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2. Moral Stages and Moralization: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach

IN THIS chapter I shall present an overview of the cognitive-developmental theory of moralization as elaborated in studies of moral stages by myself and my colleagues. I shall first present a theoretical description of the six moral stages, followed by an account of the development of our methods for identifying or scoring stage. Having presented a picture of what moral development is and how to assess it, I shall go on to present the theory of moralization which can best account for this picture of moral development, and then to contrast this theory with approaches which see moral development as a result of socialization or social learning.

In a sense, this chapter represents an updating of earlier presentations of my theory of moral development stages (Kohlberg, 1969). In this chapter, however, there is no attempt to review research comprehensively, as research reviews have appeared earlier (Kohlberg, 1964, 1969) and are forthcoming (Kohlberg and Candee, in prep.). The philosophic assumptions and implications of our stages are also treated only briefly, having been thoroughly discussed elsewhere (Kohlberg, 1971b, 1981a.).

The Place of Moral Judgment in the Total Personality

To understand moral stage, it is helpful to locate it in a sequence of development of personality. We know that individuals pass through the moral stages one step at a time as they progress from the bottom (Stage 1) toward the top (Stage 6). There are also other stages that individuals must go through, perhaps the most basic of which are the stages of logical reasoning or intelligence studied by Piaget (1967). After the child learns to speak, there are three major developmental stages of reasoning: the intuitive, the concrete operational, and the formal operational. At around age 7, children

enter the stage of concrete logical thought; they can then make logical inferences, classify things and handle quantitative relations about concrete things. In adolescence, many but not all individuals enter the stage of formal operations, at which level they can reason abstractly. Formal operational thinking can consider all possibilities, consider the relations between elements in a system, form hypotheses, deduce implications from the hypotheses, and test them against reality. Many adolescents and adults only partially attain the stage of formal operations; they consider all the actual relations of one thing to another at the same time, but do not consider all possibilities and do not form abstract hypotheses.

In general, almost no adolescents and adults will still be entirely at the stage of concrete operations, many will be at the stage of partial formal operations, and most will be at the highest stage of formal operations (Kuhn, Langer, Kohlberg, and Haan, 1977). Since moral reasoning clearly is reasoning, advanced moral reasoning depends upon advanced logical reasoning. There is a parallelism between an individual's logical stage and his or her moral stage. A person whose logical stage is only concrete operational is limited to the preconventional moral stages, Stages 1 and 2. A person whose logical stage is only "low" formal operational is limited to the conventional moral stages, Stages 3 and 4. While logical development is a necessary condition for moral development, it is not sufficient. Many individuals are at a higher logical stage than the parallel moral stage, but essentially none are at a higher moral stage than their logical stage (Walker, 1980).

Next after stages of logical development come stages of social perception or social perspective- or role-taking (see Selman, 1976). We partially describe these stages when we define the moral stages. These role-taking stages describe the level at which the person sees other people, interprets their thoughts and feelings, and sees their role or place in society. These stages are very closely related to moral stages, but are more general, since they do not deal just with fairness and with choices of right and wrong. To make a judgment of fairness at a certain level is more difficult than to simply see the world at that level. So, just as for logic, development of a stage's social perception precedes, or is easier than, development of the parallel stage of moral judgment. Just as there is a vertical sequence of steps in movement up from moral Stage 1 to moral Stage 2 to moral Stage 3, so there is a horizontal sequence of steps in movement from logic to social perception to moral

judgment. First, individuals attain a logical stage, say, partial formal operations, which allows them to see "systems" in the world, to see a set of related variables as a system. Next they attain a level of social perception or role-taking, where they see other people understanding one another in terms of the place of each in the system. Finally, they attain Stage 4 of moral judgment, where the welfare and order of the total social system or society is the reference point for judging "fair" or "right." We have found that individuals who move upward in our moral education programs already have the logical capacity, and often the social perception capacity, for the higher moral stage to which they move (Walker, 1980).

There is one final step in this horizontal sequence: moral behavior. To act in a morally high way requires a high stage of moral reasoning. One cannot follow moral principles (Stages 5 and 6) if one does not understand or believe in them. One can, however, reason in terms of such principles and not live up to them. A variety of factors determines whether a particular person will live up to his or her stage of moral reasoning in a particular situation, though moral stage is a good predictor of action in various experimental and naturalistic settings (Kohlberg, 1969).

In summary, moral stage is related to cognitive advance and to moral behavior, but our identification of moral stage must be based on moral reasoning alone.

Theoretical Description of the Moral Stages

The six moral stages are grouped into three major levels: pre-conventional level (Stages 1 and 2), conventional level (Stages 3 and 4), and postconventional level (Stages 5 and 6).

To understand the stages, it is best to start by understanding the three moral levels. The pre-conventional moral level is the level of most children under 9, some adolescents, and many adolescent and adult criminal offenders. The conventional level is the level of most adolescents and adults in our society and in other societies. The postconventional level is reached by a minority of adults and is usually reached only after the age of 20. The term "conventional" means conforming to and upholding the rules and expectations and conventions of society or authority just because they are society's rules, expectations, or conventions. The individual at the

pre-conventional level has not yet come to really understand and uphold conventional or societal rules and expectations. Someone at the postconventional level understands and basically accepts society's rules, but acceptance of society's rules is based on formulating and accepting the general moral principles that underlie these rules. These principles in some cases come into conflict with society's rules, in which case the postconventional individual judges by principle rather than by convention.

One way of understanding the three levels is to think of them as three different types of relationships between the *self* and *society's rules and expectations*. From this point of view, Level I is a pre-conventional person, for whom rules and social expectations are something external to the self; Level II is a conventional person, in whom the self is identified with or has internalized the rules and expectations of others, especially those of authorities; and Level III is a postconventional person, who had differentiated his or her self from the rules and expectations of others and defines his or her values in terms of self-chosen principles.

Within each of the three moral levels, there are two stages. The second stage is a more advanced and organized form of the general perspective of each major level. Table 2.1 defines the six moral stages in terms of (1) what is right, (2) the reason for upholding the right, and (3) the social perspective behind each stage, a central concept to which our definition of moral reasoning now turns.

Social Perspectives of the Three Moral Levels

In order to characterize the development of moral reasoning structurally, we seek a single unifying construct that will generate the major structural features of each stage. Selman (1976) offers a point of departure in the search for such a unifying construct; he has defined levels of role-taking which parallel our moral stages and which form a cognitive-structural hierarchy. Selman defines role-taking primarily in terms of the way the individual differentiates his or her perspective from other perspectives and relates these perspectives to one another. From our point of view, however, there is a more general structural construct which underlies both role-taking and moral judgment. This is the concept of *socio-moral perspective*, which refers to the point of view the individual takes in defining both social facts and sociomoral values, or "oughts." Corresponding to the three major levels of moral judg-

Social Perspective of Stage

Reasons for Doing Right

What Is Right

Level and Stage

Level I: Preconventional
 Stage 1—Heteronomous Morality

Egocentric point of view. Doesn't consider the interests of others or recognize that they differ from the actor's; doesn't relate two points of view. Actions are considered physically rather than in terms of psychological interests of others. Confusion of authority's perspective with one's own.

Avoidance of punishment, and the superior power of authorities.

Concrete individualistic perspective.
 Aware that everybody has his own interest to pursue and these conflict, so that right is relative (in the concrete individualistic sense).

To serve one's own needs or interests in a world where you have to recognize that other people have their interests, too.

Following rules only when it is to someone's immediate interest; acting to meet one's own interests and needs and letting others do the same. Right is also what's fair, what's an equal exchange, a deal, an agreement.

Perspective of the individual in relationships with other individuals.

The need to be a good person in your own eyes and those of others. Your caring for others. Belief in the Golden Rule. Desire to maintain rules and authority which support stereotypical good behavior.

Living up to what is expected by people close to you or what people generally expect of people in your role as son, brother, friend, etc. "Being good" is important and means having good motives, showing concern about others. It also means keeping mutual relationships, such as trust, loyalty, respect, and gratitude.

Level II: Conventional
 Stage 3—Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Interpersonal Conformity

Aware of shared feelings, agreements, and expectations which take primacy over individual interests. Relates points of view through the concrete Golden Rule, putting yourself in the other person's shoes. Does not yet consider generalized system perspective.

Content of Stage

Level and Stage

What Is Right

Reasons for Doing Right

Social Perspective of Stage

Stage 4—Social System and Conscience

Fulfilling the actual duties to which you have agreed. Laws are to be upheld except in extreme cases where they conflict with other fixed social duties. Right is also contributing to society, the group, or institution.

To keep the institution going as a whole, to avoid the breakdown in the system "if everyone did it," or the imperative of conscience to meet one's defined obligations. (Easily confused with Stage 3 belief in rules and authority; see text.)

Differentiates societal point of view from interpersonal agreement or motives. Takes the point of view of the system that defines roles and rules. Considers individual relations in terms of place in the system.

Level III: Postconventional, or Principled
 Stage 5—Social Contract or Utility and Individual Rights

Being aware that people hold a variety of values and opinions, that most values and rules are relative to your group. These relative rules should usually be upheld, however, in the interest of impartiality and because they are the social contract. Some nonrelative values and rights like *life and liberty*, however, must be upheld in any society and regardless of majority opinion.

A sense of obligation to law because of one's social contract to make and abide by laws for the welfare of all and for the protection of all people's rights. A feeling of contractual commitment, freely entered upon, to family, friendship, trust, and work obligations. Concern that laws and duties be based on rational calculation of overall utility, "the greatest good for the

Prior-to-society perspective.
 Perspective of a rational individual aware of values and rights prior to social attachments and contracts. Integrates perspectives by formal mechanisms of agreement, contract, objective impartiality, and due process. Considers moral and legal points of view: recognizes that they sometimes conflict and finds it difficult to integrate them.

ment, we postulate the three major levels of social perspective as follows:

| <i>Moral Judgment</i> | <i>Social Perspective</i> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| I. Preconventional | Concrete individual perspective |
| II. Conventional | Member-of-society perspective |
| III. Postconventional, or principled | Prior-to-society perspective |

Let us illustrate the meaning of social perspective in terms of the unity it provides for the various ideas and concerns of the moral level. The conventional level, for example, is different from the preconventional in that it uses the following reasons: (1) concern about social approval; (2) concern about loyalty to persons, groups, and authority; and (3) concern about the welfare of others and society. We need to ask, What underlies these characteristics of reasoning and holds them together? What fundamentally defines and unifies the characteristics of the conventional level is its *social perspective*, a shared viewpoint of the participants in a relationship or a group. The conventional individual subordinates the needs of the single individual to the viewpoint and needs of the group or the shared relationship. To illustrate the conventional social perspective, here is 17-year-old Joe's response to the following question:

Q.—Why shouldn't you steal from a store?

A.—It's a matter of law. It's one of our rules that we're trying to help protect everyone, protect property, not just to protect a store. It's something that's needed in our society. If we didn't have these laws, people would steal, they wouldn't have to work for a living and our whole society would get out of kilter.

Joe is concerned about *keeping the law*, and his reason for being concerned is *the good of society as a whole*. Clearly, he is speaking as a member of society." It's one of our rules that we're making to protect everyone in our society." This concern for the good of society arises from his taking the point of view of "us members of society," which goes beyond the point of view of Joe as a concrete, individual self.

Let us contrast this *conventional member-of-society perspective* with the *preconventional concrete individual perspective*. The latter point of view is that of the individual actor in the situation thinking about his

Table 2.1—Continued

| <i>Level and Stage</i> | <i>What Is Right</i> | <i>Reasons for Doing Right</i> | <i>Social Perspective of Stage</i> |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Stage 6—Universal Ethical Principles | Following self-chosen ethical principles. Particular laws or social agreements are usually valid because they rest on such principles. When laws violate these principles, one acts in accordance with the principle. Principles are universal principles of justice: the equality of human rights and respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons. | The belief as a rational person in the validity of universal moral principles, and a sense of personal commitment to them. | <i>Perspective of a moral point of view</i> from which social arrangements derive. Perspective is that of any rational individual recognizing the nature of morality or the fact that persons are ends in themselves and must be treated as such. |

interests and those of other individuals he may care about. Seven years earlier, at age 10, Joe illustrated the concrete individual perspective in response to the same question:

Q.—Why shouldn't you steal from a store?

A.—It's not good to steal from the store. It's against the law. Someone could see you and call the police.

Being "against the law," then, means something very different at the two levels. At Level II, the law is made by and for "everyone," as Joe indicates at age 17. At Level I, it is just something enforced by the police, and accordingly, the reason for obeying the law is to avoid punishment. This reason derives from the limits of a Level I perspective, the perspective of an individual considering his or her own interests and those of other isolated individuals.

Let us now consider the perspective of the *postconventional level*. It is like the *preconventional* perspective in that it returns to the standpoint of the individual rather than taking the point of view of "us members of society." The individual point of view taken at the *postconventional* level, however, can be universal; it is that of any *rational moral individual*. Aware of the member-of-society perspective, the *postconventional* person questions and redefines it in terms of an individual moral perspective, so that social obligations are defined in ways that can be justified to any moral individual. An individual's commitment to basic morality or moral principles is seen as preceding, or being necessary for, his or her taking society's perspective or accepting society's laws and values. Society's laws and values, in turn, should be ones which any reasonable person could be committed to—whatever his or her place in society and whatever society he or she belongs to. The *postconventional* perspective, then, is *prior to society*; it is the perspective of an *individual who has made the moral commitments or holds the standards on which a good or just society must be based*. This is a perspective by which (1) a particular society or set of social practices may be judged and (2) a person may rationally commit him- or herself to a society.

An example is Joe, our longitudinal subject, interviewed at age 24:

Q.—Why shouldn't someone steal from a store?

A.—It's violating another person's rights, in this case, to property.

Q.—Does the law enter in?

A.—Well, the law in most cases is based on what is morally right, so it's not a separate subject, it's a consideration.

Q.—What does "morality" or "morally right" mean to you?

A.—Recognizing the rights of other individuals, first to life and then to do as he pleases as long as it doesn't interfere with somebody else's rights.

The wrongness of stealing is that it violates the moral rights of individuals, which are prior to law and society. Property rights follow from more universal human rights (such as freedoms which do not interfere with the like freedom of others). The demands of law and society derive from universal moral rights, rather than vice versa.

It should be noted that reference to the words *rights* or *morally right* or *conscience* does not necessarily distinguish conventional from *postconventional* morality. Orienting to the morally right thing, or following conscience as against following the law, need not indicate the *postconventional* perspective of the rational moral individual. The terms *morality* and *conscience* may be used to refer to group rules and values which conflict with civil laws or with the rules of the majority group. To a Jehovah's Witness who has gone to jail for "conscience," conscience may mean God's law as interpreted by his or her religious sect or group rather than the standpoint of any individual oriented to universal moral principles or values. To count as *postconventional*, such ideas or terms must be used in a way that makes it clear that they have a foundation for a rational or moral individual who has not yet committed him- or herself to any group or society or its morality. "Trust," for example, is a basic value at both the conventional and the *postconventional* levels. At the conventional level, trustworthiness is something you expect of others in your society. Joe expresses this as follows at age 17:

Q.—Why should a promise be kept, anyway?

A.—Friendship is based on trust. If you can't trust a person, there's little grounds to deal with him. You should try to be as reliable as possible because people remember you by this, you're more respected if you can be depended upon.

At this conventional level, Joe views trust as a truster as well as someone who could break a trust. He sees that the individual needs to be trustworthy not only to secure respect and to maintain social relationships with others, but also because as a member of society he expects trust of others in general.

At the *postconventional* level, individuals take a further step. They do not automatically assume that they are in a society in which they need the friendship and respect of other individuals.

Instead they consider why any society or social relationship presupposes trust, and why the individual, if he or she is to contract into society, must be trustworthy. At age 24, Joe is postconventional in his explanation of why a promise should be kept:

I think human relationships in general are based on trust, on believing in other individuals. If you have no way of believing in someone else, you can't deal with anyone else and it becomes every man for himself. Everything you do in a day's time is related to somebody else and if you can't deal on a fair basis, you have chaos.

We have defined a postconventional moral perspective in terms of the individual's reasons *why* something is right or wrong. We need to illustrate this perspective as it enters into making an actual decision or defining *what is right*. The postconventional person is aware of the moral point of view that each individual in a moral conflict situation ought to adopt. Rather than defining expectations and obligations from the standpoint of societal roles, as someone at the conventional level would, the postconventional individual holds that persons in these roles should orient to a "moral point of view." While the postconventional moral viewpoint does also recognize fixed legal-social obligations, recognition of moral obligations may take priority when the moral and legal viewpoints conflict.

At age 24 Joe reflects the postconventional moral point of view as a decision-making perspective in response to Heinz's dilemma about stealing a drug to save his wife (see "The Nine Hypothetical Dilemmas," Appendix B):

It is the husband's duty to save his wife. The fact that her life is in danger transcends every other standard you might use to judge his action. Life is more important than property.

Q.—*Suppose it were a friend, not his wife?*

A.—I don't think that would be much different from a moral point of view. It's still a human being in danger.

Q.—*Suppose it were a stranger?*

A.—To be consistent, yes, from a moral standpoint.

Q.—*What is this moral standpoint?*

A.—I think every individual has a right to live and if there is a way of saving an individual, he should be saved.

Q.—*Should the judge punish the husband?*

A.—Usually the moral and the legal standpoints coincide. Here they conflict. The judge should weigh the moral standpoint more heavily but preserve the legal law in punishing Heinz lightly.

Social Perspectives of the Six Stages

This section will explain the differences in social perspective at each moral stage within each of the three levels. It will attempt to show how the second stage in each level completes the development of the social perspective entered at the first stage of the level.

We will start with the easiest pair of stages to explain in this way—Stages 3 and 4, comprising the conventional level. In the preceding section we quoted the isolated-individual perspective of Stages 1 and 2 and contrasted it with Joe's full-fledged member-of-society perspective at age 17, a perspective which is Stage 4. Joe's statements about the importance of trust in dealing with others clearly reflect the perspective of someone taking the point of view of the social system. The social perspective at Stage 3 is less aware of society's point of view or of the good of the whole of society. As an example of Stage 3, let us consider Andy's response to a dilemma about whether to tell your father about a brother's disobedience after the brother has confided in you.

He should think of his brother, but it's more important to be a good son. Your father has done so much for you. I'd have a conscience if I didn't tell, more than to my brother, because my father couldn't trust me. My brother would understand; our father has done so much for him, too.

Andy's perspective is not based on a social system. It is rather one in which he has two relationships: one to his brother, one to his father. His father as authority and helper comes first. Andy expects his brother to share this perspective, but as someone else centered on their father. There is no reference to the organization of the family in general. Being a good son is said to be more important not because it is a more important role in the eyes of, or in terms of, society as a whole or even in terms of the family as a system. The Stage 3 member-of-a-group perspective is that of the average good person, not that of society or an institution as a whole. The Stage 3 perspective sees things from the point of view of shared relationships between two or more individuals—relations of caring, trust, respect, and so on—rather than from the viewpoint of institutional wholes. In summary, whereas the Stage 4 member-of-society perspective is a "system" perspective, the Stage 3 perspective is that of a participant in a shared relationship or shared group.

Let us turn to the preconventional level. Whereas Stage 1 involves only the concrete individual's point of view, Stage 2 is aware

of a number of other individuals, each having other points of view. At Stage 2, in serving my interests I anticipate the other person's reaction, negative or positive, and he or she anticipates mine. Unless we make a deal, we each will put our own point of view first. If we make a deal, each of us will do something for the other.

The shift from Stage 1 to Stage 2 is shown by the following change in another subject's response between age 10 and age 13 to a question about whether an older brother should tell his father about a younger brother's misdeed, revealed in confidence. At 10, the subject gives a Stage 1 answer:

In one way it was right to tell because his father might beat him up. In another way it's wrong because his brother will beat him up if he tells.

At age 13, he has moved to Stage 2:

The brother should not tell or he'll get his brother in trouble. If he wants his brother to keep quiet for him sometime, he'd better not squeal now.

In the second response, there is an extension of concern to the brother's welfare as it affects the subject's own interests through anticipated exchange. There is a much clearer picture of the brother's point of view and its relationship to his own.

Turning to the postconventional level, a typical Stage 5 orientation distinguishes between a moral point of view and a legal point of view but finds it difficult to define a moral perspective independent of contractual-legal rights. Joe, an advanced Stage 5, says with regard to Heinz's dilemma of whether to steal the drug to save his wife:

Usually the moral and the legal standpoints coincide. Here they conflict. The judge should weigh the moral standpoint more.

For Joe, the moral point of view is not yet something prior to the legal point of view. Both law and morality for Joe derive from individual rights and values, and both are more or less on an equal plane. At Stage 6, obligation is defined in terms of universal ethical principles of justice. Here is a Stage 6 response to Heinz's dilemma:

It is wrong legally but right morally. Systems of law are valid only insofar as they reflect the sort of moral law all rational people can accept. One must consider the personal justice involved, which is the root of the social contract. The ground of creating a society is individual justice, the right of every person to an equal consideration of his claims in every situation, not

just those which can be codified in law. Personal justice means, "Treat each person as an end, not a means."

This response indicates a very clear awareness of a moral point of view based on a principle ("Treat each person as an end, not a means") which is more basic than, and from which one can derive, the sociolegal point of view.

Four Moral Orientations and the Shift Toward Greater Equilibrium Within Stages

In discussing social perspectives we have not differentiated *perception* of social fact (role-taking) from *prescription* of the right or good (moral judgment). What are the distinctive features of stages of moral judgment as opposed to social perspective in general?

To define the distinctively moral, we now turn to the moral categories analyzed by moral philosophy. These include "modal" categories (such as rights, duties, the morally approvable, responsibility) and "element" categories (such as welfare, liberty, equality, reciprocity, rules and social order). In describing moral philosophic theories by type, it is customary to analyze the primary moral categories of the theory from which the other categories derive. There are four possible groups of primary categories called *moral orientations*. Found at each of our moral stages, they define four kinds of decisional strategies, each focusing on one of four universal elements in any social situation. These orientations and elements are as follows:

1. *Normative order*: Orientation to prescribed rules and roles of the social or moral order. The basic considerations in decision making center on the element of *rules*.
2. *Utility consequences*: Orientation to the good or bad *welfare consequences* of action in the situation for others and/or the self.
3. *Justice or fairness*: Orientation to *relations* of liberty, equality, reciprocity, and contract between persons.
4. *Ideal-self*: Orientation to an image of actor as a *good self*, or as someone with conscience, and to the self's motives or virtue (relatively independent of approval from others).

In defining the distinctively moral, some writers stress the concept of rule and respect for rules (Kant, Durkheim, Piaget). Others identify morality with a consideration of welfare consequences to

others (Mill, Dewey). Still others identify morality with an idealized moral self (Bradley, Royce, Baldwin). Finally, some (Rawls, and myself) identify morality with justice. In fact, individual persons may use any one or all of these moral orientations. As an example, we have the following orientations to the property issue at Stage 3:

Why shouldn't you steal from a store, anyway?

1. *Normative order:* It's always wrong to steal. If you start breaking rules of stealing, everything would go to pieces.
2. *Utilitarian:* You're hurting other people. The storeowner has a family to support.
3. *Justice:* The storeowner worked hard for the money and you didn't. Why should you have it?
4. *Ideal-self:* A person who isn't honest isn't worth much. Stealing and cheating are both the same, they are both dishonesty.

While all orientations may be used by an individual, my colleagues and I claim that the most essential structure of morality is a justice structure. Moral situations are ones of conflict of perspectives or interest; justice principles are concepts for resolving these conflicts, for giving each his or her due. In one sense, justice can refer to all four orientations. Sustaining law and order may be seen as justice (normative order), and maximizing the welfare of the group may be seen as justice (utility consequences). In the end, however, the core of justice is the *distribution of rights and duties regulated by concepts of equality and reciprocity*. Justice recognized as a "balance" or equilibrium corresponds to the structural moving equilibrium described by Piaget on logic (1967). Justice is the normative logic, the equilibrium, of social actions and relations.

A person's sense of justice is what is most distinctively and fundamentally moral. One can act morally and question all rules, one may act morally and question the greater good, but one cannot act morally and question the need for justice.

What are the actual developmental findings regarding the four moral orientations? And do they support our theory's assertion of the primacy of justice? A partial answer comes from our longitudinal data. For this purpose, we group the normative order and utilitarian orientations as interpenetrating to form Type A at each stage. Type B focuses on the interpenetration of the justice orientation with an ideal-self orientation. Type A makes judgments more

descriptively and predictively, in terms of the given "out there." Type B makes judgments more prescriptively, in terms of what ought to be, of what is internally accepted by the self. A Type B orientation presupposes both awareness of rules and a judgment of their fairness.

Our longitudinal data indeed support the notion that the two types are relatively clear substages. The B substage is more mature than the A substage in the sense that a 3A may move to 3B, but a 3B can never move to 3A (though he or she may move to 4A). Individuals can skip the B substage, that is, move from 3A to 4A; but if they change substage, it is always from A to B. In a sense, then, the B substage is a consolidation or equilibration of the social perspective first elaborated at the A substage. B's are more balanced in perspective. A 3A decides in terms of What does a good husband do? What does a wife expect? A 3B decides in terms of What does a husband who is a partner in a good mutual relationship do? What does each spouse expect of the other? Both sides of the equation are balanced; this is fairness. At 4A, the subject decides in terms of the questions What does the system demand? At 4B the subject asks, What does the individual in the system demand as well as the system, and what is a solution that strikes a balance? Thus, a 4B upholds a system, but it is a "democratic" system with individual rights.

Because of this balance, B's are more prescriptive or internal, centering more on their judgments of what ought to be. They are also more universalistic, that is, more willing to carry the boundaries of value categories, like the value of life, to their logical conclusion. As an example, a Stage 3 subject responded to Heinz's drug-stealing dilemma by giving a standard A response, "A good husband would love his wife enough to do it." Asked whether a friend would steal a drug for a friend, he said, "No, a friend isn't that close that he has to risk stealing." He then added, "But when I think about it, that doesn't seem fair, his friend has just as much right to live as his wife."

Here we see a tendency, based on an orientation to justice, to universalize obligation to life and to distinguish it from role stereotypes. In summary, the full development and consolidation of moral judgment at each stage is defined by the categories and structures of justice, although stage development occurs in all four moral orientations. (See Appendix C for a more recent formulation of Type A and B.)

Methodology in Assessing Moral Judgment Development

The Aspect-Scoring System

In our original formulation (Kohlberg, 1958, 1969), the moral stages were defined in terms of twenty-five "aspects," grouped, in turn, under the following major sets: rules, conscience, welfare of others, self's welfare, sense of duty, role-taking, punitive justice, positive justice, and motives. Each higher stage had a more internalized and autonomous idea of moral rules, a greater concern about the welfare of others, a broader conception of fairness, and so on.

Our first attempt to identify an individual's moral stage from his interview protocol used "aspect scoring." This was done with two methods: sentence scoring and story rating. Sentence scoring used a manual that listed prototypical sentences, on each aspect in each moral dilemma. Every statement of a subject was scored by aspect and stage; and these statements were then converted into percentages, generating a profile of stage usage for each subject.

The second method of aspect scoring was story rating. Here the subject's total response to a story was assigned a stage on each aspect in terms of that stage's overall definition. Stage mixtures were handled by intuitively weighting a dominant and a minor stage of response. An example of a story-rating manual illustrating Stage 1 reasoning on seven aspects is presented in Table 2.2, which refers to the classic example of Heinz's dilemma:

In Europe, a woman was near death from a rare form of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her, a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The druggist was charging \$2,000, ten times what the drug cost him to make. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about half of what [the drug] cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said no. So Heinz got desperate and broke into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.

Q— Should the husband have done that? Why?

To illustrate the aspect-scoring procedure, we present an interview on the dilemma about Heinz and his dying wife, broken down into three statements and scored as Stage 1 by reference to Table 2.2.

Table 2.2. Aspect Scoring: Story Rating Manual with Prototypical Stage 1 Statements on Drug-Stealing Dilemma

Stage 1

1. *Rules:* Thinks Heinz should not steal the drug, since it is bad to steal, whatever the motive; it's against external law and is a violation of the superior power of the police.
2. *Conscience:* Concern about the wrongness of stealing is in terms of fear of punishment.
3. *Altruism:* Thinks about his own welfare, not that of other people, like his wife.
4. *Duty:* Duty is only what he has to do, a husband doesn't have to steal for his wife.
5. *Self-interest:* Yields to power and punishment where rational self-interest would say to stick up for himself or to try to get away with it.
6. *Role Taking:* Since Stage 1 doesn't see things from other people's point of view, and doesn't expect them to see things from his, he expects punishment for stealing, no matter why he did what he did.
7. *Justice:* Justice in punishment is simply retribution for committing a crime, for breaking the law.

Statement 1

Q.—Should Heinz have done that?

A.— He shouldn't do it.

Q.— Why?

A.— Because then he'd be a thief if they caught him and put him in jail.

In terms of Table 2.2, this statement reveals the following Stage 1 moral conceptions:

1. *Rules:* It's bad to steal or break rules whatever the reason, "he'd be a thief," it's a violation of law and police.
2. *Conscience:* It's wrong because it leads to punishment.

Statement 2

Q.—Is it a husband's duty to steal?

A.—I don't think so.

This statement indicates the following Stage 1 thinking:

3. *Altruism*: Doesn't focus on the welfare of the others, such as one's wife.
4. *Duty*: Obligation is limited to what one has to do because of superior power, not obligation to other people as such.

Statement 3

Q.—If you were dying of cancer but were strong enough, would you steal the drug to save your own life?

A.—No, because even if you did have time to take the drug, the police would put you in jail and you would die there anyway.

This statement indicates the following:

5. *Self-interest*: In thinking about his own welfare, he is not rational and does not stand up for himself or try to get away with a violation where it would be sensible to, because he believes he cannot escape the power and punishment system.

The limits of aspect scoring.

In a sense, aspect scoring by story is still the easiest introduction to the stages, and yields sufficient interjudge agreement (.89). This method turned out, however, to contain too much extraneous content to yield a measure or classification meeting the invariant sequence postulate of stage theory. This failure appeared in our original analysis of twelve-year longitudinal data gathered every three years on fifty males aged 10 to 26 (Kohlberg and Kramer, 1969; Kramer, 1968). The most outstanding inversion of sequence was an apparent shift from a Stage 4 society orientation to a Stage 2 relativistic hedonism in some subjects who became "liberated" and "relativized" in their college years. Based on the fact that these subjects eventually moved on to Stage 5 principled thinking, we eventually concluded that this relativistic egoism was a transitional phase, a "Stage 4½"—a no-man's-land between rejection of conventional morality and the formulation of nonconventional or universal moral principles. The social perspective of Stage 4½ was clearly different from that of naive Stage 2. The Stage 4½ questioned society and viewed himself and the rules from an "outside-of-society" perspective, whereas the Stage 2 saw things as a concrete individual relating to other individuals through concrete reciprocity, exchange, and utilities (see Chapter 6; Turiel, 1977).

A second inversion of sequence was found in a small proportion of individuals who "regressed" from Stage 4 to Stage 3, or skipped from Stage 3 to Stage 5. These inversions, in turn, could be seen as due to an inadequate definition of Stage 4, a definition which equated "law-and-order" ideas (content) with taking a social system perspective (stage structure). As a result, we redefined as Stage 3 (rather than Stage 4) any law-and-order thinking which did not display a social system perspective (for example, an Archie Bunker concept of law and order).

These changes in conceptions of the stages reflected a growing clarity in the distinction between structure and content which led us to abandon aspect scoring. Our aspect scoring was based not on "structure," but on certain statistical or probabilistic associations between structure and content. For example, a social system perspective tends to yield moral judgments whose content is law and order. One can, however, have much of this content at Stage 3 without the social system perspective, or one can have the social system perspective without this content. Accordingly, we decided to generate a new, more structural scoring method, which we call issue scoring.

Intuitive Issue Scoring

In order to develop a more structural scoring system, the first step was to standardize or analyze types of content used at every stage. These types of content, called issues or values, represent *what* the individual is valuing, judging, or appealing to rather than his *mode of reasoning* about that issue. To analyze stage differences, we must first make sure each stage is reasoning about or from the same values. We had attempted to do this with the aspects, but they were a mixture of formal or structural characteristics of judgment (for example, motives versus consequences and sense of duty) and direct issues or value content (for example, law and rules). Accordingly, we developed the following list of issues, values, or moral institutions found in every society and culture:

1. Laws and rules
2. Conscience
3. Personal roles of affection
4. Authority
5. Civil rights

6. Contract, trust, and justice in exchange
7. Punishment and justice
8. The value of life
9. Property rights and values
10. Truth
11. Sex and sexual love

The new content issues each embody several different moral aspects. For example, thinking about the issue of contract and trust involves formal aspects of altruism, duty, rules, role-taking, fairness, and so on.

Our classification of content in terms of issues also gave rise to a new unit to be rated. This unit is all the ideas a person uses concerning an issue in a story. The old system had rated each separate idea separately (sentence scoring) or else rated the story as a whole (story rating). But the sentence unit had proven too small for structural classification, and the story unit had proven too large for analytic, as opposed to ideal, typological scoring.

Having decided on issues, we then defined stage thinking on each issue. An example is the conception of life issue as worked out for Heinz's dilemma about stealing the drug (Table 2.3). To illustrate the use of this issue in scoring, here are excerpts from an interview with Tommy, a 10-year-old boy who spontaneously focuses on the life issue.

His wife was sick and if she didn't get the drug quickly, she might die. Maybe his wife is an important person and runs a store and the man buys stuff for her and can't get it any other place. The police would blame the owner that he didn't save the wife.

Q.—Does it matter whether the wife is important or not?

A.—If someone important is in a plane and is allergic to heights and the stewardess won't give him medicine because she's only got enough for

Table 2.3. Issue Scoring Stages in Heinz's Dilemma

| Stage | What is life's value in the situation? | Why is life valuable? |
|---------|--|---|
| Stage 1 | Wife's life has no clear value here to husband or others when it conflicts with law and property. Does not see that husband would value his wife's life over stealing. | Does not give a reason and does not indicate understanding that life is worth more than property. |

Table 2.3—Continued

| Stage | What is life's value in the situation? | Why is life valuable? |
|---------|--|--|
| Stage 2 | It is its immediate value to the husband and to the wife, herself. Assumes the husband would think his wife's life is worth stealing for, but he isn't obligated to if he doesn't like her enough. Life's value to a person other than its possessor depends on relationship; you wouldn't steal to save the life of a mere friend or acquaintance. | Each person wants to live more than anything else. You can replace property, not life. |
| Stage 3 | Life's value is its value to any good, caring, person like the husband. The husband should care enough to risk stealing (even if he does not steal), and a friend should care enough to save the life of a friend or another person. | People should care for other people and their lives. You're not good or human if you don't. People have much more feeling for life than for anything material. |
| Stage 4 | Even though he may think it wrong to steal, he understands the general value or <i>sacredness</i> of human life or the rule to preserve life. Sacredness means all other values can't be compared with the value of life. The value of life is general; human life is valuable no matter what your relationship to the person is, though this doesn't obligate you to steal. | Life is valuable because God created it and made it sacred. Or life is valuable because it is basic to society; it is a basic right of people. |
| Stage 5 | One recognizes that in this situation the wife's <i>right to life</i> comes before the druggist's right to property. There is some obligation to steal for anyone dying; everyone has a right to live and to be saved. | Everyone or society logically and morally must place each person's individual right to life before other rights such as the right to property. |

one and she's got a sick friend in the back, they should put the stewardess in a lady's jail because she didn't help the important one.

- Q.—Is it better to save the life of one important person or a lot of unimportant people?
 A.—All the people that aren't important, because one man just has one house, maybe a lot of furniture, but a whole bunch of people have an awful lot of furniture and some of these poor people might have a lot of money and it doesn't look it.

Is Tommy's response Stage 1, Stage 2, or Stage 3 in terms of Why is life valuable? Tommy does not seem to fit Stage 1 in Table 2.3, since his response indicates that the wife's life does have a value justifying stealing. His response is Stage 1, however, because Tommy does not clearly recognize that life is more valuable to an individual than property. He says the lives of a lot of people who aren't important are worth more than the life of one important person because all the ordinary people together have more furniture or property. This is Stage 1 thinking, not Stage 2, because the value of life depends on a vague status of being important, not on the husband's or wife's interests or needs.

Standardized Issue Scoring

The procedure just discussed is called *intuitive issue scoring* and is theoretically the most valid method of scoring, since it is instrument free, that is, applicable to any moral dilemma. It is adequately reliable (90 percent interrater agreement) in the hands of thoroughly trained or experienced scorers. Reliable intuitive scoring, however, cannot be learned without personal teaching and supervised experience. It also is too intuitive to provide satisfactory test-construction characteristics of item difficulty, item independence, written versus oral interviews, and so on. We are therefore now developing a manual for standardized issue scoring (Colby and Kohlberg, 1984, in press). This manual is based on a standardized interview which probes only two issues on each of three stories. The standard form, Form A, contains three stories covering six issues as follows:

Story III: Heinz steals the drug

Issues: life, property

Story III: the judge must decide whether to punish Heinz

Issues: conscience, punishment

Story I: the father breaks a promise to his son

Issues: contract, authority

There is a second form for retest purposes, Form B, with different stories covering the same issues.

The manual for standardized issue scoring presents criterion judgments defining each stage on each issue for each story. A *criterion judgment* is the reasoning pattern that is most distinctive of a given stage. Theoretically, such reasoning follows from the structural definition of the stage. Empirically, the criterion judgment is actually used by a substantial number of subjects at that stage (as defined by their global score) and not at other stages.

In the old sentence-scoring interview, sentences were matched to "prototypical" sentences of each stage in a manual. In some sense the new system returns to this procedure, but with controls. The first control is for the presence of the response in terms of the content or issue of response. The new system eliminates the problem of whether a criterion judgment at a given stage is not expressed because the subject does not have a stage structure for that concept, or whether it is not expressed because the content (or issue) of response has not been elicited by the interview. The second control distinguishes between matching to a verbal sentence and matching to a criterion judgment. On the unit-of-response side, this implies that the unit of interpretation is bigger than the sentence. It also implies that the stage structure of the criterion judgment is clarified or distinguished from particular examples or exemplars.

The methodology of establishing standardized scoring is like Loevinger's methodology (Loevinger and Wessler, 1970) for scoring ego stage, in that criterion items are defined by reference to their use by individuals who have been intuitively staged. The difference, however, is that the criterion judgments are not the result of sheer empirical item analysis; rather, they must logically fit the theoretical stage description.

In my opinion, this standardized scoring system goes as far toward standardization as is possible while maintaining theoretical validity. We define "validity" as true measurement of development, that is, of longitudinal invariant sequence. A more common notion of test validation is prediction from a test to some criterion external to the test of which the test is presumed to be an indicator. Using the latter notion, some people assume that a moral judgment test should be validated by predicting "moral behavior." In this sense, Hartshorne and May's tests (1928-30) of "moral knowledge" fail to be valid, since they do not predict well to morally conforming behavior in ratings or experiments. We have argued that moral stage

development predicts maturity of moral behavior better than Hartshorne and May's measures; but we have also argued that moral behavior is not a proper external criterion for "validating" a moral judgment test. From the point of view of cognitive-developmental theory, the relationship of the development of judgment to action is something to be studied and theoretically conceptualized; the issue is not one of "validating" a judgment test by a quantitative correlation with behavior.

Using the concept of external criterion validation, others have thought that a test of moral development should be validated by its relationship to *age*, a key meaning of the term *development*. While our measure of moral judgment maturity does correlate with chronological age in adolescents aged 10 to 18 ($r = +.71$), such a correlation is not "validating." Many adults are morally immature, so that a test which maximized correlation with age would ecologically relate to age but have little relation to *moral development*. The validity criterion of moral judgment development is construct validity, not prediction to an external criterion. *Construct validity* here means the fit of data obtained by means of the test to primary components of its theoretical definition. The primary theoretical definition of structural moral development is that of an organization passing through invariant sequential stages. The structural stage method meets this criterion in that longitudinal data so rated display invariant steplike change. The criterion for validity for our new standard moral-reasoning test is congruence with, or prediction to, structural scoring.

The construct validity of a moral development measure has a philosophical or ethical dimension as well as a psychological dimension, that is, the requirement that a higher moral stage be a philosophically more adequate way of reasoning about moral dilemmas than a lower stage. This is a judgment about ways of thinking, not a grading of the moral worth of the individual. I claim (Kohlberg, 1971b) that each higher stage of reasoning is a more adequate way of resolving moral problems judged by moral-philosophic criteria. This claim is, again, made for structural scoring stages; a "standardized" test may be said to be valid insofar as it correlates with, or predicts to, structural stage.

An alternative approach to a standardizing measurement of moral development is set forth in Rest's presentation of his Defining-Issues Test (1976). Rest relies primarily on the more usual approach to empirical test construction and validation. Test con-

struction is by empirical item analysis. The test is conceived as assessing a continuous variable of moral maturity rather than discrete qualitative stages. Test validation is primarily defined by correlations with various criteria, such as age, having studied moral philosophy, and so on. Rest, like my colleagues and myself, is interested in construct validity, not simply prediction to an external criterion. His conception of construct validity, however, is the notion of moderate-to-high correlations with other tests or variables expected to be associated with the test or variable in question. Instead, our conception of construct validity implies assignment of individuals to stages in such a way that the criterion of sequential movement is met. In our opinion, Rest's approach does provide a rough estimate of an individual's moral maturity level, as suggested by his reported correlation of .68 between his measure and an issue scoring of moral dilemma interviews.

We believe Rest's method is useful for exploratory examination of the correlates of moral maturity, but not for testing theoretical propositions derived from the cognitive-developmental theory of moral stages. Choice of various methods, then, must weigh facility of data gathering and analysis against relatively error-free tests of structural theory.

In What Sense Are the Stages "True"?

In claiming that our stages are "true," we mean, first, that stage definitions are rigidly constrained by the empirical criterion of the stage concept: Many possible stages may be conceptualized, but only one set of stages can be manifested as a longitudinal invariant sequence. The claim we make is that anyone who interviewed children about moral dilemmas and who followed them longitudinally in time would come to our six stages and no others. A second empirical criterion is that of the "structured whole," that is, individuals should be consistently at a stage unless they are in transition to the next stage (when they are considered in mixed stages). The fact that almost all individuals manifest more than 50 percent of responses at a single stage with the rest at adjacent stages supports this criterion.

Second, in claiming that the stages are "true," we mean that the conceptual structure of the stage is not contingent on a specific psychological theory. They are, rather, matters of adequate logical analysis. By this we mean the following:

1. The ideas used to define the stages are the subjects', not ours. The logical connections among ideas define a given stage. The logical analysis of the connections in a child's thinking is itself theoretically neutral. It is not contingent on a psychological theory any more than is a philosopher's analysis of the logical connections in Aristotle's thinking.
2. The fact that a later stage includes and presupposes the prior stage is, again, a matter of logical analysis, not psychological theory.
3. The claim that a given child's ideas *cohere* in a stagelike way is a matter of logical analysis of internal connections between the various ideas held by the stage.

In short, the correctness of the stages as a description of moral development is a matter of empirical observation and of the analysis of the logical connections in children's ideas, not a matter of social science theory.

Although *the stages themselves are not a theory*, as descriptions of moral development they do have definite and radical implications for a social science *theory of moralization*. Accordingly, we shall now (1) elaborate a cognitive-developmental theory of moralization which can explain the facts of sequential moral development and (2) contrast it with socialization theories of moralization.

Types of Moralization Theory: Cognitive-Developmental, Socialization, and Psychoanalytic Theories

A discussion of a cognitive-developmental moral theory immediately suggests the work of Piaget (1932). Piaget's concepts, however, may best be considered as only one example of the cognitive-developmental approach to morality represented in various ways by J. M. Baldwin (1906), Bull (1969), J. Dewey and J. H. Tufts (1932), Harvey, Hunt, and Schroeder (1961), Hobhouse (1906), Kohlberg (1964), McDougall (1908), and G. H. Mead (1934). The most obvious characteristic of cognitive-developmental theories is their use of some kind of stage concept, of some notion of age-linked sequential reorganizations in the development of moral attitudes. Other common assumptions of cognitive-developmental theories are as follows:

1. Moral development has a basic cognitive-structural or moral-judgmental component.

2. The basic motivation for morality is a generalized motivation for acceptance, competence, self-esteem, or self-realization, rather than for the meeting of biological needs and the reduction of anxiety or fear.
3. Major aspects of moral development are culturally universal, because all cultures have common sources of social interaction, role-taking, and social conflict which require moral integration.
4. Basic moral norms and principles are structures arising through experiences of social interaction rather than through internalization of rules that exist as external structures; moral stages are not defined by internalized rules but by structures of interaction between the self and others.
5. Environmental influences in moral development are defined by the general quality and extent of cognitive and social stimulation throughout the child's development, rather than by specific experiences with parents or experiences of discipline, punishment, and reward.

These assumptions contrast sharply with those of "socialization," or "social-learning," theories of morality. The work of Aronfreed (1968), Bandura and Walters (1959), Berkowitz (1964), Hoffman (1970), Miller and Swanson (1960), Sears, Rau, and Alpert (1965), and Whiting and Child (1953) may be included under this general rubric. The social-learning theories make the following assumptions:

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

Research based on classical Freudian theory can also be included

under the socialization rubric. While the classical Freudian psychoanalytic theory of moral development (Flugel, 1955) cannot be equated with social-learning theories of moralization, it shares with these theories the assumption that moralization is a process of internalization of cultural or parental norms. Further, while Freudian theory (like cognitive-developmental theory) postulates stages, these classical Freudian stages are libidinal-instinctual rather than moral, and morality (as expressed by the superego) is conceived as formed and fixed early in development through internalization of parental norms. As a result, systematic research based on Freudian moral theory has ignored stage components of moral development and has focused on "internalization" aspects of the theory (Kohlberg, 1963b).

A forthcoming book (Kohlberg and Candee, eds., in prep.) reports on forty studies which represent an accumulation of replicated findings firmly consistent with a cognitive-developmental theory of moralization and quite inexplicable from the view of socialization theories. The next section elaborates the cognitive-developmental view of how the social environment stimulates moral stage development.

How Does Cognitive-Developmental Theory Characterize Environmental Stimulation of Moral Development?

Moral development depends upon stimulation defined in cognitive-structural terms, but this stimulation must also be social, the kind that comes from social interaction and from moral decision making, moral dialogue, and moral interaction. "Pure cognitive" stimulation is a necessary background for moral development but does not directly engender moral development. As noted earlier, we have found that attainment of a moral stage requires cognitive development, but cognitive development will not directly lead to moral development. However, an absence of cognitive stimulation necessary for developing formal logical reasoning may be important in explaining ceilings on moral level. In a Turkish village, for example, full formal operational reasoning appeared to be extremely rare (if the Piagetian techniques for intellectual assessment can be considered usable in that setting). Accordingly, one would not expect that principled (Stage 5 or 6) moral reasoning, which requires formal thinking as a base, could develop in that cultural context.

Of more importance than factors related to stimulation of cognitive stage are factors of general social experience and stimulation, which we call *role-taking opportunities*. What differentiates social experience from interaction with things is the fact that social experience involves role-taking: taking the attitude of others, becoming aware of their thoughts and feelings, putting oneself in their place. When the emotional side of role-taking is stressed, it is typically termed *empathy* (or *sympathy*). The term *role-taking*, coined by G. H. Mead (1934), is preferable, however, because (1) it emphasizes the cognitive as well as the affective side, (2) it involves an organized structural relationship between self and others, (3) it emphasizes that the process involves understanding and relating to all the roles in the society of which one is a part, and (4) it emphasizes that role-taking goes on in *all* social interactions and communication situations, not merely in ones that arouse emotions of sympathy or empathy.

Although moral judgments entail role-taking—putting oneself in the place of the various people involved in a moral conflict—attainment of a given role-taking stage, as indicated earlier, is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for moral development. As an example, the role-taking advance necessary for Stage 2 moral reasoning is awareness that each person in a situation can or does consider the intention or point of view of every other individual in the situation. A child may attain this role-taking level and still hold the Stage 1 notion that right or justice is adherence to fixed rules which must be automatically followed. But if the child is to see rightness or justice as a balance or exchange between the interests of individual actors (Stage 2), he or she must have reached the requisite level of role-taking. Role-taking level, then, is a bridge between logical or cognitive level and moral level; it is one's level of social cognition.

In understanding the effects of social environment on moral development, then, we must consider that environment's provision of role-taking opportunities to the child. Variations in role-taking opportunities exist in terms of children's relation to their family, their peer group, their school, and their social status vis-à-vis the larger economic and political structure of the society.

With regard to the family, the disposition of parents to allow or encourage dialogue on value issues is one of the clearest determinants of moral stage advance in children (Holstein, 1968). Such an exchange of viewpoints and attitudes is part of what we term "role-taking opportunities." With regard to peer groups, children high in

peer participation are more advanced in moral stage than are those who are low. With regard to status in the larger society, socioeconomic status is correlated with moral development in various cultures (Kohlberg and Candee, eds., in prep.). This, we believe, is due to the fact that middle class children have more opportunity to take the point of view of the more distant, impersonal, and influential roles in society's basic institutions (law, economy, government, economics) than do lower class children. In general, the higher an individual child's participation in a social group or institution, the more opportunities that child has to take the social perspectives of others. From this point of view, extensive participation in any particular group is not essential to moral development but participation in some group is. Not only is participation necessary, but mutuality of role-taking is also necessary. If, for instance, adults do not consider the child's point of view, the child may not communicate or take the adult's point of view.

To illustrate environments at opposite extremes in role-taking opportunities, we may cite an American orphanage and an Israeli kibbutz. Of all environments we have studied, the American orphanage had children at the lowest level, Stages 1 and 2, even though adolescence (Thrower, in Kohlberg and Candee, eds., in prep.). Of all environments studied, an Israeli kibbutz had children at the highest level, with adolescents mainly at Stage 4 and with a considerable percentage at Stage 5 (Reimer, 1977). Both orphanage and kibbutz environments involved low interaction with parents, but they were dramatically different in other ways. The American orphanages not only lacked parental interaction but involved very little communication and role-taking between staff adults and children. Relations among the children themselves were fragmentary, with very little communication and no stimulation or supervision of peer interaction by the staff. That the deprivation of role-taking opportunities caused a retardation in role-taking as well as in moral judgment was suggested by the fact that the orphanage adolescents failed a role-taking task passed by almost all children of their chronological and mental age. In contrast, children in the kibbutz engaged in intense peer interaction supervised by a group leader who was concerned about bringing the young people into the kibbutz community as active dedicated participants. Discussing, reasoning, communicating feelings, and making group decisions were central everyday activities.

Obviously, the kibbutz differed as a moral environment from the

orphanage in other ways as well. Beyond provision of role-taking opportunities by groups and institutions, how do we define the *moral atmosphere* of a group or institution? We have said that the core of specifically moral component of moral judgment is a sense of justice. While role-taking defines the conflicting points of view taken in a moral situation, the "principles" for resolving conflicting points of view at each moral stage are principles of justice, of giving each his or her due. The core of the moral atmosphere of an institution or environment, then, is its justice structure, "the way in which social institutions distribute fundamental rights and duties and determine the division of advantages from social cooperation" (Rawls, 1971, p. 7).

It appears from our research that a group or institution tends to be perceived as being at a certain moral stage by its participants. Our empirical work on this has been primarily based on the perception by inmates of the atmospheres of various prisons in which they were incarcerated (Kohlberg, Hickey, and Scharf, 1972). Although for reasons of comprehension inmates cannot perceive an institution as being at a higher level than a stage above their own, they *can* perceive it as being at lower stages. Thus, Stage 3 inmates perceived one reformatory as Stage 1, another as Stage 2, and a third as Stage 3. An example of a Stage 3 prisoner's perception of staff in the Stage 3 institution is, "They are pretty nice and they show interest. I get the feeling that they care a little more than most people do." An example of a Stage 3 inmate's perception of staff as being Stage 2 in the Stage 2 institution is, "If a guy messes up in a certain way or doesn't brown-nose as much as he should, the counselor won't do a job for him. It's all favoritism. If you go out of your way for a guy, he will go out of his way for you."

Even more extreme perceptions of the subjects' world or institution as being low stage were shown in the orphanage study. With regard to parents, here is a 15-year-old boy's response:

Q.—Why should a promise be kept?

A.—They aren't. My mother called up and says, "I will be up in two weeks," then I don't see her for eight months. That really kills you, something like that.

On the moral judgment test this boy was beginning to show some Stage 3 concern about affection, promises, and so on; but his world was one in which such things meant nothing. This boy's mother is Stage 2, but the orphanage environment presents no

higher-stage moral world. While the nuns who direct this particular orphanage are personally conventionally moral, their moral ideology translates into a justice structure perceived as Stage 1 by this boy. He says:

It really breaks your heart to tell the truth because sometimes you get in trouble for it. I was playing and I swung a rock and hit a car. It was an accident, but I told the sister. I got punished for it.

Obviously, prisons and orphanages are exceptional in representing monolithic or homogeneous lower-stage environments. It is plausible in general, however, that the moral atmosphere of environments is more than the sum of the individual moral judgments and actions of its members. It is also plausible that participation in institutions that have the potential of being seen as at a higher stage than the child's own is a basic determinant of moral development.

A notion that a higher-stage environment stimulates moral development is an obvious extension of experimental findings by Turiel (1966) and Rest (1973) that adolescents tend to assimilate moral reasoning from the next stage above their own, while they reject reasoning below their own. The concept of exposure to a higher stage need not be limited to a stage of reasoning, however; it may also include exposures to moral action and to institutional arrangements. What the moral atmosphere studies we have quoted show is that individuals respond to a composite of moral reasoning, moral action, and institutionalized rules as a relatively unified whole in relation to their own moral stage.

Using the notion that creation of a higher-stage institutional atmosphere will lead to moral change, Hickey and Scharf (1980) and I developed a "just community" in a women's prison involving democratic self-government through community decisions as well as small-group moral discussion. This program led to an upward change in moral reasoning as well as to later changes in life-style and behavior.

In addition to the role-taking opportunities and the perceived moral level provided by an institution, a third factor stressed by cognitive-developmental theory is cognitive-moral conflict. Structural theory stresses that movement to the next stage occurs through reflective reorganization arising from sensed contradictions in one's current stage structure. Experiences of cognitive conflict can occur either through exposure to decision situations

that arouse internal contradictions in one's moral reasoning structure or through exposure to the moral reasoning of significant others which is discrepant in content or structure from one's own reasoning. This principle is central to the moral discussion program that we have implemented in schools (Blatt and Kohlberg, 1975; Colby 1972). While peer-group moral discussion of dilemmas leads to moral stage change through exposure to the next stage of reasoning, discussion without such exposure also leads to moral change. Colby (1972) found, for example, that a program of moral discussion led to some development of Stage 5 thinking on a posttest in a group of conventional level students who had shown no Stage 5 reasoning on the pretest.

Real-life situations and choices vary dramatically in their potential for moral-cognitive conflict of a personal nature. This conclusion comes from our longitudinal data on the movement of individuals from conventional to principled morality (see chapter 6). One factor that appears to have precipitated the beginning of this shift was the college moratorium experience of responsibility and independence from authority together with exposure to openly conflicting and relativistic values and standards. The conflict involved here was between the subject's own conventional morality and a world with potentials for action that did not fit conventional morality. Some of our other subjects changed in more dramatic moral situations which aroused conflict about the adequacy of conventional morality. One subject, for example, moved from conventional to principled thinking while serving as an officer in Vietnam, apparently because of awareness of the conflict between law-and-order "Army morality" and the more universal rights of the Vietnamese.

Moral Development and Ego Development

As we move from general characteristics of environments to the more individual life experiences that seem to promote moral change, a cognitive-developmental theory begins to seem limited and abstract. At this point, one begins to draw upon theories like Erikson's (1964), which present age-typical emotional experiences as they relate to a developing personality or self. It then becomes useful to look at the individual's ego level as well as his or her moral stage. In this sense, ego-development theories represent possible extensions of cognitive-developmental theory as it moves

into the study of individual lives and life histories. There is a broad unity to the development of social-perception and social values which deserves the name of "ego development." This unity is perhaps better conceived as a matter of levels than of structural stages, since the unity of ego levels is not that of logical or moral stage structures. The requirements for consistency in logic and morals are much tighter than those for consistency in personality, which is a psychological, not a logical, unity. Furthermore, there are relatively clear criteria of increased adequacy in logical and moral hierarchies, but not in ego levels.

Because moral stages have a tighter unitary structure, it would be a mistake to view them as simply reflections of broader ego levels. Writers such as Peck and Havighurst (1960) and Loevinger and Wessler (1970) have nevertheless treated moral development as part of general stages of ego or character development—indeed, as a bench mark for such development. If ego development is seen as the successive restructuring of the relationship between the self and standards, it is natural for ego-development theorists to use changes in the moral domain as bench marks. Similar restructurings are assumed to hold in the relations of the self to values in other areas, such as work achievement, sociability, art, politics, religion, and so on.

We hold, however, that there is a unity and consistency to moral structures, that the unique characteristics of moral structures are defined by formalistic moral philosophy, and that to treat moral development as simply a facet of ego (or of cognitive) development is to miss many of its special problems and features. We believe that

1. Cognitive development or structures are more general than, and are embodied in, both self or ego structures and in moral judgment.
2. Generalized ego structures (modes of perceiving self and social relations) are more general than, and are embodied in, moral structures.
3. Cognitive development is a necessary but not sufficient condition for ego development.
4. Certain features of ego development are a necessary but not sufficient condition for development of moral structures.
5. The higher the moral stage, the more distinct it is from the parallel ego stage.

While these propositions suggest a high correlation between measures of ego development and measures of moral development, such a correlation does not imply that moral development can be defined simply as a division or area of ego development. Moral structure distinct from ego structures can be found, however, only if moral stages are first defined in ways more specific than the ways used to characterize ego development. If this specification is not made in the initial definition of moral development, one is bound to find moral development to be simply an aspect of ego development, as Peck and Havighurst (1960) and Loevinger and Wessler (1970) have. Loevinger's inability to differentiate moral items from nonmoral items in her measure of ego development simply demonstrates that her criteria of moral development were not more specific than her general criteria of ego development.

In summary, a broad psychological cognitive-developmental theory of moralization is an ego-developmental theory. Furthermore, in understanding moral functioning, one must place the individual's moral stage within the broader context of his or her ego level. To see moral stages as simply reflections of ego level, however, is to lose the ability to theoretically define and empirically find order in the specifically moral domain of the human personality.