overwhelming majority of children from all social strata are convinced that they personally can succeed in a system where everyone cannot succeed" (Hall & Jose, 1983). Social psychological explanations which help to explain such a cultural belief include status attribution theory which argues that in light of unknown characteristics of another, those known characteristics become the basis for inferring other qualities. Thus, individuals of the upper class who are financially successful (what is known) are also expected to have high abilities in other areas--personality attributes, successful in relationships, etc. Another candidate for this socialized belief in personal success is the just world theory (Lerner, 1975). Thus, individuals who are in the lower class "deserve" what they have whereas personal efforts allows those more advantaged to "deserve" their advantage.

At the same time, these culturally held beliefs must compete with developmental changes that enable the adolescent to move beyond commonly accepted cultural

beliefs in their evaluations of social reality. Damon (1975) has shown that with age there is an increasingly complex understanding of "positive justice" which is concerned with the fair allocation of goods and resources. At its highest level, which is obtainable by adolescence, one's view as to how goods and services are to be allocated takes into account the special needs of others as well as special circumstances which mitigate right or wrong (e.g., a person's physical limitations--blindness). Relatedly, Lapsey and Quintana (1985) have shown that the notion of retributive justice becomes more complex with age. In this regard, they note that by adolescence, applications of punishment are no longer simply a "tit for tat" phenomenon. Rather, there exists an increasingly sophisticated understanding of relationships and a corresponding sensitivity for mitigating and extenuating circumstances which influence one's behavior.

All in all, although cultural socialization is powerful within the adolescent years, developmentally, the adolescent is capable of recognizing complex social phenomenon and victims of social injustice. When combined with levels of empathy which allows a felt distress for the disadvantaged, a situation is created

for the fostering of social morality.

The point made by both Clark and Hoffman is that empathy has a specifically social dimension which leads it to be inextricably tied to questions of social injustice, political decision-making, and cultural values--indeed, the same concerns which are central for social morality. This level of empathy is dependent upon cognitive maturation and expresses itself in a universal sensitivity towards society's disadvantaged.

Moreover, Hoffman (1980) has hypothesized that many middle class and affluent adolescents often undergo a sense of existential alienation as a result of their advanced empathic experiences. Their growing awareness of others' plight in contrast to their own advantaged state creates a sense of "existential guilt" and for some adolescents it leads to distancing or disavowal from their own cultural milieu. In effect, tacit beliefs and assumptions concerning society are called into question through their empathic concern towards those who are suffering. Their empathic stirrings also engender a personal perplexity as they must now successfully negotiate their earlier socialization experiences which prized the conventional values of a competitive and success-oriented society with their newly experienced feelings of care and concern for the

socially oppressed. For some, this entails the beginning of rudimentary ideological formulations. He notes

that adolescents often search for moral ideologies that foster a sense of identity. Ideologies are the "guardians of identity" because they locate oneself in the world and provide coherence to one's affective and cognitive experiences. If one succeeds in finding or constructing an ideology fitting one's empathic leanings, then one's new moral viewpoint is an advancement over the simple empathy-based moral norm of childhood because it incorporates social realities previously ignored. In this way, one's ideology may become an integral part of one's moral system rather than an abstraction lacking moral force. (Hoffman, 1984, p. 292).

In a similar vein, to discuss the possibility of a social morality is to bring to the forefront the relationship of youth to the political system. Easton and Dennis (1965) have provided data analyses which document children's attitudes toward government. In essence, the Easton and Dennis data uncover a gradual shift of the child from a "political primitive" who views government in an almost magical way, dominated by personable leaders, to a maturing understanding of pluralism, complexity and the multi-functionalism of the American political system. Interestingly, the researchers note that increasing comprehension of governmental authorities leads to a diminution in positive attachments towards governmental leaders. Thus

greater understanding of government diminishes an uncritical infatuation with the components of government. In other research (Easton & Dennis, 1967) the emergence of a sense of "political efficacy" is noted as early as the third grade. Although children do not comprehend with any depth the realities of the political system, it appears that an incipient conceptualization of an individual's power to influence the political process occurs in young children. Consequently, childhood socialization might well provide a preparatory stage for the later internalization of norms and feelings requisite for a sense of political efficacy. It should be noted that the child does not actually believe that he or she can influence the system, rather he or she construes an image of citizen which prepares the child to assume this adult role in later years.

The formation of political attitudes leads to inquiry as to the source of this formation. Not surprisingly, evidence suggests that parents exercise the dominant role in the child's development of a political sense of self. "Within the family the child has his first experience with authority relationships which he may generalize to larger political systems. Political loyalty, patriotism, national heroes, and devils are all seen as developing



early in life" (Langton, 1969, p. 22). Parents provide a reinforcing environment wherein positive ties towards authority are promoted. Likewise, if parents profess political loyalties (partisanship or party affiliation) then these loyalties are likely to be transmitted to their children. Further, with increasing education the child is more able to differentiate correctly ideological conflicts between political parties (Hess & Torney, 1968; Lane & Sears, 1964). All in all, there is a growing constellation of childhood needs, parental influences, and educational opportunities which shape the child's political attitudes. In sum, a predominant view in socialization studies is the child's acceptance of personable political leaders. Only with time is the child able to adopt a critical perspective of government. Further, this positive attachment to government and its leaders holds across social class and intellectual ability (IQ) (Hess & Torney, 1968).

Two points can be drawn from such findings. First many researchers take a psychodynamic interpretation; that is, they view the child as a helpless person who gladly substitutes positive and uncritical acceptance of authority figures for his or her own helplessness. Second, it is assumed that all children adopt a positive attachment toward government and its leaders.

This latter point, the unanimity of social classes' feelings towards governmental leaders, has not gone without challenge. For example, Connell (1971) speaks of an intuitive political sense which children possess. Based on in-depth interviews, Connell notes that children can sometimes develop a starkly honest and critical sense of their government. This view is shared by Coles (1975). The Harvard educator notes "the poor or those who belong to the so-called working class always live close to the law, close to the whims and fancies of political authority" (p. 24). Using an in-depth interview format with lower class white and black children, Coles documents a much more negative and fearful view of government, even among children five and six. Recent research (Leahy, 1983) has documented the child's ability to perceive gender, racial, and social differences. Thus it might be that germinal political attitudes are framed from nascently formed perceptions of inequality and social differences.

In the secondary school years, adolescents begin to develop both a deepening understanding of political realities and the capacity to think critically about social phenomena. In the early high school years, these evaluations are elementary and simplistic. Through the later high school years and during the undergraduate

years of college, however, adolescents are capable of developing a rudimentary ideology and philosophy of life that aids them as they evaluate political and social institutions. At the same time, the ideological groundings for most adolescents are unstructured; that is, the overwhelming number of adolescents display thought patterns in which complex and hierarchically ordered belief structures are lacking (Adelson, 1971, 1975; Gallatin, 1980).

The adolescent's disinclination to form an ideologically structured belief system arises from several factors. Adolescents, like children, form political thinking patterns which reflect adult beliefs; therefore, because most adult Americans are non-ideological in their political belief structures, it stands to reason that adolescents, too, will reflect weak ideological commitments (Adelson, 1979; Conger, 1976). Furthermore, the adolescent's awakening to serious political issues is influenced by numerous socializing factors which include parents, teachers, peers, and the media (Jennings & Niemi, 1974). It is highly likely that these numerous influences offer at times contradictory and opposing interpretations of political realities which in turn lessen the adolescent's attempt at forming political commitments.

Finally, the nature of political reality itself is often complex and variable. Adelson (1975) has captured the essence of political events and their accompanying ambiguity. He notes when discussing political phenomena

we have gone from a one-on-one collision of values to far more complicated issues; the relation of variable means to variable ends; the relation of uncertain means to uncertain ends; the relation between short- and long-term ends; the relation between individualistic and collective goods; the distinction between particularistic and universalistic orientations; the collision between values, and also the collision between interests, and between interests and values (p. 76).

Consequently, the adolescent must attempt to make sense of a vast array of information and in the midst of this complexity construct a personally meaningful value system. No doubt this venture is often frustrating and for some adolescents leads to adoption of a nonreflective ideological position (this could be construed as an example of identity foreclosure) whereas for other adolescents this confusion leads to the abandonment of any attempt at political commitment. It is likely that most adolescents fall between these extremes. Unlike the privately encountered moral choices which adolescents face concerning questions of personal morals--should I lie? Should I steal?--questions relating morals and politics are inherently complex and often lack moral clarity.

Furthermore, the certitude and moral simplicity that so often preoccupies the moral beliefs of children yields to the confusion and questioning which characterizes the political world of the adult.

The framing of morality in a prosocial context offers the adolescent a respite from the moral confusion emanating from political controversies. Although adolescents might evince uncertainty as to which of several political choices are moral, their familiarity and socialization to prosocial behaviors provides a resourceful means for creating interest in and commitment to socially important issues.

#### Adolescent Social Morality and a Morality of the Heart:

##### A Case Study

No research exists which explores the meaning of Rest's "fully developed morality" to the adolescent experience. Equally important, no literature exists that discusses the model of Rest and the development of a social morality. This being the case, in this section, we attempt an integration of the Morality of the Heart, the adolescent, and social morality. This integration is made more difficult by the fact that research studies which show prosociality and the adolescent are wedded to personal and interpersonal

concerns rather than "social" factors and related issues.

Although speculative in nature, in all likelihood one can assume that the empathic distress which develops with cognitive maturation not only forms the center of the component one process but it is significant in focusing the adolescent's attention on the disadvantaged and unfortunate. Moreover, empathic stirrings most likely foster one of the first critical intrusions into tacitly held conventional beliefs which, until adolescence, allow for an acquiescent adoption of societal beliefs.

An example illustrates this process. John is a 16 year old junior in high school. He has recently finished reading a book (for a social studies course) on race relations in the United States. John comes from a middle class background and is white. He has had few interactions with minorities. The stark accounts in the book he has read, however, have troubled him. Although he finds it difficult to articulate his feelings, John experiences discomfort as he thinks about the treatment of minorities in general and, in particular, the extent of discrimination that exists in his own city. Further, these feelings are confirmed by what he has recently read in newspapers and stories he has viewed on tele

vision about white-black relations.

John's empathic concern suggests a salient experience for the development of social morality. There is some level of aroused affect (empathic distress). In turn, his emotional arousal is made possible by his cognitive maturation--that is, John's awareness that a problem exists. Although he himself has not been the victim of discrimination, he perceives that others have. This arousal highlights Hoffman's assertion that empathy is experienced at the level at which one cognizes the other (with the understanding that the other can be not only an individual but a group or wider body of people).

The question does arise as to "why" John does feel this empathic arousal whereas other peers might not. One likely answer, is that John possesses a higher level of empathy. Instruments such as the IRI (Davis, 1980) could substantiate this fact. Further, these empathic expressions most likely are fostered from socialization experiences, specifically parental practices (Hoffman, 1979). Additionally, John attends outwardly to his environment; thus cognitive egocentrism (Elkind, 1980) does not preclude his awareness of other problems, especially of wider social groups. In all likelihood,

John also evidences a life history that enables him to empathize with others. This includes a sustained experiences of peer interactions and friendship formations. Noting Youniss (1980) studies in this regard, the mutuality and reciprocal functions of rights and duties could well form the basis for perceiving the rights and duties of others in social contexts.

Friendships and meaningful peer interactions promote mutuality and a more mature understanding of reciprocity and equality. Thus, as Berndt (1982) notes, evidence suggests "that close and stable friendships can enhance altruism and self-esteem" p. 1458). The interaction among adolescents in peer relationships might well be a crucial determinant in obtaining adolescent concern for disadvantaged groups. Unless the adolescent can understand and experience the reciprocal rights and responsibilities inherent in personal relationships, and the caring and empathic concerns requisite for personal friendship, then the focus on broader groups and people might be unproductive. In other words, it is arguable that the seeds for a social morality exist in the fertile soil established by already existent nurturing personal relationships. Further, the disappointments, inequalities, and hurts sustained in these interpersonal contexts provide the cognitive schema by which the



plight and disappointments of larger social groups are experienced. Building on the work of Karinol (1982), hurts experienced in personal relationships provide a repository for experiencing the hurts and pains of others experienced in wider social contexts. That is, the empathic distress engendered through exposure to social injustices activates previous stored knowledge which provides an interpretable context for the now broader understanding of the other's plight and one's personal distress over the other's pain.

Moreover, experiencing personal hurt is likely to foster an empathic bonding with those who are less fortunate and who are suffering. That is, as Staub (1978) notes, "people frequently respond more empathically to others' when they themselves have had similar experiences." p. 138). Even though John has not been a victim of racial discrimination, he most likely has experienced other forms of disappointment, perhaps some of which are discriminatory. He might have personal characteristics which have made the accomplishments of his own goals problematic (e.g., too short for the basketball team, not perceived as having talent for the school play). Even disappointment in personal relationships (experiences of betrayal, broken

confidences) might provide the requisite psychological experiences for empathizing with a wider social group.

At the same time, the adolescent's experience of personal disappointment and hurt must not be overly burdensome. If this is the case, then the emotional vicissitudes of adolescence (Larson, Csikszentmihalyi & Graef, 1980; Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986) and personal disappointments inherent in friendship formations (Youniss, 1980) foster defensive reactions and overpreoccupation with intrapsychic and interpersonal needs. Indirect support is given this interpretation when, as noted in Chapter III, needy individuals are less likely to engage in prosocial responses. In sum, there exists the need for what might be termed a psychological vulnerability in the adolescent. On the one hand the adolescent must have experienced personal disappointment and hurt, most likely some of which is felt to be unjust. On the other hand, this hurt must not be of such immensity that it induces a level of defensive reactions which inhibit the ability of the adolescent to perceive distress in others and center one's focus solely on the self.

One other piece of evidence seems to offer support to this assertion concerning psychological vulnerability as it pertains to social morality. Shelton (1985)

confirmed Hoffman's (1981) assertion that empathic distress inhibits prosociality. He found that for both a private morality as well as interpersonal morality, empathic distress was unrelated to helping. This was not the case for social morality. On the contrary, distress was highly significantly related to prosocial responding. It is unclear exactly why this would be the case. It might be that if viewing someone in need of help whether the person is unknown or known to the observer is accompanied by emotional distress than defensive reactions or an egoistic quality might enter into one's decision to help. That is, one's own internal distress takes priority over the hurt of another. On the other hand, to envision or imagine large groups of people suffering social injustice might turn one's inner turmoil into a cause or ideological commitment that demands one's response. In sum, the inclination to respond prosocially in cases of social morality appears to contradict the assertion that all affective overarousal inhibits prosocial actions. It might be that Hoffman's theory of empathic distress applies more to interpersonal situations whereas more socially oriented concerns are influenced by a different dynamic. Thus an individual when exposed to a distress-filled interpersonal situation might fail to

respond to another's plight. On the other hand, the overwhelming distress one feels when reflecting on social injustice might lead one to constructively channel energies into efforts to eradicate such situations.

To continue the discussion. John is distressed by what he reads. Yet, his sensitivity to this moral problem must include reference to Component II--the understanding that "something must be done." If John's socialization experiences has taken place in the context of a religious background, this "oughtness" can be understood in terms of conscience (e.g., Nelson, 1973) or a conversion experience (e.g., Conn, 1981). Regardless, there is some prescriptive focus to John's thinking. There exists some internal standard (norm) which provides an evaluative stance for what "ought to be done." Research evidence does support the notion of internalized norms as predictors of prosocial behaviors.

A wide range of studies have demonstrated this to be the case. Individuals with high scores on paper-and-pencil or verbal measures of social responsibility, other-oriented values, or moral reasoning tasks, were more likely to engage in prosocial behavior than those with lower scores on the same tests. (Rushton, 1981, p. 262)

Rushton quotes 16 studies that show this to be the case (for a list of some of these studies see Chapter II).

We have also noted that the underlying psychic mechanism that gives impetus to this value formation is the ego ideal which, in its normal course of development, fosters the growing adolescent-parent separation. Initially this separation transpires through idealized friendships (Blos, 1962) but a parallel process and eventually a more functional way for this to occur is through the gradual adoption of a coherent and meaningful system of beliefs and attitudes which express what one "ought to be."

The standards and values formerly attributed to the parents thereby become parts of a guiding ego ideal, and the lost perfection of the parental imagoes is transmuted into the felt perfection of these now internal standards and ideals. (Wolf, Gedo, and Terman, 1972, p. 267)

This gradual development of a personal set of ideals (values) fosters the "transformation" of the adolescent self. Even so, this increasingly personalized values system is most likely more readily disposed to evaluations in terms of personal and interpersonal moral concerns (Should I lie? Should I steal?) than to questions of social morality which include the necessity to evaluate social phenomena as well as political and social issues. Some evidence for the difficulty of responding in the context of a social morality is provided by Torney-Purta (1983) which shows that

questions of social and economic equality are perceived less clearly by children and adolescents than questions of political freedoms (e.g., free speech).

Although civil and political rights are clearly perceived as essential in a just society, situations where social or economic justice is involved or where rights come into conflict are considerably more problematic for young people. (p. 300)

Further, evidence seems to indicate that solutions to political and social problems are arrived at with more difficulty than the ability to recognize a problem.

"There is little evidence that understanding of remedies for inequality or injustice progresses in a parallel fashion to (or as rapidly as) awareness of injustice or inequality" (Torney-Purta, 1983, p. 308).

Although John appears sensitive to the plight of those who suffer racial discrimination, he must determine how he will respond now that he knows that his own standards have been violated. In short, John must decide what he will now do. At this point, John's behavioral choices must confront the complexity of social realities. Is the injustice that John seeks to respond to the result of complex social conditions? He might, for example, have various interpretations of the reasons for racial discrimination which are conflictual and lead him to a tentative response. He might be overwhelmed by the amount or the complexity of the

social problem or feel he does not have enough information. Further, as John formulates his own philosophy of life which includes increasingly well-thought ideas of society and a moral evaluation of them (Damon, 1984; Erikson, 1968), there emerges the potential for conflict with parental ideas and beliefs. John might favor wholeheartedly the consequences of actions consonant with a social morality in order to distance himself from parental values and beliefs. Thus, John might opt for some choices not so much because he believes them, but because they psychically establish his identity and ease separation struggles with parents who perhaps think differently on such issues. On the other hand, some adolescents might resist choosing behaviors consonant with a social morality in order to assuage their own separation fears from parents. Some other adolescents might believe they lack the ability to respond to issues important to social morality. Still others might be disinclined to adopt a social morality because of reactance (Brehm, 1966). Thus, in adolescence, where freedom to form one's own beliefs and values is crucial, parental or authority demands to adopt such positions can create opposition to such views thereby making problematic the development of a social morality.

Finally, for some adolescents, parental support of social morality might provide a fertile socialization for the adolescent's adoption of this morality.

Ideally, the most developed understanding of social morality includes not only behaviors which respond to distressed others, but an increasingly sophisticated value system which provides a coherent conceptual framework in order that John's behaviors can mirror his values. Furthermore, the set of values which mirror choices made is not rigidly held (Marcia, 1980) but defined and flexible in order to accommodate new experiences and challenges to currently held beliefs (Raphael & Xelowski, 1980).

Finally, what fosters John's prosocial behavior to the actual stage of execution of a prosocial act? The ability to carry out the prosocial act is considered to be a function of John's maturity level. This maturity includes the ability to fulfill one's goals and carry out one's desires. Also, a sense of self-efficacy regarding one's own behaviors. In regards to performing of prosocial acts, Staub (1978) notes "belief in one's ability to influence events and bring about desired outcomes seems important in leading people to initiate action and actively pursue goals, except when the required action is easy and straightforward" (p. 55).



### Future Research

This study offers a conceptual understanding from a psychological vantage point of everyday morality. The advantage of this conceptual framework is that it identifies discrete factors at a distinctive developmental level which are essential components for the adolescents prosocial response.

As such, this framework offers a variety of research possibilities. For one, there exists the question as to whether the value oriented and empathically based morality described herein is a better predictor of prosociality than the cognitive-developmental perspective set forth by Kohlberg. If Rest is correct that a morality must take into consideration each of the four components in order to be a "fully developed morality," then one research strategy is a comparison of adolescents who score at various levels of these four components with adolescents who score at various levels on the DIT. Dependent measures in such a study could be either the paper and pencil instruments (e.g., the VMS) or a set of behavioral situations which measure the student's prosocial response.

Other research might attempt to measure whether indeed certain distinctive personality variables such as

loneliness in adolescence inhibit prosociality. Research could be conducted either cross sectionally or longitudinally in order to ascertain differences in prosociality between the beginning and end of the middle adolescent period.

Other areas of research that might prove fruitful include ascertaining the role of political efficacy and political awareness. For example, are these concepts significantly related to social morality? In other words, does a high level of social morality necessitate a level of political competence? Further, are adolescents who experience personal hurts in friendships and peer relationships more likely than their peers to be open to empathizing with the hurts and pains of wider social groups (e.g., the poor, oppressed)? In other words, does there exist some linkage between the quality of interpersonal functioning and a widening moral concern for social questions and issues (e.g., the plight of the economically disadvantaged)?

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

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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