SOME PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS

IN THE

COGNITIVE-DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

TO MORALITY

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JOHN ALBERT CODD
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines some of the philosophical problems which underlie the cognitive-developmental approach to morality as it has been presented in the Piaget-Kohlberg theory. This theory of moralization is reviewed, synthesized and evaluated in order to demonstrate the substantial body of empirical research on which it is founded and to focus on some of the unresolved theoretical issues and methodological problems such as stage generality, motivation, decalage and cross-cultural validity.

The problem of explanation is discussed in relation to the appropriateness of alternative modes and it is concluded that, as cognitive-developmentalism is a theory of human action, it requires an explanatory paradigm which takes cognizance of (i) the agent's viewpoint and reasons for acting, (ii) a molar level of behavioural analysis, (iii) enabling conditions for choice, and (iv) cognitive processes of appraisal and judgment. The assumptions underlying the cognitive-developmental explanation of moral judgment are examined in relation to the proposed paradigm. It is contended that the concept of judgment, which is central to the theory, is not adequately defined and its logical status within the practical reasoning process is not explicated within the cognitive-developmental theory. The prescriptivism which is assumed by the theory does not explain the logical connection between reasons for action and the universalizable imperative; nor does it adequately account for discrepancies between judgment and action.

Kohlberg's approach to morality lies within the Kantian tradition but even within this context his theory entails a number of metaethical problems. In the present thesis, it is argued that the theory provides no adequate criteria for defining the moral domain and that its claim for formal universality of moral principles cannot be supported. Kohlberg's moral position is inconsistent and shifts between formal prescriptivism and a naturalistic claim for the place of justice as the supreme moral principle. The problem of justification for moral principles is evaded. By emphasizing

the cognitive aspects of moral judgment and the place of prescriptive principles at the highest stage, the theory neglects the affective and motivational features of morality and the influence of beliefs, habits and personal ideals on moral conduct. It is argued that Kohlberg's claim for the isomorphism of psychological and normative structure cannot be supported and his argument for the solution of the is/ought problem remains untenable.

Finally, Kohlberg's developmentalist ideology is discussed with special reference to educational implications. It is argued that there is a sufficiency fallacy in cognitive-developmentalism and that the theory is equivocal in its employment of the concepts of rationality and autonomy. An attempt is made to define these concepts in relation to development and education in order to illustrate the limitations of Kohlberg's concept of 'cognitive stimulation' and his advocacy of 'development' as an aim for education.

The importance of Kohlberg's theory is not disputed in this thesis but it is argued that he claims too much for it in relation to the philosophical problems which it entails and the relevance to moral education which it implies.

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The germination of this thesis occurred while I was attending the Annual Conference of The Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia in August, 1972. Professor R.S. Peters was present at that conference and his papers on freedom and moral education showed that he had given considerable attention to the work of Lawrence Kohlberg. He recognized the important contribution which this psychological theory had made to education, but he intimated a number of philosophical reservations.

As I was then employed as a practising educational psychologist as well as engaged in the study of educational philosophy, I became aware of the important relationship between these two disciplines and the need to ensure that psychological research and theory is built on sound philosophical foundations. The philosopher can enlighten the psychologist's view not by the answers he can provide but rather, by the questions which he asks. This thesis has not aimed at providing answers but it is hoped that the questions which have been raised will contribute to the understanding and application of Kohlberg's important work.

I hope that the finished product is worthy of the excellent guidance and learned support which I have received during the writing of it from Dr G.R. Bassett and Mr. A.W. Cooper. Not only has their time and attention been generously given, but their passion for the canons of reason has been infectious. Acknowledgement is due also to Dr. D.M. McAlpine who made some valuable comments on the initial proposal and to Professor C.G.N. Hill who has been a guiding influence in the background.

I wish to especially acknowledge the help of my wife, who has provided the sympathetic understanding and encouragement which enabled me to persevere with this demanding task.

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J.A. Codd
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CHAPTER 1

AN INTRODUCTION

The main stream of theoretical psychology up until the mid 1950's appears to have intentionally avoided the use of such words as "moral" and "morality." Indeed, it is only in the past decade that these words have appeared with growing frequency in the lists of contents of the most eminent psychological journals.[1]

The reason is partly historical. In establishing independence from the mother-discipline psychology needed a language of its own and the concept of morality was too deeply imbedded in the long tradition of Western Philosophy to acquire a new meaning within the aspiring science of psychology. Consequently, to even speak of the psychology of morality involved difficulties for both the psychologist and the philosopher. For the former it suggested a subject which was too clouded by subjective uncertainty to ever be studied by empirical methods: for the latter it suggested an ill-considered advocacy of some kind of naturalistic ethical position. However, the really great thinkers in modern social science (Durkheim, Weber, Freud, William James, George Herbert Mead) have recognized the fundamental place of morality in any study of human behaviour which claims to be comprehensive.

In the 1920's there was great interest, particularly amongst American psychologists, in the "psychology of moral conduct." However, the Character Education Enquiry (Hartshorne and May, 1928-30) appeared to demonstrate that most so-called moral behaviour is situation specific and not explained by underlying psychological traits. The subject fell into neglect although, in 1932, Piaget's work, "The Moral Judgment of the Child" was first published in English. The impact of this work was not felt for at least twenty years.

1. For recent comprehensive reviews of these studies see Hoffman, 1970; Wright, 1971; Graham, 1972; Hogan, 1973. Research in the cognitive-developmental field is reviewed in Chapter 2.

The revival of interest in moral psychology has been generated to a great extent by the work of Lawrence Kohlberg and his colleagues in a number of recent studies beginning with his own doctoral thesis in 1958.

At the very beginning of his work, Kohlberg makes the point that the central problem of developmental psychology is an answer to the question: "How does man become moral?" rather than the traditional question: "How does the child learn his culture?" (Kohlberg, 1958 p.1.). He claims that traditional approaches to morality have either (a) taken morality as being conformity to culture-bound norms (eg Durkheim or (b) equated conscience and morality with concepts such as "superego" or "unconscious guilt" (eg Freud).

Both of these approaches are denounced as inadequate and a conception of morality as <u>action based on moral judgment</u> is advanced.

> "An action, regardless of its consequences or its classification by the culture, is neither good nor bad unless it has been preceded by a judgment of right or wrong" (Kohlberg, 1958, p.5.)

A statement of this kind requires a changed view of the subject-matter of psychology. To use the terms of a psychologist writing about the complex and fundamental subject of motivation, it requires a change from a view of man as a PAWN to a view of him as an ORIGIN. (DeCharms, 1968, pp 272-74). The emphasis moves from what is <u>done to</u> the individual to what the individual <u>does</u>.

Such a change in emphasis now goes virtually unquestioned in the literature. The following statement, for example, is given as a definition of the subject-matter in a recent book on "The Psychology of Moral Behaviour" which makes the prior claim to being committed to the empirical approach.

> "Moral behaviour consists of all the various things people do in connection with moral rules."
> (Wright 1971, p. 15).

It is significant that nearly all the research covered in Wright's cogent and useful synthesis has been carried out since 1958, which is the year of Kohlberg's thesis. This is not to say that Kohlberg's influence is responsible for stimulating all recent research into moral behaviour, but it is to recognize that Kohlberg's work has coincided with a

very important and basic shift in the philosophical assumptions underlying the explanation of human behaviour in social science.

Extending on the work of Piaget (1932) Kohlberg has carried out extensive research into the development of moral judgment and has gradually built up, over a fifteen year period, an elaborate cognitive-developmental theory of morality which has produced an important approach to moral education. The essence of this theory is that there are culturally invariant sequences in the development of moral thinking which arise from the interaction between the child's conceptual scheme and the particular experiences with which he is confronted.

The cognitive-developmental approach to morality is now widely accepted by psychologists and educators, but there have always been expressions of reservation from the philosophers, particularly those who have a special interest in the field of education (eg Peters and Wilson). The philosophical problems which are involved in Kohlberg's theory of moral development, as with most psychological theories, are extremely complex and not easily defined. But they are problems which demand consideration and, even if ultimate solution is not possible, the theory gains in credibility if it is able to withstand critical analysis of its constituent concepts.

It can be fairly said that, in moving from empirical research findings concerning the nature of children's moral thinking to statements about the concept of morality (both in its formal and substantive aspects) and assertions about the aims, methods and content of moral education, the cognitive-developmentalists make a number of assumptions of a metaethical and epistemological kind which are largely unstated or, where they are discussed, the treatment of which is lacking in logical clarity or philosophical rigour.

Kohlberg has been accused of prescribing a morality. He makes use of an explanatory paradigm in which man is regarded as an agent of action, yet he seems to avoid dealing with some of the perennial problems of moral philosophy such as definition, justification, the logic of choice, weakness of will - even though his empirical findings have a direct bearing on these vexed questions.

If the discipline of moral philosophy and the practice of moral education are to be enriched by the research findings of developmental psychology, then it is important to expose ambiguities and examine unstated non-empirical assumptions.

It is the aim of this thesis to move some of the way along this difficult interdisciplinary path. It is recognized that the task of erecting a conceptual bridge between the psychology of morality and the philosophy of morality is not able to be achieved within the limits of the present thesis but it is intended to lay out some of the necessary building materials.

It is important at the outset to examine and review the Piaget-Kohlberg theory and provide a critical account of the research which has been carried out on its internal validity and the external correlates of moral maturity, which is the central dimension. Chapter 2, therefore, will comprise a synthesis of the research and theory which constitutes the cognitive-developmental approach to morality.

The purpose of Chapter 3 is to consider a problem which is of utmost importance to any scientific theory, namely, the problem of explanation. We can only begin to appreciate the validity and usefulness of any theory when we have some understanding of what it is setting out to explain and what kind of explanatory model it employs. It is argued that the cognitive-developmental theory is a theory of human action and such a theory rests on certain assumptions about man as a subject for science. An attempt will be made to explicate these assumptions.

The concept of judgment is one which entails many problems, yet it has a central place in theories of moral development. Philosophers have given considerable attention to the analysis of these problems, but psychologists have tended to employ the concept with some kind of operational definition, but with insufficient consideration of its logical status. In Chapter 4 of the present thesis an attempt will be made to examine the meaning of this concept within the cognitive-developmental framework.

The aim of Chapter 5 is to open up some of the problems of moral philosophy which are embedded in Kohlberg's theory.

It is not possible to consider these problems from all points of view, therefore, an attempt is made to examine the moral statements which Kohlberg makes and to analyse these within the contexts of the ethical theories to which he claims allegiance. Because his approach is essentially Kantian, most of the discussion will occur within a context of this moral tradition. It is recognized, however, that it would be possible to examine Kohlberg's moral position in relation to a number of other philosophical traditions.

Finally, in Chapter 6, Kohlberg's ideological perspective as a developmentalist is discussed, particularly as it relates to education. Kohlberg has claimed that "a cognitive-developmental psychological theory can be translated into a rational and viable progressive educational ideology" (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972, p. 450). This is an acknowledgment that there are unavoidable metaphysical assumptions about the nature of moral freedom and, ultimately, human existence itself, in any theory which asserts that some individuals are more morally mature than others and therefore are more autonomous and morally superior. Kohlberg doesn't evade this problem entirely, but his expressed understanding of it is both inconsistent and somewhat confused.

The present thesis does not set out to diminish the stature of a theory which has added more to our understanding of moral development than any other single contribution in the psychological literature. The aim is merely to expose some nerves with the hope that the relevance and value of the cognitive-developmental approach can be better understood.

CHAPTER 2

THE COGNITIVE-DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY OF MORALIZATION: A REVIEW

Traditional approaches to the psychology of morality have tended to emphasize the passive role of the individual either as a victim of internal unconscious forces or as a respondent to environmental conditions. In each case man is viewed as a pawn rather than as an origin (cf De Charms, 1968).

Wright (1971) summarises the three main passivist theoretical perspectives as follows (p. 43):

(1) "Social group theory sees moral man essentially as a conformist who complies with the expectations of others out of an imperative need to be accepted by them."

(2) "According to Freudian doctrine, moral man is pictured as a lonely and rather helpless ego struggling to satisfy the insistent demands of an amoral id without angering the watchful and punitive parents (who are now permanently installed within his own mind) in a real world that is, in the last analysis, totally indifferent to his welfare."

(3) "According to learning theory.....moral man is little more than a complex network of conditioned responses and learned habits."

He concludes that "these points of view fail to do justice to man as an originator of moral ideas and judgments." We could say that such points of view have been based on a concept of "conventional" morality (ie doing the done thing, or what one is told) rather than a concept of "rational" morality (ie one for which the individual sees that there are reasons which could be other than they are; and which evoke reflections, deliberation and justification). By emphasising the cognitive aspects (as opposed to the affective or behavioural ones) Piaget, from a Kantian position, has offered an alternative to the passivist perspectives on moral man.

Piaget has conceived of moral conduct as being determined by the cognitive processes of perceiving, judging, knowing and thinking. In the moral sphere this includes: knowledge of moral rules; understanding reasons which justify such rules; the capacity for deciding, in terms of general principles, what ought to be done. Such processes do not emerge suddenly in adult life but are the outcome of interaction between the individual and the environment such that

a developmental movement occurs from the simplest levels to the more complex through the influence of both maturing processes and experience on the growing mind.

This is the essence of what has become known as the cognitive-developmental theory of moral development and it has been extended in recent years by Lawrence Kohlberg. Its major limitation, from the empirical point of view, is the inadequate treatment given to elements of emotion and motivation in moral behaviour (cf Hoffman, 1970, p. 280). However, the great strength of the cognitive-developmental approach has been the conceptual and theoretical implications of placing emphasis on the individual's capacity for direct action on his environment so that he is both free to choose and responsible for such choice.

PIAGET'S THEORY

According to Piaget (1932) the essence of morality is found in the individual's understanding of and respect for the rules of the social order and his sense of justice in terms of concern for reciprocity and equality among individuals.

His cognitive-developmental approach involves the analysis of thought structures underlying the moral concepts of persons at different age levels in order to define a general direction of movement. These thought structures are called <u>cognitive stages</u>.

In Piaget's theory cognitive stages possess the following characteristics:

1. They imply that children of different ages possess <u>qualitatively</u> different ways of thinking or solving the same problems.
2. These different ways of thinking may be ordered in an <u>invariant</u> sequence.
3. Each successive cognitive stage is a hierarchical integration of what has gone before. Higher stages do not replace lower stages, but rather, reintegrate them.
4. Though the <u>rate</u> of cognitive development may vary from one individual to another, the stages will appear in the same <u>order</u> for all individuals and all cultures.

Piaget summarized his findings in terms of two moralities. The younger child, from 4 years to about 8 years has a

morality which Piaget called heteronomous (ie "subject to another's law"). At this level the child is subject to the law of adult authority and his respect for authority causes him to regard adult rules as sacred, unchangeable things. Wrongness is defined in terms of adult sanctions; acts that are wrong are the acts that adults punish. Duty is understood as obedience to authority. The younger child's intellectual limitations, in conjunction with his respect for authority, cause him to conceive of wrongdoing in highly literal, objective terms without regard to intentions. He believes that moral values are absolute and universal, and that justice is served by severe arbitrary punishment (immanent justice) rather than by restitution to the person wronged.

The second morality, which develops after 8 years, Piaget called autonomous (ie "subject to one's own law"). Transition to this level is assumed to develop out of peer-group interaction, with the growing awareness of the need for mutual respect or reciprocity, and intellectual development involving extension of view-points. At the autonomous level the rules of conduct are regarded as products of group agreement and as instruments of co-operative action. Moral conceptions become psychological rather than objective, relative rather than absolute, and subject to change by group consensus. Justice is a matter of reciprocal rights and obligations and is best served by repairing the harm that may have been done.

The progression from a heteronomous to an autonomous morality did not seem to Piaget to be dependent upon direct adult tuition. It results, rather, from the child's continuing spontaneous effort to comprehend within one system his total moral experiences. Four factors facilitate this process: maturation; experience; social transmission; equilibration. Central to Piaget's approach is the assumption that the scientific study of morality is primarily concerned with the study of verbally reported moral judgments and not behavioural phenomena such as resistance to temptation, conformity, or affective response to transgression (eg guilt arousal).

In his theory, Piaget emphasizes the importance of interaction with peers. Relations with parents are not as crucial (unlike psychoanalytic theory) except in the negative sense whereby authoritarian parents may stifle the emergence of co-operative morality. The emphasis is also more on the active role of the child in relation to his social environment rather than the impact of experiences upon the child (as in classical learning theory). Another emphasis is on the "cognitive" or "rational" aspects of morality rather than behavioural or emotional aspects. A recent researcher (Bull, 1969) has, indeed, strongly criticized Piaget for his neglect of the orectic elements in moral development and his tendency to ignore sociological or cultural influences. It has also been pointed out (Kohlberg, 1963b) that Piaget ignores the amoral or premoral stage occurring before the heteronomous stage. However, despite these limitations (and perhaps Piaget is more aware of what his theory excludes than is usually acknowledged from a study of his writings) the publication of "The Moral Judgment of the Child" marks the beginning of the cognitive-developmental approach to morality and is a major landmark in the history of psychology.

SUBSEQUENT RESEARCH ON PIAGET'S THEORY

There has been considerable research support for Piaget's basic claim that with increasing age the basis of judgment shifts from a consideration of consequences (moral realism) to a consideration of intentions. (Lerner, 1937; MacRae, 1954; Loughran, 1967; Kugelmass and Breznitz, 1967, 1968; Armsby, 1971; Gutkin, 1972; Buchanan and Thompson, 1973; Costanzo, et al, 1973; Schleifer and Douglas, 1973).

These subsequent studies have also provided modifications to Piaget's theory. MacRae (1954), for example, found that the notion of intentionality did not co-incide with the notion of what constitutes a "just punishment" as Piaget had claimed. The suggestion is that moral development may be less of a unitary process than Piaget had claimed and there may be several relatively independent dimensions of moral judgment which are all age-related. Armsby (1971) found that the age at which intentionality emerges can be affected by the stimulus

materials[1] and, by using revised story-pairs which more clearly contrast the purposive act with the accidental one, the number of younger children making intentionality judgments increases. Gutkin (1972) also studied the effects of varying the stimulus materials and showed that systematic story changes reveal a 4-stage developmental sequence whereby the relevance of intentions gradually replaces the relevance of consequences.[2] Costanzo et al (1973) suggested that consideration of intentions actually precedes the acquisition of role-taking skills rather than developing concurrently as Piaget had maintained. Another recent study (Schleifer and Douglas, 1973) has shown that training has direct effects on the emergence of intentionality.

Research by Johnson (1962) generally supported Piaget, but he criticized the latter's view that each stage involves a cognitive re-organization and that moral development should therefore be saltatory rather than gradual.

Piaget has in fact been most consistently criticized for placing too much stress on maturation in bringing about the transition from one stage of morality to the next with the result that he has tended to ignore social, cultural, emotional and intellectual influences and also various child-rearing practices and individual differences among children (cf Havighurst and Neugarten, 1955; Eysenck, 1960; Bronfenbrenner, 1962; Stouwie, 1972).

1. Another recent study (Chandler et al, 1973) using videotaped stimulus materials in comparison with the traditional verbal assessment procedures, indicates that intentionality judgments can be made by children at a much younger age than previous studies had revealed.

2. Breznitz and Kugelmass (1967) suggest a similar 4-stage refinement to Piaget's rather crude schema for the emergence of intentionality.

Carlson (1973) tested the emergence of moral realism and the concept of justice in Lao children and found cultural differences suggesting that the development of subjective judgment and justice reflect different causal factors than theorized by Piaget.

Writing convincingly in defence of Piaget against these criticisms and asserting that they have been mostly based on a misunderstanding of his theory, Lickona (1969, pp. 341-42) states:

> "Sociocultural differences would contradict Piaget's central assumptions only if they demonstrated variation in the sequence of judgmental orientations - if they showed, for example, that in some culture or class children first considered extenuating circumstances in evaluating acts and later ignored them, or that they first defined duty in terms of mutual respect among equals and later equated it with obedience to the rules imposed by authority. Departures of this nature from the Piaget pattern have not been reported, and are difficult even to conceive."

A number of experiments which have been interpreted as casting doubt on the cognitive-developmental thesis were based on the hypothesis that children's moral judgments are readily modifiable by the manipulation of social learning variables.

Bandura and McDonald (1963) compared learning by direct reward with learning by imitation, using pairs of stories like those of Piaget. After initially determining the subjective or objective orientation[3] of each child an experimental group listened and watched while adults expressed judgments counter to their own original orientation. The orientations were then re-assessed to determine what changes had been produced. Observations of adults produced much more change than did direct reward but the shift in moral

3. For the children having an "objective conception" of morality, the younger children, the acts with more serious consequences were the "naughtier" ones. For the children having a "subjective conception" of morality, the older ones, the acts that were selfishly or maliciously motivated seemed the "naughtier" ones.

maturity suggests that adult models are more important in development than Piaget recognized. Social learning from peers has also been shown to be important and LeFurgy and Woloshin (1969) used adolescents as both subjects and models to produce shifts in maturity which were found to be still retained after 3 months. (cf Bronfenbrenner, 1967; 1970a; 1970b; Beloff and Temperley, 1972). These studies do imply that transition between stages is more amenable to environmental influences than Piaget had claimed and, although it has been suggested that the social learning experiments only demonstrated how to produce conformity in children (Lickona, 1969, p.344), some experiments (Crowley, 1968; Jensen and Larm, 1970; Prentice, 1972) have shown that training and the influence of models can make a child more mature. Furthermore, the superiority of the trained subjects in stating verbal explanations for their choices indicated that they understood the concept and were not simply making an isolated social response.

The social learning experiment of Bandura and MacDonald was replicated by Cowan et al (1969) who claimed that modeling influences produce generalized and enduring changes in moral judgments and thus calls into question the assumptions both that the stages occur in an invariant and irreversible sequence and that movement through the stages involves a process of successive synthesis. However, in a further statement, Bandura (1969) defends Piaget's theory and maintains that it is fully compatible with social learning theory.

> "Contrary to statements by Cowan et al, a social learning approach does not assume that modeling outcomes are unaffected by the developmental status and other characteristics of observers" (Bandura, 1969, p.277).

The major contribution of these experiments has been to show that moral judgments are more variable both within and between individuals and more modifiable by social relationships other than the peer-group (eg parents, extrafamilial adults, models presented in symbolic forms) than Piaget's theory would lead one to expect.

However, for Piaget, the kind of interaction most important for the transition from an immature "morality of constraint" to one of "co-operation" is that which occurs as a result of the child's growing need for communication

with and reference to his social peers. This emphasis has been supported by recent socio-psychological studies of adolescence such as Douvan and Adelson (1966) who state:

> "....the peer group is itself a moralizing, socializing agency. It sets standards, exercises a pattern of external control, and states expectations for self-control....given the adolescent's intense attachment to his peers, their expectations assume an extraordinary importance." (pp. 82-83).

In another study (Birnbaum, 1972) moral judgments were collected before and after the arousal of different types of anxiety and results emphasized the importance of the need for acceptance by peers in the development of a flexible independence from adult rule, and, in the converse, the importance of flexibility in bringing about peer acceptance in early adolescence.

The question of whether peers or parents are more important may be less significant, however, than whether moral maturation relates directly to the development of other cognitive modes such as decentration and logical operations. Some recent research has focussed on this issue.

Piaget's conception of intelligence is such that there should be a correspondence between moral reasoning and logical thinking. He spoke of the parallelism existing between moral and intellectual development (Piaget, 1932, p. 398, p. 411). The extension of viewpoints is fundamental to both areas and there is thought to be a direct relationship between the capacity to "see beyond" some striking aspect of an object to consider other relevant features (ie perceptual decentration) and the capacity to make reciprocal observances of behavioural norms at the co-operative and autonomous stage of moral thinking. Both kinds of reciprocity emerge when the intellectual and moral egocentrism of the young child gradually yields to the pressure of collective logical and moral laws through contact with the judgments and evaluations of others (Piaget, 1932, p. 411).

Research using traditional I.Q. tests has generally shown a positive correlation between intelligence and moral maturity (MacRae, 1954; Durkin, 1959; Boehm, 1962; Johnson, 1962). However, such findings lack validity because they have not been based on Piagetian measures of cognitive development.

Stuart (1967) hypothesized that it is decentration which enables children to move from subjective to objective causal judgments, and from objective to subjective moral judgments. His research showed that the ability to decenter, and particularly the ability to decenter social relations, is positively correlated with the ability to render mature moral and causal judgments.

Another investigation (Lee, 1971) which examined the concomitant development of cognitive and moral modes of thought (with social class, sibling position, and I.Q. held constant) provided very convincing support for Piaget's theory. A factor analytic method was used to isolate the cognitive components of (a) general cognition (b) concrete operations and (c) formal operations. It was found that: the concrete operations component best related to a decrease in authority type responses and concomitant increases in reciprocal modes of moral conceptualization; the formal operations mode of thought best predicts the increase of societal, idealistic moral modes of conceptualization; the reciprocal cognitive functions are positively related to reciprocity in the moral realm. The findings "clearly support Piaget's thesis of concomitant "growth" of the two modes of thought" (Lee, 1971, p. 141).

A recent study (Rubin and Schneider, 1973) has examined the relationship between moral judgment, egocentrism and altruistic behaviour. Both the cognitive measures of communicative egocentrism and moral judgment were positively correlated with the incidence of altruistic behaviour.

More equivocal findings are reported by Hardeman (1972) whose data did not completely support Piaget's hypothesis of a developmental parallelism in children's logical ability and their moral concepts. However, a significant relationship was found between moral reasoning and ability to structure the physical world in terms of the principle of conservation, which suggests that the ability to give structure of an operational kind to inanimate, visible objects may possibly be a pre-requisite to the ability to give a corresponding structure to moral situations.

There remains, then, a number of unresolved empirical questions which are still generating research and stimulating debate. The precise nature of the evolution of the concept of intentionality, the importance of modelling, the question of cultural invariance, the relative importance of parents or peers, and the correlation of moral modes with other cognitive modes are all unresolved issues in Piaget's cognitive-developmental theory of moralization. However, the continuing vigour with which these questions are being discussed is adequate testimony of the importance of Piaget's contribution to psychological theory in moral development.

OTHER STAGE-DEVELOPMENTAL THEORIES OF MORALITY

The basic notion of development with age in morality is not as new as one might think. William McDougall made the following statement as early as 1908:

> "the fundamental problem of social psychology is the moralization of the individual into the society into which he is born as an amoral and egoistic infant. There are successive stages, each of which must be traversed by every individual before he can attain the next higher: (1) the stage in which the operation of the instinctive impulses is modified by the influence of rewards and punishments, (2) the stage in which conduct is controlled in the main by anticipation of social praise or blame, (3) the highest stage in which conduct is regulated by an ideal that enables a man to act in the way that seems to him right regardless of the praise or blame of his immediate social environment."
> (McDougall, 1908, p.6).

In a recent review of the many theories of moral development William Kay (1968) suggests that there are at least six possible developmental models. These are:

(1) the cognitive model (cf Piaget and Kohlberg)

(2) the attitudinal model in which "moral growth is deemed to be a process of developing moral attitudes" (p. 220)[4]

4. This model is advocated by Kay (1968, pp. 236-245) because it suggests techniques which may help the child make greater progress towards moral maturity.

(3) the evolutionary model whereby each stage displaces the preceding one by providing greater adaptation.

(4) the ethical model which focuses attention on a series of emerging sanctions.

(5) the sociological model.

(6) the psycho-social model.

In elaborating on the ethical model (Ch. 5) Kay suggests that the "dominant" sanction changes through four separate stages: (a) the prudential stage where restraints are externally imposed.

(b) the authoritarian stage where there is unquestioning acceptance of the restrictions and demands imposed by authority.

(c) the social stage of control by group opinion where "an empathic morality emerges where moral conduct displays altruism and concern for people, without necessarily being based on reciprocity" (Kay, 1968, p. 128).

(d) the personal stage "when reasonable, personal moral principles control the individual's behaviour" (p. 128).

Bridging these last two stages moral control comes more and more under the influence of an "ego-ideal" or ideal self-image[5] which is not the same as full autonomy.

Another stage theory has recently been advanced by Bull (1969) who also emphasises sanctions but takes a slightly more sociological slant than Kay. The four stages elaborated by Bull are:

(a) The stage of <u>anomy</u> or premorality where pleasure and pain are the controlling factors.

(b) The stage of <u>heteronomy</u> or external morality, where rules are imposed by others, eg parents, teachers, police, religious precept.

(c) The stage of <u>socionomy</u> or external-internal morality dominated by greater responsiveness to social sanctions

5. This concept is developed much further by Kay in a later article (1972). It also has much in common with Strawson's (1966) notion of 'individual ideal.' (See Chapter 5).

of praise and blame combined with an increasing awareness of the responsibilities which one owes to other people and an increasing sensitivity to the opinions of other people.

(d) The stage of <u>autonomy</u> or internal morality where the individual sets his own standards. Autonomy comprises three types of freedom: (i) freedom from emotional constraints (ii) freedom to criticize conventions and the standards of others (iii) freedom to apply ones own standards or principles in action.

These stages defined by Bull are seen as successive developments with age and experience, each of which persists, with the succeeding stage coming in as an overlay on the persisting features of the prior stage.

When we examine the various stage-developmental theories which have been advanced the same general movement can be identified. Whichever aspect is emphasized there are three clearly differentiated stages which emerge (cf Kay, 1968 p. 139):

The amoral stage:	egocentric, hedonist and prudential considerations.
The premoral stage:	authoritarian, ego-idealist, social and reciprocal considerations.
The moral stage:	personal, autonomous, altruistic, rational, independent and responsible considerations.

However, the fact remains that each theory tends to view morality in a different way, giving varying weight to the dimensions of moral judgment, moral feelings or dispositions, and moral behaviour. There is an irresolvable problem in deciding what aspects of child development are going to count as relevant, and which irrelevant to moral development (cf Wilson, 1973, p. 110).

KOHLBERG'S MORAL STAGES

By taking the basic cognitive-developmental approach Kohlberg (1958, 1963, 1969) has modified and elaborated on Piaget's theory.

He used the Piagetian approach of confronting a child with stories that pose a moral dilemma. The stories are more complex, however, and require the respondent to answer on

the basis of his general theory of morality. Each story sets up an opposition between a legal rule or social norm and a human need, often invoking the notion of justice.

The following is a typical example (from Kohlberg, 1963a, 1969):

> "In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. He paid $200 for the radium and charged $2,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow money, but he could only get together about $1,000, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz got desperate and broke into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.
>
> Should Heinz have done that? Was it actually wrong or right? Why?"

The subjects used by Kohlberg in his original study were boys ranging from 10 to 16 years of age. The data were obtained from 2-hour interviews focused on 10 hypothetical moral dilemmas like the above example. Kohlberg's interest was not in the action alternatives selected by the subjects and presumably reflecting moral content, but in the reasons given for their choices and the quality of moral thinking thus represented.

From a detailed analysis of responses Kohlberg postulates 30 different general aspects of morality including: the value of human life; motives as a basis for judging conduct; the concept of rights; attitude to punishment. It is claimed that these aspects or dimensions develop through the six stages but a detailed account of the developmental sequence is given for only a few and McGeorge (1971) has pointed out that Kohlberg is most inconsistent in the number of aspects which he claims to be involved in the development of moral judgment, with numbers reported varying from 12 to 30.

Kohlberg proposes three levels of development each divided into two stages and giving the following scheme of

six developmental stages:

Level I Preconventional. At this level, the child is responsive to cultural rules and evaluative labels but views them in terms of pleasant or unpleasant consequences of action, or in terms of the physical power of those who impose the rules.

Stage 1: Obedience and punishment orientation. Egocentric deference to superior power or prestige, or a trouble-avoiding set. Objective responsibility.

Stage 2: Naively egoistic orientation. Right action is that instrumentally satisfying to the self's need and occasionally other's. Awareness of relativism of value to each actor's needs and perspective. Naive egalitarianism and orientation to exchange and reciprocity.

Level II Conventional Role Conformity. At this level the child is oriented towards actively maintaining the expectations of his family, peers etc. as a value in its own right, and with justifying these expectations as such.

Stage 3: Good-boy orientation. Orientation to approval and to pleasing and helping others. Conformity to stereotypical images of majority or natural role behaviour and judgment of intentions.

Stage 4: Authority and social-order-maintaining orientation. Orientation to "doing one's duty" and to showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order for its own sake. Regard for earned expectations of others.

Level III Self-accepted Moral Principles. The individual is concerned with defining moral values and principles apart from the supporting authority.

Stage 5: Contractual legalistic orientation. Recognition of an arbitrary element or starting point in rules or expectations for the sake of agreement. Duty defined in

terms of contract, general avoidance of violation of the will or rights of others, and majority will and welfare.

Stage 6: Conscience or principle orientation. Orientation not only to actually ordained social rules but to principles of choice involving appeal to logical universality and consistency. Orientation to conscience as a directing agent and to mutual respect and trust.

In a recent modification of the theory (Kohlberg and Turiel, 1971, p. 415) a seventh stage is included. This is called the premoral stage and precedes all the others. It is a stage at which the child neither understands rules nor judges good or bad in terms of rules and authority. Good is what is pleasant or exciting, bad is what is painful or fearful.

Scoring of the material has been gradually elaborated on by Kohlberg over the past 15 years and a complex system of "Issue Scoring" has been developed. Issues include social norms, personal conscience, institutions of Welfare and Justice and objects of value (eg life, property, truth, sex).

The complexity of the system can be shown by looking at just one of the issues in greater detail. For example, the issue of justice, which is a fundamental one in the system, is further analysed into (i) basic liberty (ii) equality and equity (iii) reciprocity, contract and trust. (Kohlberg and Turiel, 1971, pp. 432-433).

Each issue has a different quality at each stage of development. The issue of rule obedience, for example, takes the following forms in each of the 6 stages (Kohlberg, 1963a, p. 14):

Stage 1: Obey rules to avoid punishment.
Stage 2: Conform to obtain rewards, have favours returned etc.
Stage 3: Conform to avoid disapproval, dislike by others.
Stage 4: Conform to avoid censure by legitimate authorities and resultant guilt
Stage 5: Conform to maintain the respect of the impartial spectator judging in terms of community welfare.
Stage 6: Conform to avoid self-condemnation.

A child may be assessed in terms of a "global" score for moral maturity in which he is ascribed to a particular stage (and this is considered to be general across situations), or by means of a "profile" indicating the proportion of his responses which fall at each stage.

Kohlberg explains his stages as cognitive structures which determine responsibilities, duties and rights at different points in an age-related sequence of moral maturation. Judgment is assumed to prescribe action and the ability to function at any stage is regarded as resulting from a reorganization of experience which is only possible because of preceding organization at the previous stages, and represents the child's continuing efforts to make sense of his social and moral experience as a whole (Kohlberg, 1969).

This developmental conception of the psychology of morality has led to research which has been oriented to the following tasks (Kohlberg, 1963a, pp 11-12):

1. The empirical isolation of sequential stages in the development of moral thought.
2. The study of the relation of the development of moral thought to moral conduct and emotion.
3. The application of a stage analysis of moral judgment to subcultural differences as well as pathological deviance in moral orientations.
4. The isolation of the social forces and experiences required for the sequential development of moral orientations.

We can proceed to examine the research findings as they relate to (a) internal validity of the moral maturity dimension, and (b) external correlates.

RESEARCH ON THE INTERNAL VALIDITY OF THE MORAL STAGES

Evidence to show that his stages form a fixed sequence initially consisted of statistical analysis derived from "Guttman's quasi-simplex correlation matrix" (Kohlberg, 1963a, pp. 15-17). A matrix of intercorrelations between the six types of moral judgment met the expectation that "the more two types of thought are separated from one another in a developmental sequence, the lower should be the correlations between them."

Subsequent research has endeavoured to support the claim to sequential invariance by showing that an individual's existing mode of thought determines (a) which new concepts he can learn, (b) which types of justification he can comprehend, and (c) which type of judgment he prefers.

Turiel (1966) postulated that if the stages form an invariant sequence and if each new stage involves integration of the previous stages, then (a) more learning will result from exposure to the stage directly above one's level than to stages further above, and (b) more learning will result from exposure to the stage directly above than to the stage just below. He examined the effect of adult example on the moral thinking of children, and in his experiment adults consistently displayed a type of moral thought which was either one stage above, two stages above, or one stage below that of the subjects. The results showed that it is easier to lift children one stage than either to lower them a stage or raise them two stages.

Rest, Turiel and Kohlberg (1969) provided evidence that Kohlberg's stages comprise an order of difficulty of comprehension. Children and adolescents comprehend all stages up to their own, but not more than one above their own. This suggests that level of cognitive maturation is an important determinant of the child's moral thinking.

Rest (1973) hypothesized that subjects would express a preference for statements expressed at the highest level of moral maturity which they were able to comprehend. The postulation of hierarchical order of stages implies that the more advanced stages are more cognitively complex and therefore more difficult to comprehend. It is assumed also that they are more adequate ways of making moral judgments.[6]

6. This assumption is to be challenged in Chapter 5 of the present thesis. However, it is fundamental to the cognitive-developmental view.

Rest found that the "two factors - comprehension and preference - largely account for the developmental stage at which a subject is actually producing moral judgments and for the stage of judgment presented to him which he will assimilate." (p. 105). An important conclusion to be drawn from the study is that the stage at which a subject spontaneously produces moral judgments may be lower than the stage at which he comprehends them, and preference for statements will be at least as high as the level of comprehension and possibly even higher.

An assumption which has been common to the validation studies of Turiel (1966), Rest, Turiel and Kohlberg (1969) and Rest (1973) is that moral judgment level is general across situations. However, in his original study, Kohlberg appeared to guard against any challenge of the claim to stage generality by asserting that the stages define "ideal types" and not persons (Kohlberg, 1958, pp. 80-81). This important point, however, appears to have been over-looked in subsequent studies and Kohlberg himself in later writings refers to Stage 2 subjects and Stage 5 subjects as though individuals functioned in one mode across all situations and furthermore that the moral maturity scale was an infallible measure of that modal level.

Kohlberg and Kramer (1969) reported the first longitudinal validation study and generally they found that over time subjects naturally tend to change "upwards". It has also been shown (Turiel, 1969) that when change is induced it tends to be to the next highest stage. Blatt (1970) succeeded in facilitating moral development within the normal classroom setting. After pre-testing a group of twelve children who ranged in moral maturity from Stage 2 to Stage 4, they were subjected to a twelve-week programme of classroom discussions which centred on moral dilemmas different from those used in the pretest. The teacher supported and clarified the arguments which were one stage above the majority of the children, thus creating a cognitive dissonance which induced the child's moral orientation to a higher stage in order that the conflict be resolved. The results, after retesting, showed that the manipulation of "non-spontaneous" learning experiences can stimulate growth in moral development. Most of the movement which occurred was to one stage higher than

the initial dominant stage and thus supports the sequentiality of Kohlberg's theory of moral judgment.

Some research evidence has cast doubt on both the stage generality hypothesis and the sequential hierarchy claim of Kohlberg's theory. Kramer (1968) carried out a longitudinal study of changes in mode of moral judgment during late adolescence and young adulthood. Generally, he found that there is continued growth in moral maturity quotient during this age range but the evidence suggested that development in moral judgment is far from a simple straight line process and not all individual ontogenies conform to a unidirectional hierarchical developmental model (Kramer, 1968, p. 89). Sometimes regression occurs and this was found most commonly for subjects who first attained a Stage 5 modal level and then, with increasing age, moved back to a predominantly Stage 4 orientation (p. 83). There was also some regression from Stage 4 to Stage 3. There is a suggestion, then, that moral development in late adolescence is a matter of eliminating immature response patterns rather than restructuring higher stage thinking. Furthermore, some stages appear to be more an elaboration or maturation of earlier stages than a step-by-step hierarchy. Kramer points to the similarities between Stage 1 and Stage 4 which would make it possible for some individuals "to move out of Stage 1 without becoming modally Stage 2, and move directly to the conventional sanction orientation of Stage 4" (Kramer, 1968, p. 88). There is a similar movement likely between Stages 2 and 5 (p. 89) as both involve a tacit rejection of conventional morality and Stage 5 is a more sophisticated version of the Stage 2 orientation. It is also possible for a young adult who leaves College functioning at Stage 5 to regress to a Stage 2 orientation because of the social environment which he enters (p. 165).

Kramer's research points to non-developmental changes in moral judgment scores (retrogression, inter-stage correlation, non-sequential movement) which are not readily explained by the cognitive-developmental theory per se and he sees the need for further research into the manner in which social learning can effect the moral judgment profile (pp. 120-1).

Stages, in developmental theory, are described as structured wholes but empirical findings always show that when a particular stage or mode of thought is applied in actual situations and to specific contents there are inconsistencies and disjunctions which suggest that individuals operate concurrently at a number of different levels and that the modal stage does not cover conceptualization across all situations or contents. Piaget refers to this phenomenon as "decalage" (cf Flavell, 1963) to account for the observation that in the cognitive realm a child can conceptualize some issues at a higher level than others. This occurs because some concepts are more difficult than others and because the child's social experience is richer in some areas than in others. Consequently, although an individual may be classified at a given stage because he applies the structure of that stage to a given set of tasks, there will be other tasks at the same stage to which both higher and lower structures will be applied by the same individual. Kramer (1968, p. 8), claims that Kohlberg has not yet attended to the problem of horizontal decalages in moral development.

Turiel (1969) attempts to refute the claim that stage mixture is problematic for developmental theory. He states that:

> "....inability to pin-point one stage in a child should not be regarded as a contradiction to structural theory. Rather, we propose that mixture is in itself a necessary part of development through successive structures....Our position is that an adequate theory of development must include both the concept of discrete structures and the concept of mixture."
> (Turiel, 1969, p. 115)

In this way the difficult question of what motivates development through the stages is partly answered. Stage mixture enables the child to perceive the contradictions in his own thinking such that he will try to generate new and better solutions to moral problems in order to reduce the resultant cognitive dissonance.[7]

7. Not all the research supports this explanation of movement. Tracy and Cross (1973) studied antecedents of shift in moral judgment when subjects were exposed to reasoning at one stage above. They found that subjects at the preconventional level shifted upward more than subjects at the conventional level and that social desirability was associated with change while role-taking, intelligence, stage mixture and socioeconomic status were not.

However, the concept of moral maturity as advanced by Kohlberg and his colleagues, while allowing for the fact that a child may use more than one type of moral reasoning in discussing any one situation, rests on the two assumptions that (a) there will be a tendency to use one type more than any other, and (b) this generally predominant level of moral judgment is the same on all situations. The method of calculating Moral Maturity Score has allowed for vertical decalage with respect to the different aspects of morality but two recent studies have specifically examined differences in orientation from one type of situation to another.

McGeorge (1971) produced evidence to show that, for a group of 12 year old boys, mean Moral Maturity Scores differed significantly from story to story on the nine Kohlberg dilemma situations. He concludes that "a tension can be seen, in at least one major account of the cognitive-developmental view of moral judgment, between an insistence on the unitary nature of the child's thought and an insistence on the existence of genuine variation in level" (1971, p. 190). He refers to the "logical circularity" of Turiel's (1969) account of the mechanisms of development which attempts to explain stage mixture as both a cause and a consequence of upward movement (Turiel, 1969, p. 129 ff).

> "Why do people exhibit stage mixture? Because they are moving up through the sequence. Why do they move up through the sequence? Because of stage mixture." (McGeorge, 1971, p. 205).

Situational variations in moral judgment pose a major problem for the cognitive-developmentalist and in another recent study it has been shown that this phenomenon is even more significant when it is evidenced in concrete, personally experienced situations rather than the usual hypothetical moral dilemma stories. Butter and Seidenberg (1973) asked subjects to describe a recent, personally experienced moral conflict, the manner in which it was resolved, and the reasons for their decision. Responses were coded with the Kohlberg Moral Judgment Scale (1958) with the purpose of investigating the influence of specific conflict areas (social, sexual, religious, legal etc) on level of moral development. The results indicated that more mature moral thinking is utilized in resolving political and ideological

conflicts than honesty conflicts or social conflicts. It is suggested such variations cast doubt on the usefulness of grossly categorizing subjects as to their level of moral development. (This point is taken up again in Chapter 5 of the present thesis).

It is evident, then, that the claim of stage sequence, which is a foundation stone of cognitive-developmentalism, has been challenged by recent empirical findings. The existing theoretical model is not static, however, and further elaboration is both necessary and healthy.

Another basic claim in the Kohlberg scheme is that of sequential invariance and this, too, is considerably in need of empirical support. Cross-sectional studies (Kohlberg, 1969) using children of different ages as subjects have found that, on the average, older children are at higher stages of moral development than young children. However, one limitation of these studies is that they nearly all employed male subjects.

The cross-cultural claim has been widely made but appears to be based on a few studies which have been reported with almost monotonous regularity in all Kohlberg's recent writings. Reference is made to comparative data on middle-class urban boys in U.S.A., Taiwan, Mexico, Turkey and Yucatan, which is said to show that a similar sequence of development exists in all cultures, though the rate of development and the ultimate level attained varies from one cultural milieu to another. (Kohlberg, 1966b; Kohlberg, 1968a; Kohlberg, 1969; Kohlberg and Kramer, 1969; Turiel, 1969). However, it appears that the samples in each of these studies were small and a complete methodological report of the cross-cultural studies has not been published to date. Graham (1972, p. 237) comments that "it may seem questionable how far cross-cultural studies are likely to support the universality of stages based on one particular society." It is significant that Kohlberg has discovered little evidence of the emergence of the highest two stages of moral thought in preliterate or tribal communities and

Graham makes a very far-reaching speculation on the whole question of cultural invariance:

> "Since self-direction is a common Western value, this increasing cognitive capacity manifests itself in an increasing tendency to accept principles allowing and encouraging (up to a point) autonomy or internally oriented decisions, while in other societies, increasing cognitive capacity might mean the development of different kinds of principles. Certainly a great deal more cross-cultural evidence is needed." (Graham, 1972, p. 238).

In his most recent writings, Kohlberg has placed great emphasis on the cultural invariance claim, despite the shortcomings of its empirical support, because it relates directly to his rejection of ethical relativism.

> "In contrast to both extreme and sociological relativism, we have first pointed out that there are universal moral concepts, values, or principles, that there is less variation between individuals and cultures than has been usually maintained in the sense that (a) almost all individuals in all cultures use the same thirty basic moral categories, concepts, or principles; and (b) all individuals in all cultures go through the same order or sequences of gross stages of development, though varying in rate and terminal point of development."
> (Kohlberg, 1971b, p. 176).

While research continues in the area of testing the internal validity of the cognitive-developmental theory, another important group of studies has focussed on correlating the moral maturity dimension with other developmental and environmental variables. We now turn to a consideration of this group of research studies and the implications of the findings for the cognitive-developmental theory of morality.

RESEARCH ON EXTERNAL CORRELATES OF MORAL MATURITY

It has been well recognized by Kohlberg and his colleagues that development in the domain of moral thinking is not isolated and therefore it is important to the theory as a whole that attempts be made to establish the relationship between moral judgment maturity and other parameters such as intelligence, role-taking skills, behaviour, personality variables and environmental factors (eg parental practices and social class).

Intelligence

Psychometric assessment of global intelligence, as produced in the form of I.Q. measures, has proved to have little theoretical relationship to a cognitive-developmental dimension such as moral maturity. This appears to be as much the case with a complex scheme such as Kohlberg's as it has proved to be in research on Piaget's theory.

Kohlberg (1969, p. 391) states that correlations between group I.Q. tests and moral judgment level at age 12 range from .30 to .50 in various studies. A curvilinear relationship has been found, indicating that children below average in I.Q. are almost all below average in moral maturity, whereas children above average in I.Q. are equally likely to be low or high in moral maturity. Furthermore, Kramer (1968) has shown that moral judgment continues to develop until the age of about 25 years whereas intelligence (in the conventional sense) does not.[8]

This is not to say, however, that moral maturity does not have a cognitive base in Kohlberg's view. Indeed, he assumes the same kind of parallelism as was postulated by Piaget:

> "....our stage definitions assume that Piagetian concrete operations are necessary for conventional (Stage 3 and 4) morality and that formal operations are necessary for principled (Stage 5 and 6) morality" (Kohlberg, 1969, p. 391).

However, the further point is made that "cognitive maturity is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for moral judgment maturity." Such cognitive maturity, it is claimed, is not dependent on mere verbal facility and cannot be measured by standardized psychometric tests of intelligence which are designed primarily to make gross

8. One recent study (Simon and Ward, 1973) reports that intelligence level (measured on Raven's progressive matrices test) is a factor which is associated significantly with level of moral judgment, as reflected in score value on the Kohlberg questionnaire.

predictive distinctions. In a recently reported correlational study using a wide range of ability and aptitude tests, Arbuthnot (1973) provided support for Kohlberg's claim by showing that maturity of moral judgment was related to process or structural aspects of cognitive functioning, but not content.

There appears to be a fundamental dilemma couched within the dual claim that moral maturity is both parallel to other forms of cognitive development but at the same time independent from them. This dilemma arises because the only methods available for measuring moral maturity rely on cognitive and verbal capacities within the individual. (See Chapter 4). Validity is the problem. How does Kohlberg know what his Moral Judgment Scale is in fact measuring? This point is expressed well by Aronfreed:

> "It is distinctly possible that the changes in the principles which children apply to the evaluation of conduct are determined primarily by the increasing cognitive and verbal complexity which they can use to integrate their social experience, rather than by any shift in the substance of the values which are specific to conscience." (Aronfreed, 1968, p. 266).

Cognitive complexity may be reflected in higher level moral judgments rather than more fundamental shifts in moral orientation or value position. Koenig and Sulzer (1973) predicted that lower class school children would be less cognitively complex and consequently show less advanced moral judgment than would middle class children. Their findings verified this prediction; but surely it does not follow that lower class children are, therefore shown to be less moral than middle class children.

We can find an analogy for this problem in the area of linguistics. Children use grammatical structures long before they have any explicit knowledge of the grammar involved. However, this does not detract from the meaning which they express, and linguists would argue that the ability to analyse grammatical structures does not produce higher levels of thought or greater powers of verbal communication. (Chomsky, 1964).

In the sphere of morality it may well be that children can act in accordance with high level principles and for superior, intuitively held reasons, although they lack the capacity to verbally justify those principles and reasons

(cf Brown, 1965, pp. 406-7). The cognitive-developmental theory has not come to terms with this important question.

Role-taking skills

Role-taking has been defined by Flavell (1968) as the ability to understand the interaction between the self and another as seen through the other's eyes. It is concerned with the extension of viewpoints or the capacity to put oneself in another's position such that one can make inferences about another's capabilities, attributes, expectations, feelings, and potential reactions.

Selman (1971) studied a group of 8, 9, and 10 year old children in order to explore the relationship in middle childhood between role-taking ability and moral reasoning. He found that developing role-taking skills (as measured by tests developed by Flavell) was a necessary condition for moving to higher levels of moral judgment (as determined by the Kohlberg scale). Selman's results showed that the development of the ability to understand the reciprocal nature of interpersonal relations is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the development of conventional moral thought. It is possible to acquire role-taking reciprocity and still remain at a preconventional moral level.

These findings have been supported by Moir (1971) who found that "within Kohlberg's theoretical framework role-taking, at least in the minimal sense of simply achieving a non-egocentric viewpoint on social reality, is of particular significance during the emergence of Level two or Conventional morality" (p. 308). In his study, Moir used non-moral role-taking situations and was therefore able to show that moral judgment is closely related to cognitive structures which are not dependent on specific content. This point is also made by Koenig and Sulzer (1973) who produced findings to support the assumption that cognitive complexity (as measured by the Barren-Welsh Figure Preference Test) relates to the ability to take the role of the other and to moral judgment maturity.

The implication of these studies is in line with the central cognitive-developmental thesis that development in moral reasoning proceeds along the same path as other types of judgments in non-moral areas, suggesting the existence

of a common underlying psychological mechanism.

Behaviour

The philosophical problems inherent in the concept of judgment, especially as it relates to action, will be considered in a later chapter (Chapter 4). On empirical grounds, however, the relation between moral judgment and moral behaviour or, more generally, between moral knowledge and moral conduct is far from clear, despite its central significance for the cognitive-developmental approach.

Hartshorne and May (1928) found low positive correlations between level of moral knowledge and morality of conduct (about .34 on the average). Kohlberg (1964) related moral judgment level to the child's resistance to cheating and to the child's strength of conscience (as rated by teachers) and found correlations at about the same level as were reported by Hartshorne and May.

In his original study, Kohlberg suggested that Moral Maturity provides a dimension differentiating delinquent from non-delinquent boys similar in age, socio-economic status and intelligence (Kohlberg, 1958, p. 338). Further support for this claim was provided by Eshel, Kugelmass and Breznitz (1968) and Schwartz et al (1969) report that yielding to temptation in experimental tests and conviction for delinquency both correlate with moral judgment level. A study by Fodor (1972) however, indicated no significant relationship between cheating and level of moral development.

Several studies have sought to correlate moral maturity with experimental behaviour variables. Ruma and Mosher (1967) for example, found a high correlation between maturity of moral judgment and three different measures of guilt. Krebs (1967) studied the extent of cheating among 6th grade children in relation to level of moral judgment on the Kohlberg scale. The results (see Table I) suggest that those who have attained the principled moral-judgment level are much less likely to exhibit cheating behaviour than those at lower moral-judgment levels.

Table I

Distribution of Cheating Behaviour on Moral Levels

N	Level	Percent Cheating
55	Premoral (Stages 1 & 2)	83
63	Conventional (Stages 3 & 4)	67
5	Principled (Stages 5 & 6)	20

From, Krebs, 1967.

These findingshave been corroborated by Lehrer (1967) and by Grim, Kohlberg, and White (1968).

In a recently reported study (Turiel and Rothman, 1972) subjects whose moral judgment level had been measured were placed in an experimental condition which required choice between two actions. The actions involved choosing to either continue or stop an experiment with independent subjects (who were also confederates and had been instructed how to respond) where one subject was presumed to be "experimenting" on the other to find out how punishment affected learning. The subjects were then exposed to reasoning one stage above their own and one stage below their own before being once again placed in the behavioural choice situation. The study showed (a) that behavioural responses are related differentially to stage of moral development, and (b) that exposure to reasoning affected changes in behaviour when the reasoning was one stage above rather than one stage below the subject's. A correlation was thus shown between the subject's stage of moral judgment, the stage of communications from others which would affect behavioural choice, and the subject's actions in an experimental choice situation. This study, therefore, provides strong empirical support for both the internal and external validity of Kohlberg's theory and the suggestion is made that action may play an important role in the stimulation of change from stage to stage by providing the conflict or disequilibrium necessary for stage reorganisation (Turiel and Rothman, 1972, p. 754).

One of the most comprehensive tests on the external validity of Kohlberg's theory has been reported by Haan, Smith, and Block (1968), who related student's moral-judgment stages to their political behaviour, their participation in student protests, their backgrounds, their perceptions of their parents, and their self- and ideal self-descriptions.

> "In general, subjects at the principled level of moral reasoning, as contrasted with the conventionally moral, were more active in political-social matters, particularly in protest; their views on current issues were more discrepant from their parents who themselves were politically liberal; their self- and ideal conceptualizations emphasized interpersonal reactivity and obligation, self-expressiveness, and a willingness to live in opposition"
> (Hann, Smith, & Block, 1968, p. 183).

Of a total of 957 subjects (comprising college students and Peace Corps Volunteers) who were given the Kohlberg Moral Judgment Scale, only 54 percent gave responses which could reliably be classified into one of the six moral-judgment stages. (This outcome of the study, though not given significance by the authors, may reflect the lack of validity in ascribing subjects to a modal stage as discussed above). Table 2 shows the distribution of subjects at each of the moral stages.

Table 2

Percent of Subjects at Each of Kohlberg Stages

Stages	Males (N=253)	Females (N=257)
1 & 2	7%	3%
3	22%	41%
4	43%	38%
5	21%	14%
6	7%	4%

Adapted From Hann, Smith & Block 1968, p. 185.

One of the most interesting facets of the study is the report on the extent of participation in the 1965 Berkeley Free Speech Movement sit-in, according to moral-judgment

levels. Table 3 shows the distribution of participants over the various moral stages.

Table 3

Percentages of Pure Moral Types Arrested in the Free Speech Movement Sit-in

Stages	Men (N=117)	Women (N=97)
1 & 2	60%	33%
3	18%	9%
4	6%	12%
5	41%	57%
6	75%	86%

From Haan, Smith & Block, 1968, p. 198.

The results suggest that, while conventional types generally reject the opportunity to protest, significant percentages of both preconventional and postconventional types participate in protests. The reasons, however, are different in each case. The preconventional Stage - 2 types see the protest as a situation in which they can gain peer-group status and power, whereas the principled protesters (Stages 5 and 6) are concerned about basic issues of civil liberties and the role of students as citizens within a university community. The important implication of these findings is the need to consider motive in the interpretation of overt behaviour.

A similar study has been reported (Fishkin, Keniston and MacKinnon, 1973) in which moral maturity was correlated with measures of conservativism and radicalism among undergraduate students. The results indicate that differences in ideology relate to moral judgment level in the same way as Haan et al had shown political behaviour to be related to moral judgment level. At the preconventional level subjects favoured violent radicalism, while those who reasoned at the conventional moral level were politically conservative and extremely high correlations were found between Stage 4 (law and order) reasoning and conservatism.

Postconventional moral reasoning was associated with the rejection of conservative views but not with the acceptance of radical ideology.

Both these studies indicate that there are two distinct moral types who reject conservative political views and it is, therefore, very misleading to make generalizations about the moral development of "the radical" or "the activist."

Stage 1 and 2 "radicals" who are likely also to be "violent activists" exhibit a moral immaturity or regression while Stages 5 and 6 "radicals" reflect a higher stage of moral development than that attained by most of their peers. The behaviour of both groups may appear to be the same but the underlying motives are clearly different.

In another study (Fontana and Noel, 1973) moral reasoning was investigated among three role groups in the university setting using the Kohlberg scale. Administrators were found to employ law and order (stage 4) reasoning more than faculty or students. Political ideology was assessed by a specially designed scale and "Rightists" were found to use law and order reasoning more than "Leftists," but "Leftists" reasoned egoistically more than "Rightists."

All of these studies contain ideological assumptions about what constitutes 'radical' or 'conservative' views and what kinds of responses reflect 'rightist' or 'leftist' political types (if such clear-cut types in fact exist). Such assumptions are not explicitly recognized in the reported accounts of the studies, however, this research which we have just reviewed does demonstrate a degree of relationship between moral judgment and behaviour. In some situations, individuals at the post-conventional level are characterised by behaviours different from those who, in Kohlberg's scheme, possess less developed levels of moral judgment. In other situations, the behaviour of post-conventional persons resembles that of pre-conventional persons and differs from conventionally moral subjects. However, in both cases, the differences are predictable and consistent with the cognitive-developmental theory, provided the dimension of moral judgment level is seen as conceptually distinct from moral action per se. (The importance of this point will

emerge in Chapters 4 and 5). The definition of one's responsibilities, duties, rights and reasons for action provides a necessary but not a sufficient condition for stage-related behaviour.

Personality variables.

Although Kohlberg has consistently rejected the approach to the psychology of morality which explains conduct in terms of underlying traits of character ("a bag of virtues and vices," Kohlberg, 1971a, p. 75) there has been a growing body of evidence to suggest that moral judgment level is related to personality variables.

Grim, Kohlberg and White (1968) for example, found moderate to high correlations between measures of morality and measures of attention which is interpreted as indicating that both moral judgment and perceptual attention are influenced by underlying ego-control factors. These factors determine, to a large extent, the relationship which will exist between judgment and action. As the writers point out, the association between attention-will factors and moral behaviour was first made by William James.[9]

Using a simpler measure of moral maturity than Kohlberg's, Hogan and Dickstein (1972) found that persons whose moral judgments were rated as mature tended to be sensitive to injustice, well socialized, empathic, and autonomous, and they based their judgments on an intuitive understanding of morality. As will be argued in chapter 5 of the present thesis, all these criteria are in themselves value-laden, but the evidence does suggest that moral judgment maturity is not as independent from the "bag of virtues" as Kohlberg has maintained.

9. "If a brief description of ideal or moral action were required, none better would fit the appearances than this: it is action in the line of the greatest resistance." (W. James "Principles of Psychology"; New York: Holt, Rinehart Winston, 1890, p. 549). James goes on to account for moral will in terms of attentional processes.

One of the most commonly used behavioural measures of "conscience" or "morality" in experimental situations is "resistance to temptation" and evidence suggests (cf Aronfreed, 1968) that this cannot be separated from motivational and psycho-affective factors which fall clearly into the realm of personality dynamics. Nelson, Grinder and Biaggio (1969) carried out a factor analysis on data comprising behavioural, cognitive-developmental and personality variables which showed that children who resisted temptation on experimental tests tended to be more mature in moral judgment than those who yielded and also to have differential personality characteristics (eg greater ego control).

In a carefully designed experiment involving decision-making in two situations of moral conflict, Schwartz, Feldman, and Brown (1969) showed that behaviour was not determined entirely by Level of Moral Thought (measured on Kohlberg's Scale) but that at least two personality/motivational factors were significantly related. The need for achievement was related positively to "not cheating" but negatively to "helpfulness," while the need for affiliation was associated positively with "helpfulness" but unrelated to "cheating." According to the writers, the findings do not provide evidence against the generality of conduct across moral domains, and they found that, despite the importance of personality factors, the Level of Moral Thought enabled a prediction of the conduct in a consistent direction, suggesting the existence of an underlying morally relevant characteristic.

Further research into the importance of personality variables has been reported by Sullivan and Quarter (1972). Their study was prompted by the observation that the original Kohlberg study (1958) had been based on a sample of boys between the ages of ten and sixteen, while subsequent studies which had related the moral stage structure to an older age-group (Haan et al, 1968; Kohlberg and Kramer, 1969) had produced equivocal findings on the post-conventional moral types. They suggest (p. 150) that Kohlberg's stages can be conceived of as a form of moral "grammar" which is implicit in the language of moral judgments, and, therefore, question whether such a structure derived from the responses of one age-group can be validly applied to an older age-group.

According to Sullivan and Quarter, the study of moral development in late adolescence and early adulthood has led to the emergence of hybrid types at the postconventional level. Furthermore, they suggest that the developmental process beyond the conventional stage is not motivated entirely by cognitive factors (eg "equilibration" or cognitive conflict") as Turiel (1966; 1969) has claimed, but that "part of the cognitive conflict may be generated by the personality makeup that a person has at his present stage or some carryover factors from earlier stages" (Sullivan and Quarter, 1972, p. 159).

From a brief survey of the above studies, it is evident that this has been a relatively neglected area of research on the Kohlberg theory, but it appears to be currently growing in importance, and promises to provide an empirical basis for elaborating the cognitive-developmental theory of moral judgment into a total, yet consistent, theory of human personality which will explain a much wider range of behaviour.

Environmental factors

In his original study, Kohlberg (1958, p. 338) was able to show that his arrangement of moral stages provided "a dimension significantly differentiating groups expected to be environmentally favoured for social development (eg groups higher in socioeconomic status).

Because it is based on an "interactional" model, it is predictable that environmental factors such as social class, experience of conflict situations, and child-rearing practices will have an effect on both the rate and the terminal level of moral development. However, it is fundamental to the theory that these variables should not affect either the sequence or the nature of the moral stages. Research findings appear to be consistent with these predictions.

According to the Kohlberg theory environment can affect cognitive development to the extent that the latter is

related to the development of role-taking skills:

> "The assumption is that moral development is dependent on role-taking ability and on general social participation rather than on the learning of specific habits or values." (Kohlberg, 1958, p. 140).

This view, which is derived from the theories of Baldwin and Mead, becomes the core of the cognitive-developmental approach to socialization and is explicated in great detail by Kohlberg in later work:

> "The structure of society and morality is a structure of interaction between the self and other selves who are like the self, but who are not the self. The area of the conflicting claims of selves is the area of morality, or of moral conflict, and the modes of role-taking in such conflict situations represents the varying structures of moral judgment and choice defining our various stages." (Kohlberg, 1969, p. 398).

It will later be argued (Chapter 5) that this represents an overly narrow and somewhat simplistic notion of morality, but if we accept it at this point, the empirical evidence supporting predicted environmental influences must be considered convincing. Where we would expect "role-taking opportunities" to be unequal we find predictable differences in moral maturity.

A number of studies show that delinquents function more at preconventional stages of moral judgment (Kohlberg, 1958; Eshel et al, 1968; Schwartz et al, 1969; Hudgins and Prentice, 1973).

Holstein (1968) found that where parents provided greater role-taking opportunities by encouraging the child's participation in discussion there was greater likelihood of development to higher stages. Fodor (1972) found that conventional subjects, as against premoral subjects, reported more "principled discipline" (ie willingness of parents to explain parental policy) from both parents.

Kohlberg (1969) refers to a large body of research which shows that lower class children are more retarded in moral development than the middle class. He also refers to the limited cross-cultural studies which have indicated that less civilized or pre-literate societies are unlikely to develop beyond the conventional level.

However, not all the research involving environmental variables is interpreted as supporting the cognitive-developmental theory. Aronfreed (1968, pp. 261-2) cites observations revealing differences which are considered to

be "related to variations in social experience that cannot simply be placed on a fixed developmental continuum."

Indeed, Aronfreed, has been one of the most pungent critics of the empirical basis to the cognitive-developmental approach to moralization (cf Aronfreed, 1968, pp. 257-272; Aronfreed, 1971) particularly in respect of its neglect of motivational and affective elements. The following comment captures the essence of this criticism:

> "Even the person whose conscience is capable of operating at the heights of moral philosophy will often judge alternatives of conduct on less exalted ground because he is subjected to constraints of information, intensity of affect, and decision-making time" (Aronfreed, 1968, p. 265).

CONCLUSION

This review of the Piaget-Kohlberg theory has attempted to highlight both the depth and complexity of the growing body of empirical research on which it is founded. However, at the same time it has been possible not only to focus on some of the unresolved theoretical issues and methodological problems, but to stand outside the theory sufficiently to see something of its narrowness in relation to the whole field of the psychology of morality.

At the outset of this chapter it was acknowledged that the great strength of the cognitive-developmental theory lay in its emphasis on explaining human action without devaluing the importance of subjective experience or human freedom. We can now see that, without losing this strength, a monolithic theoretical structure has been based on a foundation of rigorous and experimentally sound research.

Too often, however, the exponents of the theory have failed to explore its conceptual geography. As with all theories, there is an underlying philosophical position concerning not only the nature of man, but such problems as, what is to count as explanation. Key concepts, such as "judgment" "morality" and "development" are woven into the fabric of the literature without subjection to the processes of analysis and definition.

It is to a consideration of these subjects, beginning with the explanatory basis of the theory, that we now turn.

CHAPTER 3

THE PROBLEM OF EXPLANATION

Recent theory in the philosophy of social science has emphasised the conceptual differences between overt behaviour (in the sense that this refers to movements or events) and human action.[1]

This has led, firstly, to an exposure of the limitations of a psychological theory which remains committed to the following basic assumptions: a mechanistic model of man; a Humean conception of cause that places stress on external stimuli; and, a related methodology based upon the logical and epistemological theories of positivism. Secondly, it has allowed the emergence of a new paradigm for the scientific study of man which is compatible with notions of autonomy and rationality in addition to acknowledging the rule-following and rule-formulating features of human behaviour.

The philosophical heritage for what we might call the new paradigm for scientific psychology lies with Kant. (cf Mischel, 1969, Ch. 1). It has been revived and elaborated on, in a number of different ways, by Peters (1958) Winch (1958) Melden (1961) Charles Taylor (1964) Hampshire (1965a) Louch (1966) Richard Taylor (1966) Anscombe (1966) Toulmin (1969) Borger and Cioffi (1970) Harre and Secord (1972) Krimerman (1972). These writers have provided a basis for explanation which emphasises the distinctly human characteristics of man as a subject for science in contrast to other physical phenomena. As a consequence there has emerged a concept of man, a methodology, and a rationale for empirical theory-building which allows the psychologist and the philosopher, as collaborators in

1. May Brodbeck offers the following definition of human action:

> "An action....is any bit of behaviour whose complete description, that is, an account of <u>what</u> is occurring, requires mention, in addition to manifest behaviour, either of such things as the person's motives, intentions, and thoughts or of such things as moral, legal, or conventional standards or rules."
> (1963, p. 309).

an interdisciplinary campaign, to move into the most complex areas of human behaviour with greater confidence. Nowhere is this seen more clearly and with greater relevance to the growth of our knowledge than in the recent surge of enquiry into the realm of morality.

In order to comprehend the significance of the most recent developments in the philosophy of social science for the psychology of morality we need to examine some of the perennial problems of explanation and the limitations of a paradigm which has served well the hypothetico-deductive system of scientific investigation but which cannot cope with the metaphysical uniqueness of phenomena which may not be law-governed.

The traditional model of scientific explanation is now conceived as only one among several possible modes, and its application to the study of the person and personal action is no longer a constraint upon psychological theory.

MODES OF EXPLANATION

In general terms the natural science model requires that the data of observation be objective in the sense that independent observers of the same event would report it with a maximum degree of consistency and agreement given the same theoretical framework.

From such consistent observation certain laws (or law-like statements) are formulated which, when they are taken in conjunction with certain specified circumstances, will explain by logical implication the events which are observed (the explananda). Thus, in physics, if we accept (i) Newton's laws of motion and his law of gravitation and (ii) certain data on the Solar System (masses, distances, instantaneous velocities, etc.) it is possible to deduce something close to Kepler's three "descriptive" laws of planetary motion, being summaries of observations and therefore, in this case, explananda. This is a simplified example and no mention has been made of the wider theory which

is needed to give these laws an explanatory context.[2] The essential point, however, is that laws are open to falsification on the basis of observation and through such an empirical process the theories to which they belong can be modified (cf Popper, 1963).

While some psychologists, particularly those in the behaviouristic tradition, have formulated theories on the 'covering-law' model, the modern school of so-called humanistic psychologists (May, 1967; Maslow, 1968; Giorgi, 1970) claim that this natural science model, in respect both of the sort of data it admits and the mode of interpretation it uses, tends to eliminate consideration of the distinctively human features of human behaviour, especially its heuristic and subjective aspects. They would not deny the many activities, functions and structures which man shares with the other animals, but would emphasise the phenomena in respect of which man seems to be distinguishable from the other animals or to be peculiar or even unique. Such differences are in some cases marked by degree while in others they are differences of kind. The phenomena relate to (i) conceptualisation (ii) language (iii) value-systems (iv) self-awareness.

Finding an appropriate mode of explanation is complicated by the extremely diverse range of explananda which man, as a subject for study, can entail. There is an incredible gulf between attempting an explanation for the learning of a set of nonsense syllables and explaining Hamlet's delay in revenging his father's murder. Any psychological theory which sets out to embrace these two phenomena within the same mode of explanation will, in Wittgenstein's phrase, be one in which problems and methods pass one another by. It is not enough to develop a psychology of clear experimental methods if it is to be couched in conceptual confusion.

Philosophers of science (Kuhn, 1962; Popper, 1963; Toulmin, 1969) have recently emphasised the close connection

2. The 'covering-law' model of explanation is expounded in Hempel and Oppenheim (1948).

between conceptual and factual issues in the development of the physical sciences. It is now generally acknowledged that "scientific fact and theory are not categorically separable" (Kuhn, 1962, p. 7). This inseparability is much stronger in the study of human behaviour than in other sciences. Recognition of it involves an understanding of the relationship between observation and theory. A theory is both a tool, enabling the scientist to look for further, still unconfirmed relationships, and a goal, in that it seeks to encompass, in a relatively small number of statements, discovered relationships among events. There is consequently a conflict in that as a goal the theory may be driven towards explanations in terms of more basic classes of phenomena, while as a tool to further inquiry it needs to embrace higher levels of explanation. When the psychologist conceives of his theory only as a goal he falls into the following line of argument:

> "If human beings are physical objects, governed by causal laws, it seems to follow that human behaviour is straightforwardly amenable to causal explanation. Ideally therefore a truly adequate explanation of a human action would involve our being able to trace in detail the physiological—and in the end physical and in this sense 'mechanical'—process by which the action comes to be produced." (Ryan, 1970, p. 104)

Here we have what is known as the fallacy of reductionism which is based on the premise that human beings are physical objects, governed by causal laws.[3] If accepted it leads to (i) a fragmentary and molecular analysis of human behaviour in which 'pieces of behaviour' become the objects of study rather than 'the person', (ii) a verificationist theory of meaning in which the observer viewpoint is the only valid one and agency is discounted, (iii) a deterministic and law-governed concept of man which

3. Nagel (1961, p. 282) points out that reductionism is not a necessary assumption for the scientific method, and it is not implied by determinism. Nor does determinism imply that all events are physical or mechanical in nature. A mechanistic system predicts only mechanical events. Molecular movements and position at a given point in time determine some subsequent movements and positions, but predict nothing about other, non mechanical phenomena accompanying those subsequent mechanical states.

is based on the Humean notion that causal laws be taken to express constant correlations of stimulus and response. Such a restrictive mode of explanation prevents an adequate molar explanation of behaviour, in which agency is acknowledged and where recognition is given to the phenomena of cognitive processes, language, value systems and self-awareness. An explanation which does make this recognition is given by Harre and Secord (1972) who set out a non-reductionist conceptual framework for social psychology which they outline in the following way:

1. Human beings must be treated as agents acting according to rule, and it must be realized that it is unscientific to treat them as anything else.[4]
2. Social behaviour must be conceived of as actions mediated by meanings, not responses caused by stimuli.
3. The theory of movements, physiology, must be clearly separated from psychology, the theory of actions.
4. It must be clearly appreciated that most human social behaviour cannot be made intelligible under the mechanistic, causal paradigm.
5. Reasons can be used to explain actions, and not all reasons can be treated as causes in the mechanistic sense, though in some special cases causes may be cited as reasons.[5]
6. Lay explanations of behaviour provide the best model for psychological theory, and properly considered they can be seen to be actually more in accordance with the actual methodology of real natural science than is the positivist methodology which provided the old models of science which psychologists have copied.

(Harre and Secord, 1972, p. 29)

4. The meaning of this major claim rests on a new conception of what is meant by 'scientific' which in turn relates to adequacy of explanation.

5. The point will later be made that reasons and causes are categorically separate, and while it is, in a sense, conceivable to cite causes as reasons (eg when the agent gives a physical stimulus -- change in room temperature -- as a reason for his action -- opening the window), it is not conceptually accurate to speak of reasons as causes. Harre and Secord are not clear on this distinction.

Those who espouse a positivist doctrine of truth will counter thses premises with the argument that there are no publicly agreed to criteria for giving meaning to phrases such as 'acting according to rules' or 'actions mediated by meanings', as these involve 'subjective', non-observable phenomena. But there are equally good arguments to show that even natural science, which is the paradigm of 'objective knowledge' has no claim to absolute truth. (Popper, 1972).

The essence of Popper's argument is that, while it is true to say that a theory entails the data on which it is based, the converse is not true i.e. data does not entail theory. This means that any theory (which is the basis of scientific knowledge) is always open to falsification by the discovery of data which it cannot accommodate. There is, therefore, an impossibility in natural science of knowing for certain if ones theoretical explanations are correct, and there is always a possibility that they may have to be revised.

Surely then the problem is no greater in psychology when we admit cognitive processes (explanations by meanings and reasons) as induced from observable responses. Here is the analogous case to Popper's: cognitive process entails response but response does not entail cognitive process.[6]

This does not mean that we can only explain behaviour by invoking hypothetical cognitive processes. Whether we do or not will depend on the context in which the behaviour occurs and our aim in seeking an explanation. It may also depend on the behaviour per se.

6. By using this argument Campbell (1969) dispels the common assumption that psychology (as a science) cannot be 'objective' in making assertions about the 'phenomenology of the other'. The philosophical problem is at least no more complex for psychology than for physical science. The same point is also made by Harre and Secord (1972, p. 17).

According to situational context we can distinguish four types of human behaviour:

1. purposive, voluntary, autonomous (eg. making a moral decision).
2. purposive and voluntary but not autonomous (eg. acting out of fear of pain or because of racial prejudice).
3. purposive but not voluntary nor autonomous (eg. acting under a post-hypnotic trance or showing a phobic reaction to water).
4. non-purposive, non-voluntary and non-autonomous (eg. blinking or sneezing).

If, therefore, we recognize that the behaviour is purposive, voluntary and autonomous, our explanation will need to consider the way the agent sees the situation ie. purpose can only be understood in terms of 'the logic of the situation', to use Popper's phrase. On the other hand, the explanation of an irrational and compulsive act of violence may need to include personality constructs or environmental forces.

Accordingly, if our aim is to control or indoctrinate people, we will probably find an S-R (mechanistic) mode of explanation not only appropriate but useful. If, however, we aim to educate, our explanatory mode will be quite different, taking into account the needs, wants, goals, intentions, and--most important of all--the choices of our subject.

It is important then that the social scientist recognizes that there are several <u>different</u> modes of explanation available to him. This is, of course, if we take the meaning of explanation in its widest sense of 'understand' rather than in narrower descriptive, predictive, or law-governed senses. Toulmin (1969, p. 95) expresses this point as follows:

> "So it would be unreasonable to look for one single model of explanation applicable equally to all kinds of human action and behaviour. Rather, we should expect to find varied modes of psychological explanation applicable on different levels and in different situations.

Some would say that the appropriateness of the mode of explanation depends upon the nature of the behaviour to be explained (Taylor, 1964) while others would say that it

depends upon what the person wants to know (Brodbeck, 1963). It is likely that both of these criteria will give us the same results, because how we describe behaviour will contain prior assumptions as to what is significant and description always precedes explanation.

EXPLAINING MORAL BEHAVIOUR

We need to consider now what kind of explanatory model is going to be appropriate to moral behaviour which, by definition, is purposive, voluntary and autonomous. It is to be argued that such a model will need to be both teleological and anti-determinist. It will take cognizance of (i) the agent's viewpoint and reason for acting, (ii) a molar level of behavioural analysis (iii) enabling conditions for choice, (iv) cognitive processes of appraisal and judgment.

(i) The agent

The viewpoint of the agent is different from that of the spectator and the same event can be legitimately explained from either position. In Kantian theory, from which this consideration derives, perception and thought are construed as activities that we perform. The will, which is the faculty of taking a rule of reason for the motive of an action, provides a link between the so-called "driving springs of action" (desires, affects, passions) and behaviour. However, this is not to be equated with a mechanical 'push-pull' type of relationship. The rules and order associated with mental states are not in a category that makes them proper candidates for the causes of bodily motions. Rules for acting are not like causal laws and the order is not like that of a physical theory.[7]

7. This is because there is an intrinsic limitation upon the predictability of human behaviour. Scriven (1965) argues that when the person whose behaviour is to be predicted is faced with several possible courses of action, and is himself aware of all the facts, lawful relations and derived predictions at the disposal of the super-scientist, yet wants to disconfirm these predictions, then his behaviour is logically unpredictable.

The spectator will perceive movements between physical agencies whose influence is causally compulsive; whereas, the agent will be aware of considerations or reasons for acting which he finds rationally compelling. Nevertheless, the fact that the agent can find reasons compelling does not give them the status of causes.

It is clear that some behaviour, because it is not intentional, can be fully explained from an observer viewpoint eg having a muscle spasm, falling down stairs or having an epileptic seizure. In an action, however, where intention is involved, the behaviour will be influenced by the values, plans and purposes which the person holds. The question is, to what extent can these values, plans and purposes be taken as explaining the behaviour. In order to answer this question Weber introduced the notion of understanding (verstehen) which is conceived of as something different from explanation. In his explication of this concept he distinguishes two sorts of verstehen. The understanding of an action can be either rational, where the reasons justifying it are contained within a shared context of meaning, or emotionally empathic, where the observer can "grasp the emotional context in which the action took place" by means of a comparison drawn from his own experience ie he is able to say "That is what I would do if I felt that way" (cf Strike, 1972a, pp 28-33). Now, as Strike shows, Weber distinguishes between explanation of an action and understanding of an action on the basis of whether or not the action could be predicted from what is known.[8] He distinguishes between those reasons which explain an action and those which merely justify it. This view is based, firstly, on an over-narrow concept of explanation, and secondly, on a conceptual confusion in which compelling

8. Strike infers from this distinction that the problem of the compatibility of teleology and mechanism is therefore resolved. Such a claim is somewhat naive and Strike has been subsequently 'pulled up' on this point by Fenstermacher (1973) who states:

"That there are differences between explanation and understanding is not the solution to the problem of teleology vs. mechanism, it is the source of the problem" (Fenstermacher, 1973, p. 162).

reasons (eg. those which arise out of attitude or belief) are distinguished from logically justifiable reasons such that the former can cause actions whereas the latter cannot.

Toulmin (1971, p. 5) makes this kind of category mistake when he differentiates between talking directly about 'having reasons' and talking indirectly about 'recognizing reasons' in the sense that they will be compelling or cause the person to act. If we ask the agent for his reasons, surely these will be both what he holds as justifiable and what he recognizes as having compelled him. Reasons and causes must be held categorically separate.

In the moral sphere we are concerned with having reasons in the sense that (a) our actions are goal-directed, purposive, or intentional, and (b) our actions are justifiable. Two further considerations are important. Firstly, reasons need to be held within a context of 'what is to count as a reason.'[9] Reasons are embodied in language and, as Wittgenstein has argued, the idea of a 'private language' is unintelligible. It is also true that there are certain substantive considerations which cannot be avoided because any theory of reasons for action presupposes certain assumptions about human nature.[10] Secondly, statements about a man's reasons for his actions are not in competition with statements about the causes of his behaviour. The two sorts of statements are on quite

9. In a moral context such criteria will be determined by the ethical position (eg emotivist, intuitionist, naturalist) which is adopted (This will be further developed in Chapter 5).

10. R.S. Peters makes this point when he states:

"....some very general notions of 'normal human nature' are necessary to give content to the notion of a reason for acting. Some very general notions of what men qua embodied men tend to accept as reasons for action is necessary to give content to our justificatory discourse." (Peters, 1970b, p. 30).

different levels and the latter may be important in excusing rather than justifying an action. If behaviour can be so excused ie. the agent held not responsible, then moral considerations do not count. An acceptance of Weber's position would force us to conclude then that moral action, by its very nature, could not be explained; it could only be understood. This anomaly can be overcome, however, by conceiving of verstehen as a mode of explanation in itself. It is explanation from the agent's viewpoint.

One criterion for moral action is that it should be justifiable. However, justification can only be done by appealing to some accepted criteria or rules ie what most people are to count as reasons.[11] If the observer is able to say that the reason why the agent acted is something different from his (the agent's) reason for acting (cf Peters, 1958, p.8) then moral justification is not appropriate. When the reason why someone acts is also his reason then we are able to say that the action is autonomous and, provided it meets certain other formal criteria to be considered later, also moral.

(ii) Molar explanation

There is an important distinction to be drawn in psychological explanation between 'part processes' and 'whole processes' or between what is sometimes called molecular explanation and molar explanation.

Charles Taylor (1970) has claimed that behaviourism is the paradigm case of a 'molecular' or 'centralist' approach to explanation. It tends to be neurophysiological, reductionist and mechanistic--and, in order to sustain explanatory power, the key concepts of 'stimulus' and 'response' have to be extended to the point where they

11. There is a further problem here in defining what we mean by 'most people' - perhaps a further qualification eg 'most rational people' should be added. This point is considered again, however, in Chapter 5 of the present thesis.

lose precise meaning.[12] (Taylor, 1970, pp 64-66). In explaining human action, however, we must always be concerned with 'the person' and hence with explanation at the molar level. This will always be purposive and cognitive.

The behaviourist assumes that explanation at the molecular level will ultimately develop, as it grows in comprehensiveness or expands in empirical richness, into explanation at the molar level. But this assumption cannot be justified. The whole is more than the sum of the parts. At the molar level, which is the only level at which we can speak of human acts and the features of situations which provide their context, explanation is irretrievably teleological and purposive. There is no way of building the blocks of S-R connections into a structure which has the capacity to perform actions for reasons. A psychology of morality must start, therefore, with a concept of 'person' at a molar level.

Failure to come to terms with the concept of 'person' has led to undue emphasis in psychological theory on 'part functions' eg helping behaviour, altruism, other-directed life-style, where the object of study shifts to some conceptual entity which exists as separate from, though belonging to 'the person' viz. the behaviour, the trait, the life-style. In the study of moral behaviour such part functions are not enough to meet the requirements of explanation. One can always describe the specific behaviours, define the traits of character or explicate the elements of a life-style yet still ask the question "But why did he act as he did?"

It is possible to describe as 'helping behaviour' someones action in supplying aspirin to another who is in pain. However, he may (i) think it to be arsenic and

12. Colgan (1972) in his paper to the N.Z.P.S., shows that key Skinnerian terms such as 'reinforcement' have an imprecision and tautological nature which makes parts of behaviourism untestable and therefore irrefutable.

intend to kill (ii) fear punishment if he does not do it (iii) hope to be praised by others for his act of kindness or, feel genuine concern for the other's suffering. It is important, therefore to consider the description under which the agent sees his action and the reason why he acts or fails to act.

Molar explanation will involve not only what the person does but the reasons which he holds for doing it. The methodological difficulty in uncovering the latter must not lead us into discounting its importance.

We cannot explain moral behaviour without considering the thought processes of the subject and we can only come at these by 'asking him'. Kohlberg, for instance, asks the child or adolescent why he has judged a course of action (in response to a moral conflict story) as right or good. Presumably the child's answer begins 'Because.....'. Inferences are then made about the judgment which enable the level of moral maturity to be established. There are many difficulties in this method of assessment,[13] but the theoretical concern with 'the person' and with a molar level of description and understanding is demanded by the nature of what is being studied.

Treating the moral agent as a subject for science means accepting his own commentary upon his action as authentic, though revisable, reports of mental states, subject to empirical study. This position needs to be defended against those who would argue that (i) the reports are the

13. Wilson (1973, pp 15-19) gives a penetrating account of the language problems involved in such assessments ie the difficulties of knowing what the subject means when he uses such words as 'right' 'ought' 'should' or even what sort of reason he is proferring when he says "Because.....". He may be giving (a) a good reason, or just a (possibly bad) reason (b) a reason which is 'ultimate' (stands on its own feet), or which assumes a background of higher-level reasons (c) a reason which he would use (have in mind) when acting, or which he knows of but would not use (d) a reason which would compel him and which he would approve of or a reason which would compel him but which he would not approve of.

phenomena and not statements about phenomena (ii) there is no independent way of verifying whether the reported states exist (iii) the states are only epiphenomena and only the neurophysiological changes can be said to exist. The defence, which is well argued by Harre and Secord (1972), emphasises that mental states (eg beliefs and moods) are shown in both the content and manner of what is said and provide the common sense means of accounting for certain phenomena such as 'states of readiness' or 'dispositions to act'.

In answer to the question "Why is it so important to take the reports of states of mind and the expressions of intention so seriously?" they state:

> "It is partly because the systems of rules and meanings under which social life is lived can only be grasped by studying the reports and commentaries of social actors. It is partly because we wish to place considerable emphasis on the changes in people's powers and capacities that are affected by changes in their psychic states." (Harre and Secord, 1972, p. 108)

An appropriate method for the study of moral action will, therefore, rely on this kind of data and in so doing permit explanation at the molar level.

(iii) Choice

An explanatory model for moral behaviour must come to terms with two logical problems; firstly, it must provide a rationale for regarding some human actions as both freely chosen and rationally explicable or non-arbitrary; and, secondly, it must clarify the conceptual relationships between choice and other events or occurrences such as appraisal, judgment, decision and action. We shall examine these separately.

A. For an action to be freely chosen or autonomous there must be certain features present both in the beliefs or knowledge which give rise to it and in the purpose or goal at which it is directed.[14] These will constitute the criteria for autonomy.

14. In Kant's view, a man was autonomous if in his actions he bound himself by means of his will to moral laws which are legislated by his own reason, as opposed to being governed by his inclinations.

Krimerman (1972, pp 334-35) suggests criteria for identifying cases of autonomous belief and autonomous desire. He would see as determining the autonomy of a belief such considerations as (i) whether it is understood (ii) whether it can be tested (iii) whether it resists change under conditions of reward and punishment. The autonomy of a desire would relate to (i) whether the agent could state what attaining the goal consisted in (ii) whether it was compatible with other adopted goals (iii) whether a temporary prevention from pursuing or attaining the goal prevented the pursuing or attaining of other goals.

An examination of the concept of autonomy shows that freedom is not a sufficient condition for saying that a person is autonomous in some respect.[15] Other important criteria such as self-knowledge, impartiality, independence-of-mind, may also need to be considered. Dearden (1972, p. 451) makes the point that 'relevant freedoms are a necessary condition of the exercise of autonomy' and he further states that 'a person is autonomous to the degree that what he thinks and does in important areas of his life cannot be explained without reference to his own activity of mind' (p. 453).

There is a sense (ie. the notion of unavoidability) in which it becomes contradictory to speak of necessary and sufficient conditions for autonomy other than in the sense of 'freedom from' restraints, both internal and external, which would shift the basis of explanation away from the agent's 'own activity of mind'. It is therefore useful to adopt Krimerman's notion of enabling conditions.

15. This important point will be discussed further in chapter 6 where the concept of moral autonomy is considered.

His explanatory model involves three elements:

1. an autonomous act, A, the explanandum.
2. an obstacle, O, which has deterred or prevented A, or acts of the same type from occurring.
3. an enabling condition, E, by which O is overcome (Krimerman, 1972, p. 342)

To preserve the existence of choice, it must be possible for E to exist yet for A not to follow.

If we seek to answer the question "Why did A occur?", which seeks an explanation for an autonomous act, Krimerman would say that at least two interpretations are possible (p. 345):

1. Given that some obstacle has blocked the performance of A in the past, what is that obstacle, and by what was it overcome in the present case?
2. Why was A performed, rather than B or C when enabling conditions for all three were available?

In order to preserve a notion of predictability with respect to the second interpretation, Krimerman introduces the concept of enabling condition covering laws, which have the status of general laws because they can make predictions yet are antideterministic because they do not set boundary conditions on choice. At this point, it seems Krimerman's paradigm loses clarity.

These laws, according to Krimerman, establish the factors by which the range of choice a person has is extended. They presuppose choice and render no option unavoidable and none inaccessible. They are factors which (a) enable a person to report accurately on his feelings, desires, sensations etc., or (b) enable a person's judgment to be unbiased and free from the influence of hopes and ambitions. As they are defined, these antideterministic or 'range-extending' uniformities are only more general instances of the 'enabling conditions' which Krimerman has previously discussed and which adequately cover the first interpretation of the explanatory question. There is no justification for calling them laws, in fact it becomes confusing to do so. It would seem that his attempt to devise a model which parallels the covering-law model has led to an inappropriate

use of the term law.[16] However, the principle of enabling conditions ie that by removing obstacles and restraints increase the range of choice open to the agent and thereby increase his autonomy, is a very useful contribution to the problem of explaining action. From this it follows, not only that autonomy is a matter of degree rather than something absolute, but also that we can empirically assess the extent to which it exists.[17]

In the domain of moral action, Kohlberg's test of judgment provides an empirical means of assessing the extent to which autonomy is impeded by developmental immaturity. The further up the hierarchical stage structure the person progresses the greater the enabling conditions for autonomous choice to operate.

B. We come now to a consideration of what constitutes choice and how it relates to the logic of moral action.

The problem of explanation is increased by the obvious differences which exist between actions under various circumstances. Choices and decisions to act are not necessarily preceded by self-conscious examining, comparing and evaluating of alternatives and consequently the formal elements are not all present for every action.

There are cases where the action is spontaneous and others where it arises out of habit such that the processes of evaluation and judgment are very much curtailed if not eliminated. Furthermore, Gauthier (1963, p. 26) has argued that, for a person to have acted for reasons (of any kind),

16. This point has been made in a recent review of Krimerman's paper by Soltis (1973) who suggests that it is contradictory to talk of laws which by their very nature cannot be verified or falsified.

17. Note that in this context we are using autonomy in the non-moral sense of 'range of choice'. Later (chapter 6) we will consider 'moral autonomy' where choice becomes limited not by 'obstacles' but by commitment to principles.

it is not required that the reasons in question actually were considered prior to the action, or that any reasoning process necessarily occurred. The person may well have acted spontaneously or out of habit but if his whole way of life is rational then he will have acted for reasons (cf Oakeshott, 1962, pp 80-109).

In cases of moral action, however, we more often find that all the formal elements of decision-making are present, In such instances the situation presents a problem and the action becomes a solution to that problem.[18]

The question is, at what point does 'choice' logically enter? At which one of the following five stages in the decision-making process does 'choosing' take place?

(i) Evaluating and defining the problem.

(ii) Deliberating on the particular alternative actions which are available.

(iii) Judging which is the best course of action.

(iv) Deciding to take that course of action.

(v) Acting.

An existentialist position would ascribe choice to each of these stages, including the first where we would <u>choose</u> to perceive something as a problem in the first place. This requires us to hold a criterionless notion of choice otherwise we become involved in a regress of needing to have criteria by which to choose our criteria etc. (cf. Dearden, 1972, p. 457). Most would argue that 'choice' falls somewhere between judging and acting.

Those who would see choice as belonging with judgment eg R.S. Peters and R.F. Dearden would argue that a choice is capable of evaluation (good, bad, rational, stupid) in

18. Gauthier (1963, p.5) refers to the verbal formulation of a practical problem as a <u>practical question</u>. An action, or set of actions, performed by the person in the situation specified in the problem, he calls the <u>solution</u>. A decision taken by the person concerning what to do in the situation, he calls the <u>resolution</u>. A judgment about what to do in the situation is called the <u>answer</u> to the practical question.

the same way as judgment is. Some criterion or standard is involved such that what is chosen is thought to fulfil some aim or end in view which guides the choice. Peters, therefore, distinguishes between choosing an alternative and merely 'plumping' for it. (Peters, 1966, p. 122). If alternatives are not considered then one merely decides without "choosing" in the sense that ones "mind is made up." By definition, therefore, one cannot choose arbitrarily.

The case for placing 'choosing' and 'deciding' on the same logical level has been made by W.D. Glasgow (1957; 1960) who sees both as (i) connoting previous judgment of alternatives, (ii) implying that their object is within the agent's capability, (iii) related to action, (iv) capable of evaluation, and (v) having corresponding noun functions. He also goes further than Peters by saying that choice must involve commitment in addition to considerations of alternatives.

A third position on the logic of choice equates it with action per se. Nowell-Smith (1958), for instance, argues that there are not only linguistic reasons for identifying 'choosing' with 'doing' but also "deeper philosophical reasons for insisting on this". These are not explicated but the suggestion seems to be that ascription of moral responsibility can be given only to an action and not to some prior 'mental event'. However, we cannot escape the logical fact that 'choosing not to act' can be a moral position, and the linguistic fact that 'choosing a friend' is not the same as shaking hands, confiding inner-most secrets, accepting help, or any other action one can think of.

One way of resolving these differences may be to see choice as being logically capable of entering the action process at any point between judgment and action, but precisely at the point where commitment enters. Where commitment/choice is removed from judgment and lies closer to action we have a greater possibility that what the person does will depend on his motives and habits or external conditions of reward or punishment,[19] rather than on his

19. This will also allow arbitrariness or what Peters calls 'plumping' to become identifiable with choice.

rational judgment. Where commitment/choice is brought closer to judgment, such that what a person judges he becomes committed to do, we have, not only conditions in which moral praise or blame become appropriate, but we have enhanced autonomy.[20]

Where enabling conditions for choice are maximized, therefore, the person's judgment of what he ought to do becomes a reliable guide to his subsequent action. The higher one moves up the scale of moral maturity the further the notion of choice moves from a simple manifestation in action towards a rational basis in judgment. Accepting this concept of choice, however, raises the immense problem of the relationship between cognitive processes and action, or the place of judgment in the explanation of moral behaviour.[21]

(iv) Cognitive Processes

Explanation of behaviour at a mechanistic level does not entail the problems of agency. It tends to be molecular rather than molar and because a spectator viewpoint is adopted the notion of choice can be avoided. It is a mode of explanation at a level which does not require the postulation of mediating cognitive processes such as judgment and appraisal. It is, therefore, a mode which is inappropriate for the explanation of action.

It has already been argued that moral action cannot be explained without reference to the agent's viewpoint and his verbal report of private mental states which accompany the activity of practical problem-solving and 'choosing' behaviour. It follows from this that any efforts to develop theory in this area will comprise propositions about the nature of cognitive processes.

20. We need to recognize that choice and judgment may be non-moral but this raises the problem of defining morality and this is to be considered in chapter 5.

21. This problem will be discussed in chapter 4.

From time to time the status of cognitive processes and structures in psychological theory is questioned. In a recent paper, Malcolm (1971) uses the example of 'pattern recognition' to suggest that the term process of recognition is unnecessary. He states:

> "We feel that when a person recognizes something, in addition to the various manifestations or characteristic accompaniments of recognition something must go on inside. This is the 'inner process' of recognition." (p. 387)

Malcolm proceeds to argue that there is no need to postulate anything above the facts or the circumstances surrounding the behaviour which we understand as expressing recognition. Furthermore, he claims that this applies to the processes of memory, thinking, problem-solving, understanding etc. He then relates his argument to the notion of "structure" as contained in the theories of Piaget and Chomsky.

However, while this position may be tenable in simple cases of perception, it loses all force in providing adequate explanations for rule-governed actions. In arguing that appeal to inner processes is a philosophical mistake the alternative which Malcolm adopts is not strict behaviourism but a description of 'appropriate behaviour in certain circumstances' (a view which owes much to Wittgenstein). However, it is not conceivable how 'appropriateness' can be defined without reference to the prior mental events experienced by the agent. Malcolm does not adequately distinguish between the 'achievement sense' of a term and the 'process sense' (cf Martin, 1973). The term 'learning', for example, sometimes refers to certain achievements of people and sometimes to the process leading up to such achievements. We cannot equate these uses. It would seem that Malcolm would take a concept such as moral judgment as denoting only the verbal utterance. But this cannot have any explanatory power. A scientific explanation of the phenomenon of moral judgment would need to take account of the inner processes leading up to that utterance.

Martin (1973, p. 87) points out that Malcolm's argument is based on a false dichotomy.

> "Either (a) an explanation of why people know how to do something is in terms of rules they know how to use, or (b) an explanation of why people know how to do something is 'They just know how'."

In moral conduct the explanation will involve neither a simple description of what the subject says or does, nor a second-order analysis of the rules which are invoked in what he says or does. Of essential relevance is the person's account of how he moves from the abstract rules or principles to the specific judgment. This involves a study of his self-conscious reasons and motives ie both cognitive and conative processes. It is not sufficient to see moral principles as having a purely action-guiding function.[22] They are built into the cognitive process of judgment in such a way as to mediate between the perceived problem and the action-solution by generating a decision. The developmental psychologist states this as follows:

> "....moral principles are not specific rules for guiding actions, but are modes of making judgments and decisions. This means that a rational process is involved in the moral judgment, rather than a mechanical application of internalized rules. Moral principles are modes of handling moral conflicts, for resolving the competing claims of more than one person." (Kohlberg and Turiel, 1971, p. 447)

The concept of moral maturity, which is central to the cognitive-developmentalist approach, has meaning only in relation to inner process and structure. The verbalized judgment and justificatory speech-act are interpreted as evidence for the presence of underlying cognitive structure. It is not enough, therefore, to take the expressed judgment on its own because the same judgment or decision may emerge from different structural backgrounds. Describing such a decision or verbalized judgment as morally mature is simply to evaluate its substance; describing a justificatory speech act as morally mature is to match the reasons given

22. Although this function is very important as will be argued in chapter 5.

against canons of correct procedure and to infer the existence of a cognitive structure relating to a certain level in the logical structure of that procedure.

If moral maturity is defined in terms of certain sorts of actions, it obviously does not explain those actions If, however, it is defined in terms of certain sorts of reason, it may be seen as explanatory, depending on the logical grounds for accepting the reasons as rational and the empirical evidence for assuming that the inferred structure provides enabling conditions for the action to have occurred autonomously. In short, moral maturity is explanatory to the extent that it enables us to make assumptions about the conditions under which a human action occurred.

There has been disagreement recently (see Brainerd, 1973) as to what is to count as minimum evidence for the existence of various Piagetian cognitive structures (eg. conservation, transitivity, class-inclusion) and processes (eg. inversion, reciprocity). By taking the subjects verbalized judgment on its own some have argued that one has a more valid index of the underlying process or structure than if one takes the subject's explanation of the judgments (ie poses the further question of the form "Why?" "How do you know that?").

It must be admitted that the latter introduces more sources of extraneous error, but this was the "clinical method" which Piaget and his colleagues used. The justification for this method in the study of moral structures is simply that it is the subject's explanation which is the manifestation of the level of moral maturity, not the judgment per se.

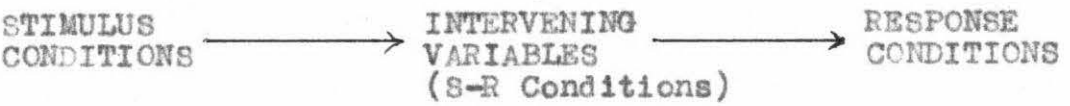
THE HIERARCHY OF EXPLANATORY MODELS

Having considered the logical requirements for adequate explanation of moral action a three-tier model is proposed which relates the various modes of explanation to each other and shows their application in psychological theory.

It has been argued that different modes of explanation for human behaviour may be employed depending on the nature of the behaviour, the purpose of explanation, and the

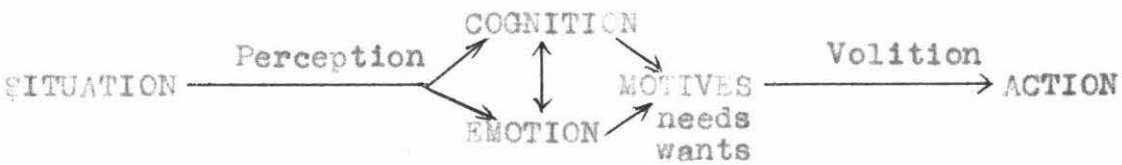
theoretical context in which the explanation occurs.

At the mechanistic level explanation proceeds through the following stages:



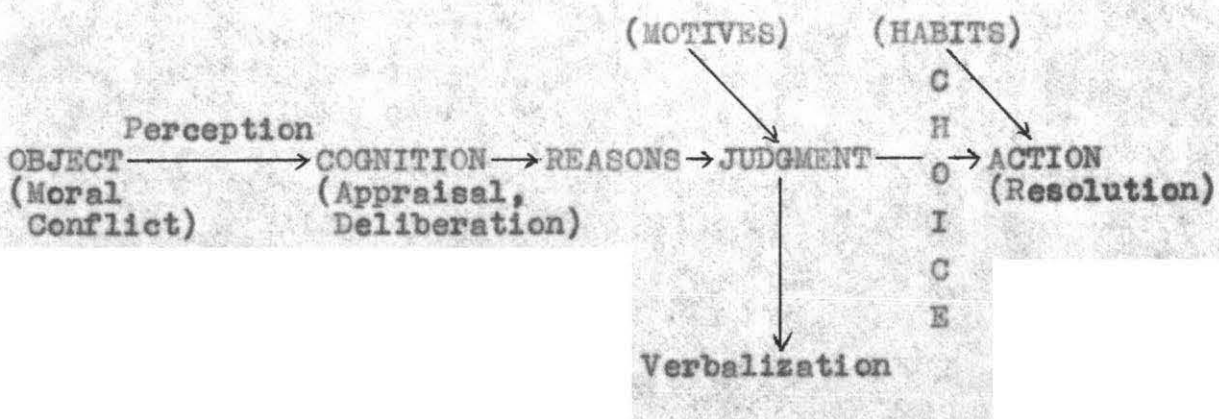
Such explanation is found in Behaviouristic Theories and can be used to account for HABITS and NON-VOLUNTARY actions. These may occur in moral contexts but because agency and responsibility are not ascribed to the subject, it is not useful to apply such a model to moral behaviour, except in social learning theories of 'part functions' such as role-taking.

At the purposive/affective level explanation proceeds through the following stages:



Such explanation is found in Psychoanalytic Theories and can be used to account for CONATIVE or GOAL-DIRECTED actions. These frequently occur in moral contexts where action is spontaneous eg cases where inhibitory controls operate or where guilt is generated or where action is motivated by needs and wants. Psychopathic states and normal psychoaffective behaviour might be explained in this mode. In moral psychology it has relevance to conscience development (cf Aronfreed, 1968) and character formation (cf Peck and Havighurst, 1960).

At the rational/cognitive level explanation proceeds through the following stages:



Such explanation is found in the Cognitive-Developmental Theories and can be used to account for AUTONOMOUS and PRACTICAL PROBLEM-SOLVING actions where agency and responsibility are ascribed to the subject. This is the mode of explanation appropriate to the study of moral maturity but it is not altogether independent from the two previous modes. Moral action is frequently influenced by habit and moral judgment is frequently influenced by motive. These sources of interaction from one explanatory level to another create some of the most difficult problems for the psychology of morality and in Chapter 4 we turn to a consideration of the determinants of judgment and action in order to explicate some of these problems.

CONCLUSION

The explanation of purposive action has demanded a different paradigm from the deductive covering law model employed in the natural sciences.

The uniqueness of human beings as subjects for science is found in such phenomena as: language, conceptualization, consciousness, and capacity for choice. Explanation can be on different levels, such as: agent vs spectator; mechanistic vs teleological; molecular vs molar.

Accepting the principle of different modes of explanation for different purposes appears to have resolved the traditional paradox of conceiving of man both as a rational being capable of choice and as a legitimate subject for science. In distinguishing between various kinds of behaviour according to the degree of autonomy involved it is possible to make use of both mechanistic and teleological models. Verstehen explanations are in terms of motives, beliefs, emotions, reasons and other commonsense psychological categories.

In the study of moral behaviour it is important to recognize that man is a rule-governed creature and an agent of action. There is a difference between bodily movement and human actions. The latter requires concepts, descriptions, rules under which behaviour becomes action. Explanation needs to be from the agent's viewpoint as well as from the observer's and it needs to provide analysis at

the molar level with the object of study being the person. Data will comprise the agent's self-report on his mental states and his reasons for action.

It can be argued that whenever we appeal to desires, pleasures, emotions, motives, purposes and reasons we are making a moral explanation (Louch, 1966, p. 50). This is because describing something from the viewpoint of an agent involves placing what we call facts within an appraising context. Louch makes the point that explaining human action necessarily invokes evaluative criteria:

> "the man or situation is not seen and then appraised, or appraised and then seen in distortion; it is seen morally. Value and fact merge." (1966, p. 54)

This means that explanation of moral action involves two sets of criteria: those of the agent and those of the observer. Assumptions about the nature of morality are unavoidable.

Theories in moral psychology will explicate the enabling conditions for choice and provide a rationale for judgment, decision and action in terms of underlying cognitive processes and structures.

The cognitive-developmental approach is essentially an action theory in which the agent/spectator problem is overcome by appeal to a morality which makes claim to a universal formal structure despite substantive variations. The view of man is essentially Kantian in characterizing the rational agent as one who is able to establish reasons for acting, to deliberate on these reasons in relation to rules, and to act on his deliberations. As a consequence, judgment has a place of paramount importance within the conceptual framework of this theory.

There are, however, inadequate definitions of what is meant by judgment, how it relates to action, and how it is influenced by the internal affective determinants of behaviour. Chapter 4 will explore some of these difficulties.

The concept of moral maturity is also very important in this theory and is explained in terms of the teleological model. Cognitive structure is manifested in the verbal reports of subjects and is assumed to produce the enabling conditions for autonomous and justifiable action. Too

often, however, the assumptions underlying the view of cognitive development and autonomy remain unstated.

There is a need for greater recognition on the part of developmental psychologists of the explanatory problems which their theories entail, and the philosophical assumptions about the nature of morality and human action which underlie their orientation.

CHAPTER 4

THE CONCEPT OF JUDGMENT

The cognitive-developmental approach in moral psychology involves the analysis of thought structures underlying the moral concepts of persons at different age levels such that a general direction or movement is discovered. In his original work, Kohlberg stated that:

> "The focus of our study is not on behavioural prediction, but on analysis of children's thinking and attitudes about verbal conflict situations of clear moral import." (1958, p. 16).

The central concept taken in this approach to morality is that of active judgment. The meaning of this concept, however, within the explanatory paradigm which is adopted, is rarely given explicit expression. The following statement is as far as Kohlberg seems prepared to go in mapping the logical geography of this term:

> "Judgment is neither the expression of, nor the description of, emotional or volitional states, it is a different kind of function with a definite cognitive structure. We have studied this structure of judgment as the child's use and interpretation of rules in conflict situations, and his reasons for moral action, rather than as correct knowledge of rules or conventional belief in them." (Kohlberg, 1971b, p. 185-6).

The main point here is that judgment involves a verbal response (reasons for moral action) to a practical problem (conflict situation). The response, however, is not determined by the situation but by the relationship of this 'input information' to criteria (or rules) which exist in the individual's 'stored experiences'. Neither, is the response determined by some kind of action-governing rules.

> "Therefore, moral principles are not specific rules for guiding actions, but are modes of making judgments and decisions. This means that a rational process is involved in the moral judgment, rather than a mechanical application of internalized rules." (Kohlberg and Turiel, 1971, p. 447).

This brings us no closer to the 'definite cognitive structure' of judgment and it would seem that Kohlberg avoids going any further than an identification of judgment with some kind of (undefined) 'rational process.'

It is difficult to understand how an empirical psychology of cognition can be credible when its basic concepts are permitted to remain so elusive, though Kohlberg is not the only psychologist to be caught in this predicament. In a recent study of the nature of adolescent judgment (where the concern is with non-moral issues) the author, E.A. Peel, goes no further than Kohlberg in providing a definition of judgment:

> "....Judging is a form of thinking and is therefore invoked whenever we are in a situation for which we have no ready-made answer learned off pat....judgment refers to a situation for which there is no single final correct response to be discovered, but rather a spectrum of responses satisfying different criteria." (Peel, 1971, p. 19).

THE PLACE OF JUDGMENT IN PRACTICAL REASONING

Because judgment involves "going beyond the information given", to use Bruner's phrase, there is always an element which defies precise prediction from a definition of the situation. There is always the possibility of a non-rational element because the process of selection is only guided by relevant reasons--never governed by them. The process of judgment (as selection of reasons for action) is independent, not being extended in time with phases, stages, subprocesses etc. (See Newell, 1968, pp 4-5) If such occur, they belong more at the levels of cognitive appraisal or deliberation. This is not to say that judgment must occur at <u>one</u> point in the problem-solving process for there is good evidence to show that the selective element begins at the perceptual level. Abercrombie (1960) has drawn together the psychological evidence which shows that:

> "In receiving information from a given stimulus pattern we select from the total amount of information available (that is from the complex of the stimulus pattern in its context) and from our own store of information." (1960, p. 142).

The selection or judgment is independent only in the sense that it is distinct from the preceding processes of: evaluating alternatives, determining facts and estimating consequences, subsuming instances of action under general rules of conduct, or justifying intended actions in terms of

fundamental principles. Judgment is an outcome of these processes.[1] At the same time it is logically distinct from the subsequent events of decision (choice/commitment/resolution) and acting. It is therefore possible to judge X, decide Y, and do Z, with respect to a single practical problem.

When we consider moral judgment the distinction between rational appraisal and decision is very important. D.P. Gauthier makes this clear in his discussion of practical judgments.

> "There is no formal relationship between practical judgment and resolves. Two judgments may be mutually contradictory, as may two resolves, but, as Hare rightly observes, an imperative can be entailed by (and hence contradictory to) only another imperative....I may convince you that you ought to do X, but, strictly, I cannot convince you to decide to do X." (1963, p. 17).

Action is determined by much more than judgment if we conceive of man as a conative and desiderative being subject

1. In an examination of the logic of teaching judgment, W. Hare (1971) makes the point that "Going through a preliminary 'weighing up' process therefore is not a sufficient condition of having a sense of judgment. But neither is it a necessary condition." He goes on to argue that, although the sense of judgment does not enable any prediction of outcomes, it is still compatible with the notion of teaching.

   > "The feature of open-endedness necessarily means that there is something vague about the notion of a sense of judgment ie we cannot say in general what a man of judgment will do. Notice, however, that other concepts are similarly vague, for example 'skilful boxer.' Such a description will apply to men of very different styles and varying abilities. It is vague but not empty." (W. Hare, 1971, p. 248)

to the influence of feelings and needs in addition to reasons for acting in certain ways.[2]

R.M. Hare expresses a contemporary interpretation of the Socratic view which can be roughly stated as: to know is to do. For Hare, judgment and decision are logically connected and the test of whether someone is using the judgment 'I ought to do X' as a value judgment or not is, "Does he or does he not recognize that if he assents to the judgment, he must also assent to the command Let me do X?" (Hare, 1952, p. 168-9).[3] Nowell-Smith (1954) takes a very similar position to Hare's in reducing judgments to expressions of decision.

However, there are important conceptual problems in equating judgments with imperatives. One of these relates to the question of moral justification (to be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter). To give an imperative of the form 'You shall do X' or a self-addressed command of the form 'Let me do X' does not logically entail the need for reasons to justify such an action. P.W. Taylor

2. Scheffler (1960) brings out this distinction in relation to moral education where the aim of teaching is not to get the pupil to behave in certain ways but, rather to act in certain ways out of conviction. The following example is used to illustrate his point:

> "Three people may all have learned to be honest, yet the first may be unreflectively honest because he has been reared in a protected environment where the option of acting dishonestly has never been allowed to present itself, the second may be honest because he believes honesty to be essential for advancement in his vocation or because he finds dishonesty emotionally taxing, while the third may be honest because he believes that one ought to be honest."
> (Scheffler, 1960, p. 94)

3. Hare is not absurdly suggesting that a person always does utter such an imperative to himself before acting; rather he claims to be elucidating the formal structure of practical reasoning.

(who in many respects adopts Hare's moral position) explicates the logical relation between prescribing and evaluating.

> "To prescribe an act to someone, then, is not to give a reason for his doing it, whereas to express a positive value judgment about an alternative open to him is to give a reason for choosing it. Value judgments serve to justify acts, prescriptions do not. Value judgments may in fact serve to justify prescriptions themselves." (Taylor, 1961, p. 231).

Another problem which Hare's prescriptivist theory of moral judgment does not satisfactorily deal with is that of 'akrasia' or 'weakness of will.' How do we explain the case of the moral agent who is unable to carry out the moral principle to which he verbally assents? Hare attempts to include all such instances under the general case of non-cognitive psychological forces preventing the agent from acting in a way analogous to physical compulsion. This position has, however, been justifiably criticized on logical grounds. (cf C.C.W. Taylor, 1970).

If we adopt the prescriptivist notion of judgment within a cognitive-developmental theory of morality, moreover, there are empirical problems. How do we account for discrepancies between verbalized judgment and observed behaviour. That this difference exists is a basic claim of the theory and is even given as evidence for the independence of cognitive structure. Kohlberg states this as follows:

> "Judgment does not appear to become 'moral' until early adolescence, while 'morality' of conduct appears to develop early. Individual differences in level of moral judgment are quite general and stable; morality of conduct is more specific to the situation and more unstable over time. Moral judgment appears to develop in the same direction regardless of social groups; moral conduct appears to develop in line with specific social class and peer-group norms." (Kohlberg, 1964, p. 408).

These differences between judgment and conduct suggest that practical judgment needs to be conceived of as action-guiding rather than action-determining.

Even when judgment and conduct are equivalent there is no sufficient evidence that one has determined the other.

However, this does not preclude the possibility of explaining human action by reference to moral judgment.[4]

NON-COGNITIVE INFLUENCES

Action is also influenced by habits and motives. A habit is a behaviour pattern which is conditioned by previous experiences such that deliberation and judgment are circumvented. A motive can be an object of desire or an inner drive arising from organismic or personality needs. Reasons can also function as motives but not all motives need be reasons and it is not possible to balance reasons with motives in such a way that action would always be predictable.

Experimental psychology has shown that both perceptual and cognitive judgment are affected by personality variables such as impulsivity, ego-strength, risk-taking capacity etc. This has acquired greater significance since the movement away from typology theories of personality (cf Freud, Jung) to dimensionality theories (cf Eysenck, Cattell) suggesting that factors which may distort perception or cognition (eg. persecution feelings,

4. This point has been expressed in a recent paper, thus:

> "The possibility of explaining a person's action is then relevant to the practicality of moral judgments in the following way: if a person holds a moral judgment that he ought to do X, then the moral judgment can be said to be practical in that case only if he does X (which is not to deny that it might still be said to be practical in some dispositional sense). But doing X is clearly not sufficient for the practicality of moral judgments, for the judgment might play no role in his so acting".
> (Boatright, 1973, p. 325)

authoritarianism) may be present in varying degrees in so-called 'normal' people (cf. Berkowitz, 1960).[5]

Because moral judgment may be affected by motives as well as impelled by reasons, and because there may be a discrepancy between judgment and subsequent action,[6] the thesis has been put that one can explain what a moral judgment is only by invoking the notion of expressing a moral attitude.[7]

Alston (1968) however, argues for the conceptual independence of moral judgment and moral attitude, though he does acknowledge that an attitude can dispose one towards the separate states of emotion, judgment or action. Judgment is thus subsumed under the wider concept of moral attitude and Hare's problem of having action dependent on judgment is overcome. A person may judge something differently from the action to which his underlying attitude disposes him.

One cannot necessarily infer from a justificatory speech-act of the type which comprises the data for Kohlberg's

5. Bruner (1957) cites experiments which have shown that distorted expectancies arise when the desirability or undesirability of events distorts the learning of their probability of occurrence. Such findings confirm that the cognitive/affective dichotomy is an artificial one. The individual's structuring of a situation is to some extent influenced by his needs and desires.

6. In the moral sphere one can speak of (i) 'failure of will' wherein the judgment does not lead to a resolve to act, and (ii) 'weakness of will', or what Aristotle called 'akrasia', wherein one fails to act even after resolving to do so. In each case there are likely to be non-voluntary, affective factors producing the moral turpitude.

7. This is the position taken by the modern school of emotivist ethics represented in the work of C.L. Stevenson.

theory anything more than the cognitive structure which gives it meaning. Inferences about attitude, disposition to act, affective and motivational states--all of which may be more relevant to moral behaviour, must depend on separate data.

ASSUMPTIONS

There are two assumptions, generally unstated, which give 'judgment' its central place in the cognitive-developmental theory of morality

A. Moral Position

This is the assumption that Kantian ethics or a form of moral rationalism is superior to emotivism. This is the view that there is a 'true morality' (objective and universal) which can be uncovered by reason or discovered 'in the nature of things'. Judgment is the process whereby the Reason legislates over the Will in discerning the Good and therefore determining what a person desires.

Richard Taylor (1970) is one modern philosopher who opposes this Kantian position. He argues for a theory of moral voluntarism, whereby man is conceived of as having the natural capacity for sympathetic projection and is motivated by two opposing forces: the incentive of compassion and the incentive of malice. Out of these arises the distinction between good and evil which are qualities ascribed to objects by men but not inherent in the objects themselves.

Taylor denounces casuistry (the determination of the moral quality of particular actions by the subsumption of them under true general rules or principles of morality) as a form of rationalization.

> "Moral principles are nothing but conventions, but they have the real and enormous value to life that conventions in general possess. They help men to get where they want to go." (p. 172).

In his theory of moral voluntarism Taylor places the conative capacity above the cognitive and asserts that the end or goal of a man's activity is set by the Will. Thus, to say that anything is a man's goal or the object of his desire is simply to say that it is willed. Reason is subject to Will and, therefore, judgment has a very subordinate position in explanations of action within moral

theories of the type which Taylor espouses.

The cognitive-developmentalist, in giving a paramount place to judgment, commits himself to a conception of morality which lies within a particular tradition and to which there are well-argued philosophical alternatives.

B. Epistemological Inference

This is the assumption that a verbal expression of judgment can represent an internal cognitive structure within which a person's conceptions of a moral order are held. This includes the further assumption that the quality of this structure reflects a stage of moral maturity and hence the degree of moral superiority of the reasoning which lies behind overt conduct.

Kohlberg justifies his own acceptance of these assumptions by

(1) admitting that his 'scientific' theory has built into it claims about the relative worth of the various stages of development in judgment. (Kohlberg, 1971b, p. 181).

(2) claiming that there is empirical evidence for psychological development of moral thinking paralleling a logical hierarchy of the thoughts expressed in justificatory speech-acts. (1971b, pp 183-185).

(3) giving affective-volitional components a subordinate place to cognitive components in moral judgment. He states that:

> "In contrast to irrational emotive theories of moral development such as those of Durkheim and Freud, the cognitive-developmental view holds that 'cognition' and 'affect' are different aspects, or perspectives, on the same mental events.....moral judgments often involve strong emotional components, but this in no way reduces the cognitive component of moral judgment.....Just as the quantitative strength of the emotional component is irrelevant to the theoretical importance of cognitive structure for understanding the development of scientific judgment, so the quantitative role of affect is relatively irrelevant for understanding the structure and development of moral judgment.....the quality (as opposed to the quantity) of affects involved in moral judgment is determined by its cognitive-structural development, and is part and parcel of the general development of the child's conceptions of a moral order." (Kohlberg, 1971b, pp 188-189).

The view that emotion entails some kind of 'cognitive appraisal' and is, therefore, essentially passive, has been

advanced by several philosophers (Kenny, 1963; Wilson, 1971; Peters, 1972). It is not clear, however, what Kohlberg can mean by referring to 'cognition' and 'affect' as two different aspects of a 'mental event' which exists presumably at some level above (or removed from) the level of verbalized judgment.

There is a confusion here as to what is to count as the meaning of a moral judgment. Is it the expressed statement "Heinz ought to have stolen the drug" or is it some presumably prior mental event, having both cognitive and affective aspects which can vary in both quantity and quality? The implication is that we accept the verbal expression as representing the internal structure but the only way of arriving at the quality of the latter is by asking the agent the further question 'Why?' and evaluating the response.[8] It might be asked whether this method does involve an access to the phenomenological world of the subject or whether such notions of judgment which postulate mental events having both cognitive and emotional components, to use Kohlberg's terms, introduce a dualistic 'ghost in the machine' concept which Ryle (1949) has rigorously argued[9] stems from a category mistake in the use of language.

8. Kohlberg is not at all clear about what is to count as the observable representation of inner structure and is led into making perplexing statements, such as "attempting to observe thought process" in the following passage:

> "The progressive or cognitive-developmental view attempts to integrate both behaviour and internal states in a functional epistemology of mind. It takes inner experience seriously by attempting to observe thought process rather than language behaviour and by observing valuing processes rather than reinforced behaviour." (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972, p. 461).

9. In Ryle's view psychological statements are not reports of mental acts but are hypothetical or semi-hypothetical statements about overt behaviour. However, not all philosophers agree with Ryle and a well developed case for the logical status of mental acts has been argued by Geach (1957).

The source of Kohlberg's confusion as to the psychological locus of moral judgment is in the criteria which he sets up for distinguishing and comparing moral judgments. These criteria cannot be applied to the judgmental speech-act "Heinz ought to have stolen the drug" because the level of moral maturity depends on the kind of reasoning the individual typically uses. Two people may agree on what should be done but if the reasons given by one are in terms of the instrumental satisfaction of needs, he will be ascribed to Stage 2, whereas the other may give reasons relating to individual rights and social standards and therefore be ascribed to Stage 5. The assumption is that the judgment (as speech-act) is the product of a reasoning process occurring within a cognitive structure which can be represented by further speech-acts of a justificatory nature. What can be meant by the judgment as a mental act is not at all clear. Nor is it clear that the justificatory utterances elicited by the Why? question represent some cognitive process which preceded this mental act. Further confusion arises when the subject gives a number of different reasons all at different stages in the hierarchy. On which one would the judgment be based?

CONCLUSION

The concept of judgment has a central explanatory status in the cognitive-developmental theory. However, when it appears in the psychological literature, this word lacks the precision of usage and clarity of meaning one should expect in a theory of moral action.

The empirical data on which Kohlberg's research is based, when viewed as observable phenomena, comprises a number of justificatory speech-acts or 'reasons for action' given in response to 'Why?' questions. This empirical domain contains no other behavioural elements unless subsequent action is recorded. The inferential domain comprises a cognitive structure in which moral judgments are formulated by a process involving appraisal of the situational content against formal criteria such as rules for action or moral principles. Decision to act is also

within this inferential domain, though it may be manifested in a speech-act. Conceptually, then, within the process of practical reasoning, judgment, resolution and action are independent and subject to mediational, non-cognitive influences such as motive and habit. The problem for the empiricist is to define the precise operation which will give meaning to the notion of judgment in more than a merely nominal sense.

Prescriptivism is not a solution because it does not explain the logical connection between reasons for action and the universalized imperative. Nor does it adequately account for discrepancies between verbalized judgment and subsequent action. It is therefore not clear what kind of relationship exists in cognitive-developmental theory between what is observed and what is inferred.

There are elements of prescriptivism in the theory but also elements of naturalism (the cognitive structure determines a certain 'moral sense' or disposition to judge in certain more or less justifiable ways). It would seem then that the ambivalence in the way the concept of judgment is used is part of the larger meta-ethical problems of defining morality and justifying ultimate principles. These problems are the focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

MORALITY : PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION AND JUSTIFICATION

One of the most commonplace assertions in the debate about the definition of morality is that moral terms are used in many different ways at different times and by different people. Defining the moral domain, therefore, has been one of the most challenging tasks facing psychologists interested in moral behaviour, and it is one which can be achieved only under the scrutiny of philosophical debate. (cf Wallace and Walker, 1970).

Traditionally, the social scientist has viewed morality simply as a social code (cf Durkheim, 1925) using the term in a purely descriptive sense, as when sociologists talk about "the morality" of a particular society or social group. Frankena (1963, p. 9) describes such moral positions as those which "hold that our judging and deciding is moral if and only if it is done from a certain point of view which is not definable in purely formal terms; its definition may include purely formal features but it must also include a material one." These positions, therefore, will assert "some reference to the welfare of others, the security of social life, etc, as part of the meaning of words like 'moral' and 'morality' when used as second-order terms" (Frankena, 1963, p. 9). It is often assumed that formal features are relative and the perplexing questions of ultimate justification for moral principles are avoided by identifying such principles with the culture-bound norms or mores of a particular group. Sociologists and social anthropologists adopting such a relativist position will tend to study the manifest and latent functions of particular moral beliefs in maintaining the social order or group properties of a defined collective of human beings.

Some psychologists, however, have found a common ground with those philosophers who have emphasized the formal criteria of moral judgments and statements. Kohlberg

speaks for the cognitive-developmentalists when he asserts:

> "....like most moral philosophers from Kant to Hare, Baier, Aiken, etc., we define morality in terms of the formal character of a moral judgment or a moral point of view, rather than in terms of its content. Impersonality, ideality, universalizability, and pre-emptiveness are among the formal characteristics of a moral judgment. These are best seen in the reasons given for a moral judgment, a moral reason being one which has such properties as these." (Kohlberg, 1971a, p. 55).

It is, therefore, significant that Kohlberg's original thesis begins with an examination of the criteria of moral judgments (Kohlberg, 1958, pp 8-13). However, the limitations of these criteria can be readily shown.

Firstly, Kohlberg defines what he calls "motivational characteristics of a moral orientation" as follows:

(i) Moral action is oriented to or preceded by a value judgment. (The implicit problems contained in this view were discussed in the previous chapter).

(ii) Moral judgments are viewed by the judge as taking priority over other value judgments. (This assumes that there are criteria for distinguishing the moral from other value areas such as aesthetic, political, or religious. It is not valid to hold the notion of priority as a criterion when it is itself an evaluative concept necessitating further criteria).

(iii) Moral actions and judgments are associated with judgments of the self as good or bad. (This criterion clearly contains an implicit circularity. It is hardly a distinguishing criterion of a value statement or action for it to be a subjective expression of approval or disapproval on the part of the agent).

(iv) Moral judgments tend to be justified or based on reasons which are not limited to consequences of that particular act in that situation. (It does not logically follow that an inclination towards justification in terms of general principles or even the observation that people do not restrict their reasons to the situational content is sufficient to show that this is conceptually necessary.

Secondly, Kohlberg sets up what he calls "cognitive criteria of moral judgments" as follows:

(i) Moral judgments tend toward a high degree of generality, universality, consistency and inclusiveness.

(ii) Moral judgments tend to be considered as objective by their makers i.e. to be agreed to independently of differences of personality and interest.

From these two sets of criteria, which were initially advanced by Kohlberg in 1958, we might infer that he conceives moral judgment as being exclusively cognitive (given a basic motivational orientation) and definable in terms which are completely independent of content. Subsequent writings, however, reflect a lack of consistency with regard to his position on this basic philosophical issue.

Within the context of one recent paper he initially asserts:

> "Following formalist philosophers from Kant to Hare I have claimed that only the higher stages of moral thought have the formal features of distinctively moral judgment" (Kohlberg, 1971a, p. 57).

Here Kohlberg seems to be referring to the post-conventional stages of principled morality. However, a little further in the same paper we find the following point:

> "Now it is clear that our conception of moral principle implies that one cannot ultimately separate form and content in moral analysis" (1971a, p. 60).

The confusion arises because of a failure to provide a means for distinguishing the moral domain.

It is assumed that the psychologist-observer will <u>know</u> when the agent is proferring moral reasons, and it is considered unnecessary to explain why the moral dilemmas are held to be <u>moral</u> in kind. Perhaps there would be little disagreement with the particular situations Kohlberg has chosen, but one could envisage other situations containing unresolved conflicting claims where the domain might be better described in non-moral terms (many disputes, for instance, are described as purely legal or political or economic).

Furthermore, Kohlberg asserts that the higher stages of moral judgment constitute a morality which is more 'moral',

in a logical sense, from that of the lower stages:

> "Thus the responses of lower level subjects concerning moral judgment matters fail to be moral responses in somewhat the same sense that the value judgments of high level subjects concerning aesthetics or morally neutral matters fail to be moral. In this sense, we can define a moral judgment as 'moral' without considering its content (the action judged) and without considering whether it agrees with our own judgments or standards" (1971a, p. 57).

This is clearly a formalist claim, yet the criteria for distinguishing the method of reasoning from the substance or content have only recently been attempted to be explicated by Kohlberg (1973) in response to considerable dialectical pressure (cf Discussion section in Beck, Crittenden and Sullivan, 1971). The argument which is advanced, however, is weakened by lack of consistency in the adoption of a clear moral position.

KOHLBERG'S MORAL POSITION

Arguments concerning the nature of moral principles advanced from the traditional positions of the intuitionists, naturalists and non-naturalists (cf. Hospers, 1961; Peters, 1966; Warnock, 1967) are all, in a sense, reducible to disagreement about the nature of the difference between propositions of the type 'X is the case' and propositions of the type 'X ought to be the case.'

The naturalist argues that normative claims and moral issues can be settled by empirically or scientifically ascertainable facts such that 'X ought to be the case because X has property Y.' Max Black, for instance, has argued that certain factual statements about a chess game entail that a player should (or ought to) move the queen, and further that the same may hold in some moral cases (1969, pp 99-113). However, Moore has argued against the naturalist's view with his famous 'open question' : 'I know that this act has property X but still, is it right?' The intuitionist's reply is that, in the final analysis, we know a priori that it is right, while the emotivist replies that the question is empty because its rightness is a matter of our attitude or feeling of approval and therefore not verifiable in the way factual assertions are. The difference between these

positions rests on the logical character of the proposition 'X is right.' Does it have the same logical status as 'X is green' or 'Do X' or 'Hurrah for X' for 'I approve of X'?

A further problem, which was referred to in the previous chapter, concerns the relationship between moral language and moral conduct. Views which claim that moral judgments express statements are often called 'cognitivist.' (Both 'intuitionism', which sees them as a priori statements, and 'naturalism', which sees them as a posteriori, are cognitivist positions). Views according to which moral judgments are considered to be commands, wishes or expressions of attitude are usually called 'non-cognitivist'. (Both 'emotivism' and 'prescriptivism' take this view). Non-cognitivists typically hold that the practicality of moral judgments requires that there be a logical relation between moral judgments and actions such that a person's moral conduct and his reasons for justifying that conduct must be included in the analysis of moral judgments. On the other hand, cognitivists typically hold that moral judgments have only a contingent and not a logical relation with moral actions and therefore the analysis of moral judgments does not necessarily entail a reference to either reasons for acting or moral action per se. Clearly, the position one takes will be fundamental in determining whether the analysis of moral judgments can (a) include empirical data about the agent, such as his level of moral maturity, and (b) explain the subsequent moral conduct of the agent.

These problems lie at the heart of moral philosophy and it is not surprising, therefore, that philosophers are not easily convinced when a developmental psychologist advances a metaethical view which attempts to bridge the gap between naturalistic and non-naturalistic theories of moral judgment and justification (Kohlberg, 1971b, p. 223; Kohlberg, 1973).

Firstly, Kohlberg adopts what appears to be a cognitivist position by arguing that both logic and morality develop through stages and that each stage is a structure which,

when its formal aspects are considered is in better equilibrium than its predecessor.

> "Our theory assumes that new moral structures presuppose new logical structures, ie., that a new logical stage (or substage) is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a new moral stage. It assumes, however, that moral judgments (or moral equilibrium) involves two related processes or conditions absent in the logical domain. First, moral judgments involve role-taking, taking the point of view of others conceived as subjects and coordinating those points of view, whereas logic involves only coordinating points of view upon objects. Second, equilibrated moral judgments involve principles of justice or fairness. A moral situation in disequilibrium is one in which there are unresolved conflicting claims." (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 633).

One would infer from this account that a moral judgment is a statement concerning the resolution of these conflicting claims and that the governing 'principles of justice or fairness' are either known intuitively or emerge because 'that is the way a person's thinking develops.' Although one might describe this as a purely cognitive position, it is not enough to explain moral action. While role-taking is sufficient to enable the extension of viewpoints, it involves merely conceiving of the situation from another person's point-of-view and this is not enough to explain the moral situation. It is necessary, in the full moral sense of 'concern for others' to be committed to the worth and importance of that view. Role-taking may be a necessary condition for the human states of sympathy and compassion, but it is hardly sufficient. Indeed, such powerful components of mature moral conduct seem to completely transcend the level of cognitive judgment and assume a much more pervasive and perhaps more significant place in the whole pattern of moral life. According to R.S. Peters, Kohlberg's whole account of moral development suffers from the defects of the Kantian approach.

> "There is an exclusive interest in how the individual conceives of interpersonal rules. This is what the Piagetian type of test elicits from the subjects of investigation. There is no probing of the motives that explain their actions, no assessment of the intensity or level of compassion which suffuses their dealings with others. Yet this, surely is developmentally most important; for what is the moral status of a man who can reason in an abstract way about rules if he does not care about people who are affected by his breach or observance of them?" (Peters, 1973a, p.26)

This raises again the problems inherent in the concept of judgment as an explanatory basis for moral action which were treated in the two previous chapters. But let us, at this point, return to Kohlberg's moral position.

He argues that moral stages constitute a hierarchy of forms of moral integration and an order of moral adequacy. Since they develop naturally, not as a result of the individual modelling himself on his environment, but as a result of interaction with it, Kohlberg claims to have bridged the logical gap between 'is' and 'ought'.

This claim rests on the assumption that there is an isomorphism of psychological and normative theory leading to the bold assertion that an empirical sequence can entail a logical sequence and so rejecting the long-standing Humean defence of the "autonomy of ethics." He states that:

> "The scientific theory as to why people do move upward from stage to stage, and why they factually do prefer a higher stage to a lower, is broadly the same as a moral theory as to why people should prefer a higher stage to a lower" (Kohlberg, 1971b, p. 223).

But Kohlberg nowhere shows how it is conceptually possible to equate "what is desired" with "what is desirable." The following statement is neither a logical argument nor is it complete:

> "Our assumption of isomorphism implies first the assumption of continuity between the context of discovery of moral viewpoints (studied by the psychology of moral development) and the context of justification of moral viewpoints (studied by formal moral philosophy). This implies that the philosopher's justification of a higher stage of moral reasoning maps into the psychologist's explanation of movement to that stage, and vice versa. The isomorphism assumption is plausible if one believes that the developing human being and the moral philosopher are engaged in fundamentally the same moral task. (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 633).

This constitutes some kind of statement of belief and it cannot be fully understood without a clear explication of what is meant in this context by 'maps into' or, more important still, just what kind of moral task is here being referred to. If it is the task of answering the question "What ought I to do" then some would argue that this is not the aim of moral philosophy and represents only a confusion

of analytic ethics with substantive ethics (cf Aiken, H.D. 1955).[1] Even conjecture on what Kohlberg sees as the task of the moral philosopher is not likely to render an explanation of the isomorphism assumption while the ethical position on which cognitive-developmentalism is based remains so confused.

The claim that moral theories are derivative from the natural processes of development is clearly a 'naturalist' position which has to be somehow wedded to his claim that the '"equilibration" assumptions of our psychological theory are naturally allied to the formalistic tradition in philosophic ethics from Kant to Rawls' (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 633).[2] What develops naturally, according to Kohlberg, is not merely the capacity to reason about moral issues, but the necessity to espouse certain substantive moral principles.

> "Our notions of moral philosophic adequacy derive, then, from the notion that moral theories are derivative from the natural structures we term "stages." The structures are "natural", not in the sense of being innate, but in the sense of being the sequential results of processing moral experience, not derivative from particular teachings or particular moral ideologies or theories. In this sense notions of natural rights, social contract, and utility are "natural structures" emerging in nonphilosophers from reflection upon the limits of customary morality in very varied cultural and educational circumstances."
> (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 634).

1. This position is strongly argued by Nowell-Smith (1954) and he concludes with the following statement (cf Hare, 1952, p. 77f):

   "The most a moral philosopher can do is to paint a picture of various types of life....and ask which type of life you really want to lead. The questions 'what shall I do?' and 'what moral principles should I adopt?' must be answered by each man for himself; that at least is part of the connotation of the word 'moral.'" (pp 319-20)

2. Rawls is far less in the formalistic tradition than R.M. Hare. However, he does share with Kohlberg the neo-Platonic view that man has the innate capacity to recognize justice and to seek it (Rawls, 1971).

The cognitive-developmental theory, as it is presented by Kohlberg, rests on the assumption that there is greater agreement among philosophers on the nature of moral reasoning than is, in fact, the case. For this reason it appears, Kohlberg fails to maintain a consistent interpretation of morality. At the highest moral stage there is a combination of the prescriptivist account of moral language with a cognitive naturalistic position regarding the justification of moral principles.

> "What we are claiming is that developmental theory assumes formalistic criteria of adequacy, the criteria of levels of differentiation and integration. In the moral domain, these criteria are parallel to formalistic moral philosophy's criteria of prescriptivity and universality."
> (Kohlberg, 1971b, p. 216).

Although he affiliates himself with the formalistic tradition in ethics from Kant to Hare, Kohlberg explains the highest stage of development in terms of a "moral sense" (i.e. moral maturity of cognition in the processing of experience) which ensures that judgments are rational, universalizable imperatives derived from freely chosen principles and resolving conflicts of interests.

This "moral sense" component is clearly a naturalistic notion and, as will be later argued, is basic to Kohlberg's concept of development. In essence, from this view morality is justified on the grounds that man, if he develops naturally, wants to act according to reason. This approach, which is basically Platonic, has been taken, in differing forms, by Sidgwick (1907), Baier (1958), and more recently by Nagel (1970), Richards (1971) and Rawls (1971). However, in defining the moral realm and the logical status of moral judgments, Kohlberg owes much to the prescriptivist theory of moral language advanced by R.M. Hare (1952, 1963) which was briefly discussed in the previous chapter. The extent to which this theory succeeds in setting up purely formal linguistic criteria for the definition of moral judgments requires further consideration at this point.

THE LANGUAGE OF MORALITY

Let us consider in what ways a statement like, "Never say what is false" is different from a statement like "All men need oxygen." Clearly, the first is prescriptive or imperative and functions to guide conduct, while the second is descriptive or indicative and functions to state something about reality. According to Hare (1952), language functions at two different levels. There are speech-acts where the substance being communicated depends largely on rules governing sense and reference or criteria of application i.e. 'descriptive discourse,' and there are speech-acts where the main substance is the performative force i.e. informing, warning, ordering etc. Any single sentence may contain elements of both traditional reference meaning, or phrastic, to use Hare's term, and of performative force, or neustic. In a descriptive sentence the phrastic is all-important and the neustic is merely 'to inform', whereas in a prescriptive sentence the neustic predominates. Moral language is of the latter form.

In moral reasoning, Hare maintains, we begin with at least one premise which is a prescriptive principle, but the subsequent logic is deductive and analytic. Provided we acknowledge that we cannot draw a prescriptive conclusion from purely factual premises (sometimes referred to as the 'conceptual autonomy of ethics') we can, nevertheless, regard practical reasoning as a rational activity concerning "matters of substance" and having as its end-product an imperative of the form 'Do so-and-so.'

In addition to being an imperative, there is another condition to be met, in Hare's view, before we can regard a principle as <u>moral</u>. It must be a universalizable prescription. This means that anyone who accepts the moral principle that he ought to do X is logically committed to doing X and is also committed to the view that anybody, including himself, in the same circumstances ought to act in this way.

The problem which Hare faces as a formalist, is not what is "moral" assuming a particular ethical view, but rather what, if anything, allows one to define a rule as

a moral rule without assuming a particular commitment to an ethical position. That such rules should govern human action as it affects self or others is clearly not sufficient, as this would not preclude such rules as might govern a boxing contest or a rugby match.[3] Likewise, rules cannot be defined as distinctly moral when they govern situations involving the considering of alternatives. One is therefore pushed further back in defence of a formal criterion towards a claim that moral rules are justified by reference to higher order principles. This, however, produces a problem of regress for there remains then the need to establish criteria by which to define moral principles and it is arguable whether prescriptivity and universality are sufficient.

When we come to apply the criterion of universalizability, moral content enters almost unnoticed for it requires, for example, that all humans are to be treated as being of the same kind. This means that, for moral purposes, the agent assumes that his feelings are the same as anyone else's in that situation. But human nature may not have the consistency which Hare assumes and, in any case, whether or not it has, is a substantive matter.[4] It has been

3. For Baier (1958) the moral point of view consists in following rules which are designed to over-ride self-interest in favour of the interest of all. He has thus introduced content to define morality and Baier would not hold that his is a formalist position.

4. Hare is aware of this problem in his theory-especially where prescriptions include the desires of the agent. He acknowledges that:

"We have not.....explained how we are to compare the intensities of desires had at different times or by different people."
(Hare, 1972, p. 104).

argued (MacIntyre, 1971, pp 96-108) that the universalizable criterion is not strictly necessary for a judgment to be moral. This would be particularly true for principles of supererogation. When a person decides to act in a way which clearly goes beyond the level of common duty, he may claim that this decision arises from certain characteristics of his own life which would not be common to all men. He may consider that these unique features of experience provide him with relevant moral reasons, but would not need to be universalizable except in the very weak sense that anyone else exactly like himself should make the same judgment in the situation.

It becomes apparent then that there are major problems in setting up purely formal criteria for deciding whether or not a judgment is a moral one. Crittenden (1972, p. 4) has recently pointed out that:

> "The judgment that settles what a person should do (and on which he acts) may satisfy the prescriptive and universalizable conditions, but still be of the kind that many would call say, aesthetic or prudential rather than moral. People sometimes do recognize certain reasons and judgments as moral and as relevent to what they should do if they were disposed to act morally. However, in making a decision, they give greater weight to various kinds of non-moral reasons."

While there may be a large amount of general agreement about the kind of problems which call for moral judgment and the kind of reasons that are morally relevant, it is not enough to take purely formal criteria as defining these.

Crittenden argues for an ultimately substantive criterion:

> "....we recognize that someone is raising a moral question, stating a moral problem, and making a moral judgment about what should be done, from the substantive concepts in which he describes or argues about the situation. Regardless of a person's sincerity, logical tone of voice when using words like 'ought', consistency and form of argument, we cannot say that he is engaged in moral inquiry unless he is using the substantive language of moral practice." (1972, p. 33)

The kind of morality to be found at Kohlberg's highest stage is not definable simply in terms of whether or not the judgments made can be shown to be universalizable imperatives. A substantive moral component is required. It is this which enables Kohlberg to be certain that the dilemmas used in his empirical work are presenting valid

moral problems and will be recognized by his subjects as such. These dilemmas are moral, not because they employ words such as 'right', 'wrong', 'duty', 'should' and 'ought', but because these words are used in a context which involves conflict between practices and human activities which are recognized as moral because they involve the content or substance which one accepts as having moral meaning. Kohlberg would agree that this substance, in terms of the practices, is culturally relative, but he would want to claim that the principles creating the conflict are universally recognizable as being moral principles. Crittenden points out the fallacy contained in this claim:

> "There is Heinz - to take one example from Kohlberg's stories - who steals an expensive drug in an effort to save his dying wife. We see this as a moral problem, perhaps even a dilemma, because on the one hand respect for life and the special moral relationship of husband and wife are involved, and on the other the institution of personal ownership and the moral notion of stealing. But suppose someone does not recognize or has no awareness of the moral aspect of property. 'Stealing' for him does not describe a moral act; it is simply more or less synonymous with 'taking'. He will not see Heinz's problem as a moral one. Perhaps he will be interested in the practical problem of how Heinz can acquire the drug or money necessary to buy it without being caught. The case would also be radically changed as a moral problem for anyone who did not believe that the moral concern for life extended to the use of extraordinary means, or who could not appreciate why a man should feel he had to make a special effort when the dying person was his wife." (1972, p. 34).

The inconsistency in Kohlberg's position is that, while espousing a formalist approach like Hare's, he explicitly argues that morality is synonymous with the principle of justice (Kohlberg, 1971a, pp 62-66; Kohlberg and Turiel, 1971, p. 447). Attainment of complete moral maturity, according to Kohlberg, is not only equivalent, therefore, to the capacity to apply analytical reasoning to universalizable imperatives, or to gain competence in the language of morality; it also includes a 'natural' disposition to regard the interests of others as of equal value to ones own. Moral content has, therefore, not been excluded.

MORAL UNIVERSALITY

The cognitive-developmental theory assumes moral universality by implying universality of stage sequence under varying cultural conditions. Moral development is a natural process and not merely a matter of learning the substantive values or rules of a culture. It is not relative to socio-cultural environment but is universal to human development.[5]

Kohlberg distinguishes two types of moral relativism.

> "Extreme relativism denies that there is a culturally universal meaning to moral terms and implies that (a) differences in value standards between individuals or groups cannot be legitimately evaluated as more or less moral or adequate, and (b) that value differences cannot be explained by a theory of morality, but must be explained by a theory of psychological need, or of culture and subculture." (1971b, p. 174).

A more popular view among social scientists is what Kohlberg calls moderate or sociological relativism (cf Brandt, 1959) and he cites the theories of Sumner (1906) and Durkheim (1925) as examples of this approach in which a sharp distinction is made between a culturally universal moral form and culturally variable moral content.

In contrast to both of these views, Kohlberg asserts that:

> "not only is there a universal moral form, but the basic content principles of morality are universal" (1971b, p. 177).

The empirical support for this claim was critically examined in Chapter 2 and it has led to the conclusion that:

> "There is a universal set of moral principles held by men in various cultures, our stage 6. (These principles, we shall argue, could logically and consistently be held by all men in all societies; they would in fact be universal to all mankind if the conditions for socio-moral development were optimal for all individuals in all cultures.) At lower levels than stages 5 or 6 morality is not held in a fully principled form. Accordingly, it is more subject to specific content influence by group definition of the situation than is principled morality." (1971b, p. 178).

5. Hare has argued that a naturalist cannot avoid being a universalist (Hare, 1963, p. 19).

What we are to consider here, is the problem of justifying these conclusions, not on empirical, but on logical grounds.

Firstly, let us see how far it might be possible to go in establishing formal criteria for justifying moral judgments. Such a position would hold that the process of justification is a method of reasoning and is logically separate from the substance of what is to be justified. This does not mean that people cannot be convinced about moral principles without being able to state explicitly how they can be justified (cf Oakeshott, 1962) but it places an onus on the philosopher or psychologist who is maintaining that there is a logical necessity that they should be convinced. The problem rests on the extent to which we can define the principles governing moral discourse per se as distinct from the principles contained in the subject-matter of that discourse (cf Kerner, 1966, p. 175). A universal justification of such principles is not aimed at the discovery of 'moral truth', but at the discovery of a 'morally reasonable' procedure for arriving at judgments which will meet formal criteria by being reversible, consistent, universalizable and prescriptive. Kohlberg claims (1973, p. 641) that only the substantive moral judgments made at stage 6 fully meet these conditions because at stage 6 moral structures are ultimately equilibrated.

This attempt to justify stage 6 principles is based on the assumption that meeting the formal conditions of moral judgment (reversibility, consistency universalizability and prescriptivity) is parallel with the equilibration of fully logical thought in the realm of physical or logical facts. However, while we can recognize that moral reasoning follows certain logical conditions, it is a fallacy to suppose that reasoning of this kind 'stands in the same relation to the practice of evaluating and morally judging as reasoning in mathematics or formal logic stands to the solution of mathematical or logical problems' (Crittenden, 1972, p. 37). This distinction between evaluative reasoning and reasoning in mathematics and the empirical sciences has been elaborated in the theory of Paul Taylor

(1961) which derives much from Hare's approach. Taylor argues that value judgments are distinct from non-evaluative assertions in that the former are justified by the giving of reasons, whereas the latter are verified by giving criteria for their truth.

> "We verify (or confirm) a proposition by showing that it is true, that is, by giving the evidence for it, or by offering reasons in support of it, or by proving it, or by specifying the grounds on which it rests and showing that they are good grounds. We justify a decision, an act, or a disposition by giving reasons for <u>making</u> the decision, for <u>doing</u> the act, or for <u>having</u> the disposition."
> (Taylor, 1961, p. 70).

On this view, then, if there is to be universal agreement on stage 6 judgments, there must be universal agreement on what sorts of reasons are good reasons in justifying such value judgments.

The process of moral reasoning, according to Taylor, begins with relating the single act or judgment to a general rule or social practice (verification). When we seek to justify the social practice itself we appeal to higher principles (validation) which, arranged in a hierarchy and ideally being relevant to our conduct, free from exceptions and free from internal conflict, constitute our particular moral value system. We do hold other value systems (eg aesthetic, religious) which combine to constitute our total way of life but what differentiates a moral value system from any other kind is the moral point of view and 'what defines the point of view is the canons of reasoning that govern the justification of the assertions made from it' (Taylor, 1961, p. 109).

The next step in Taylor's procedure, beyond validation, is the justification of our supreme principles themselves, for which we must use the method of vindication. A value system is vindicated by reference to 'a set of value systems each of which belongs to a different point of view and all of which are arranged in an order of relative precedence' (1961, p. 135). In such a way, living in accordance with the value system is shown to be a means to and part of, a rationally chosen way of life. This means, firstly, that the way of life must be chosen among alternative ways of life and, secondly, the choice is rational to the extent

that it is free, enlightened and impartial. This assumes, of course, that we are committed to the ideal of rationality and it is not necessary to incorporate this ideal into a way of life because there is no possible context for the converse (ie irrationality).[6]

The similarity with Hare's position becomes obvious as he also argues that our decision to accept a moral principle, is rationally arrived at. However, at this point he has been challenged.

> "Hare does not explain how the more momentous and ultimate decisions - the decisions of principles - can themselves be defended by reasons. From Hare's writings we get inevitably the impression that they really cannot be defended at all and that morality rests on decisions and commitments for which rational justification is out of place"
> (Kerner, 1966, p. 177).

Warnock (1967) questions the effectiveness of universalizability as a means of justification (p. 43) and, like Kerner, sees an ultimate arbitrariness in Hare's position, maintaining that 'he is saying, not only that it is for us to decide what our moral opinions are, but also that it is for us to decide what to take as grounds for or against any moral opinion' (p. 47).

It is at this point that we begin to see the limits of formal criteria in the justification of moral judgments.

If we continue to pursue Hare's argument beyond this point we find him arguing that justification carries weight only if the person in question is in a good position to make the decision or pass the judgment. His view begins to merge with the 'Ideal Observer Theory' (cf Hospers, 1961, pp 546-551) as he argues that while in science we test singular statements of fact by generalizing and observing consequences; in morals we test singular prescriptions or imperatives by universalizing and inferring consequences. We refute a scientific law[7] by showing that it is

6. This is arguable, as some ways of life may view the irrational as being sometimes the only human thing to do (cf D.H. Lawrence).

7. cf Popper's falsifiability criterion.

inconsistent with facts; we refute a moral principle by showing that it is inconsistent with inclinations (Hare, 1963, 6'3). Moral reasoning, therefore, consists of 'exploring what singular prescriptions the agent is willing to universalize on the basis of the inclinations which he has as an informed, imaginative, and sympathetic individual' (Kerner, 1966, p. 188). Agreement is possible because 'people's inclinations about most of the important matters in life tend to be the same' (Hare, 1963, p. 97).

Taylor finds himself in a similar position to Hare when pushed on the fundamental question of what is to count as a rule for the relevance of reasons in moral judgment. The best he can do is speak in general terms of these rules as the ones which we would follow if we were being fully rational in our moral thinking. He takes a Platonic stand : X is the rational thing to do <u>means</u> X ought to be done.'

> "No reasons can be given for living a rational life but no reasons <u>need</u> to be given. For knowing that a certain way of life is rational is knowing that one is wholly justified in committing oneself to it"[8] (Taylor, 1961, p. 188)

The question we must ask, however, is whether it is sufficient justification for a moral position to argue that 'people's inclinations tend to be the same' or that most would agree to holding as the supreme value principle of human life something like 'Always act as rationally as possible.'

The positions of Hare and Taylor, which represent ethical theories of particular relevance to Kohlberg's claims of universality, reflect that ultimately any moral view rests on a commitment to a particular view of man. One has only to delve below the surface of any ethical theory to find assumptions about human nature.

8. cf Hare (1952, p. 69):

> "Far from being arbitrary, such a decision (to commit oneself to a way of life) would be the most well-founded of decisions, because it would be based upon a consideration of everything upon which it could possibly be founded."

If we return now to a consideration of how the claim of moral universality can be justified we must conclude that formal criteria are not ultimately sufficient and merely produce a problem of regress. When a person produces reasons to justify his judgment then surely it is relevant to seek further reasons in justification of the relevance of the first reasons and so on. Kohlberg cannot look to formal criteria in order to establish grounds for the moral relevance of reasons. Crittenden makes this point in the following way:

> "The responses to the moral problems examined in Kohlberg's study often do not go beyond reasons that seem to be directly moral, but sometimes they extend to justifications of the moral reasons themselves" (1972, p. 22).

A person may give as the reason for his judgment that 'human life is sacred and one should treat every individual as having equal human worth' and on the basis of this 'principle' he may be ascribed to stage 6. However, what may be far more significant from the moral point of view is the reason (and it may not be his reason) for his holding this as a principle. He may, for instance, be ultimately governed by self-interest (stage 2) and have rationally arrived at this principle as a means of securing self-interest in uncertain social conditions; or, he may be a theist (stage 4) and hold the principle because it is derivative from the 'law of God'; or, the principle may be arrived at as the best practical guide for insuring that the greatest degree of happiness is available to the greatest number (stage 5). Crittenden concludes that:

> "Our reasons, if we have any, for holding moral principles and standards do make a difference to the way we interpret morality and make moral judgments" (1972, p. 23).

If we try to isolate the purely formal aspects of moral principles from the closely woven fabric of moral attitudes and feelings, we inevitably destroy the substance of moral experience and widen the gap between moral judgment and behaviour. Even if Kohlberg's claim that the basic content principles of morality are universal can be logically supported, it does not follow from this that even the most morally mature individual is going to be bound by such principles in making decisions. Moral beliefs and personal

ideals are also going to influence the weight given to considerations of justice, welfare, benevolence, utility and other substantive moral concepts. Strawson (1966) has explained this in terms of a potential conflict between social morality and individual ideals.

He recognizes that there are some universals of social morality such as: "The abstract virtue of justice, some form of obligation to mutual aid and to mutual abstention from injury and, in some form and in some degree, the virtue of honesty" (Strawson, 1966, p. 291). The recognition that such principles exist is viewed as a "corrective to the idea of unbounded freedom of choice of such principles on the part of the individual" (. 292). The argument is that it is entailed in the very notion of a society that individuals will accept the truth of a number of universal precepts. Peter Winch (1972, p. 59) has said that "moral conceptions arise out of any common life between men and do not presuppose any particular forms of activity in which men may engage together." Certain principles such as moral regard for telling the truth, integrity in fulfilling social roles and some notion of justice are not conceived of as merely conventional matters but are necessary moral features of any society.

Strawson's view allows a place for the individual's ideal images of life, "a region in which many such incompatible pictures may secure at least the imaginative, though doubtless not often the practical, allegiance of a single person" (1966, p. 283). This means that a contrast can exist between "our conflicting visions of the ends of life and the systems of moral demand which make social living possible" (p. 297). The point of this view is that the principles of social morality do not determine what is morally right action in any situation they merely ensure that when we proffer reasons for our actions we will know as a result of our social experience which features of the situation are moral in nature. The principles determine the relevance of our reasons but the justification for such reasons is found in the individual's ideals or values and these are not only culturally relative but, in a pluralistic society, extremely individual in nature.

If there is to be a case for universality in the moral domain, therefore, a clear distinction needs to be made between principles and reasons for action. Kohlberg does not consistently recognize such a distinction. At one point he states:-

> "In our empirical work, we considered the term "principles" to refer to considerations in moral choice, or to reasons justifying moral action." (1971b, p. 219)

- while, a little further on, he makes the distinction:

> "mature principles are neither rules (means) nor values (ends), but are guides to perceiving and integrating all the morally relevant elements in concrete situations."

If principles are identified with reasons, as it appears they are in the first statement, then they will certainly be relative to particular contexts and situations. However, if they provide the criteria for giving relevance to reasons and enable us to place reasons into an order of priority, it is possible to consider their universal aspects.

R.S. Peters expresses the distinction clearly when he writes:

> "Fundamental principles of morality such as fairness and the consideration of interests only give us general criteria of relevance for determining moral issues. They prescribe what sort of considerations are to count as reasons....Such principles have to be interpreted in terms of concrete traditions; they cannot prescribe precisely what we ought to do, but at least they rule out certain courses of action and sensitize us to features of a situation which are morally relevant. They function more as signposts than as guidebooks." (Peters, 1970, pp 33-35).

Peters argues that such principles as impartiality, the consideration of interests, freedom, respect for persons, and probably truth telling are presupposed in any situation where the question is seriously asked: 'why do this rather than that?' Such principles have a transcendental justification (ie they act as presuppositions of the form of discourse in which the question "what are there reasons

for doing?" is asked seriously.[9] One of the potential strengths of this kind of argument is that it does not rest on any empirical description of the rationality of human nature in the way that a naturalistic argument would. It simply states that for there to be human comprehension, awareness, understanding and experience of moral phenomena, these principles are presupposed as constituting the logical schemas which make such awareness, comprehension, understanding or experience possible.

This argument is probably the strongest that can be made for the universality of the basic content principles of morality and constitutes the most coherent justification of stage 6 morality that might be presented. It seems regretable, therefore, that Kohlberg does not give greater attention to the transcendental argument but merely mentions it as though it were a trivial philosophical consideration.

> "Nor does our formalist metaethic answer questions like 'Why be moral?' or 'What good is justice?' Such questions cannot be answered by a normative ethical theory or by using moral concepts. Just as a theory of formal logic is a theory of what logical inference is and ought to be, but does not answer the question 'What good is logic?' or 'Why be logical?' so answers to these metaethical questions are not given by a stage 6 normative ethical theory. A formalistic normative theory says, 'Stage 6 is what it means to judge morally. If you want to play the moral game, if you want to make decisions which anyone could agree upon in resolving social conflicts, Stage 6 is it.' It cannot give a justification of stage 6 morality in nonmoral terms." (Kohlberg, 1971b, p. 218).

9. A strong case has been made by Kleinig (1972) in an attempt to expose the logical inadequacies of Peters' use of the transcendental argument - especially in relation to the principle of justice. (White (1973, pp 78-82) also questions the use of the transcendental argument in providing a justification for educational activities. It is not intended, however, in the context of this thesis, to engage in a discussion of the validity of transcendental arguments because Kohlberg does not justify his position with this kind of argument.

Although he makes this point, however, Kohlberg does imply that stage 6 morality is justified and the essence of his case has been taken as support for those who express a modern form of ethical naturalism. The basis of stage 6 morality and the evidence for its superior adequacy is taken from an assumption of normative psychology which holds that it is in accordance with the nature of man to be a rational being inevitably concerned with sociomoral action.

> "The criteria of adequacy used by stage 6 are implicit in "stage 5" structures, since these are trying to do the same job as stage 6. Both aim at determining moral decisions and judgments on which all rational men involved in sociomoral action could ideally agree. Stage 6 can do this better than Stage 5." (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 635).

THE MORAL SENSE

The relationship between moral form and content at the highest stage of development is consistent with the most basic assumption on which cognitive-developmental theory rests. This assumption is that the relationship between psychological laws and logical necessity is such that they are mutually inter-dependent and one justifies the other. In the moral domain, this means that the fully mature person is rational (by definition) and to be rational is both a necessary and a sufficient condition for being moral.

Inherent in this view is a confusion between moral reasoning and moral reasons. This means that the processes by which a person arrives at a judgment about what ought to be done are sufficient to justify the judgment provided it can be shown that such processes involve rational choice within the dispositions or attitudes of mature human nature.

This position has been recently expounded by D.A.J. Richards (1971) in a book which is concerned with decision theory and with the principles of rational choice, whereby preferences are ordered, desires (both self-regarding and other-regarding) are expressed and satisfactions are maximized. Richards takes a naturalistic position which gives logical substance to Kohlberg's theory. His basic claim is that the practical syllogism can naturally lead into moral philosophy, especially as it relates to social

issues. Rationality is characterized in terms of various principles of rational choice (such as justice, fairness and duty) which forge close links between morality and rationality:

> "....what is meant by my saying 'X is what you ought to do' is not that I am impartially disposed to desire X, but that the principles of rational choice require X" (Richards, 1971, p. 64)

He argues that this propositional account:

> "....is naturalistic in the sense that it explains the concept of rationality in terms of certain principles which have a logical relation to the natural facts of self-regarding desires" (p. 64)

The principles of rational choice are related to the natural facts of self-regarding desires which constitute the rational attitude, such that:

> "The rational man believes that the principles of rational choice defines what are self-regarding reasons for action." (p. 68)

The natural attitude of morality is analogous to the natural attitude of rationality (p. 245f). It comprises:

(a) Having the thoughts and beliefs that the concept of morality implies. This means holding a set of principles which can define a large class of reasons for action.

(b) Having the capacity and desire to be moral. This means that in addition to holding the moral imperative as a concept the person must have the inclination to act on it. This desire to be moral includes associated desires for (i) reasonableness and (ii) sympathy.

(c) Having a disposition to certain sorts of feelings (rational guilt and shame) and intentions to act, if ones actions culpably violate moral principles.

It is not surprising that Richards makes considerable reference to the work of Piaget and Kohlberg (as well as the motivational theory of R.W. White) in "trying to show that there are well-evidenced and plausible psychological accounts, which can be used to support the view of the natural attitude of morality" (p. 267). He holds that the developmental theories concentrate on the conditions for the "evolution of certain natural attitudes and conceptions, as a response to certain kinds of social experience" (p. 273).

Such conditions foster "the internal capacities of feeling and judgment involved in such attitudes as love, trust, and a sense of right" (p. 274). As this is taken to be an empirical matter concerning the emergence of rational morality, it leads Richards to formulate what he calls 'The Principle of Moral Development':

> "People are to expose themselves and be exposed by others to those psychological conditions which will causally facilitate the development of the desire to act on moral principles" (p. 276).

If this principle is accepted, it is implied that the motivational problem of stage 6 morality is solved. The judgments derived from principled reasoning are compelling because ultimately this is the way of human nature, as defined by the empiricist. Furthermore, the natural attitude of morality will ensure the pre-eminence of the principle of justice in such reasoning. However, paradoxically, Kohlberg does not claim to have provided empirical evidence for identifying justice as the core of principled morality. His case rests on the assertion that "no one has proposed a satisfactory alternative (1971b, p. 222).

At stage 6, justice is conceived as applying to (a) distribution, ie principles should be impartially applied to all, (b) equity, ie the treatment of persons as morally equal and, (c) reciprocity, ie involving contract and trust. But, Kohlberg makes the point that "we cannot show that the moral form of universality, tied to the notion that obligations are to persons, logically implies the principle of justice....We simply point to the fact that no principle other than justice has been shown to meet the formal conception of a universal prescriptive principle." (1971b, p. 221).

What we have is a perplexing circularity, with philosophers, such as Richards, who advocate a naturalistic morality, claiming empirical support from Kohlberg; and, in turn, Kohlberg justifying his advocacy of a substantive moral principle on the grounds that it has philosophical support. The most recent theory to have provided Kohlberg with such support is that which has been advanced by John Rawls (1971).

Rawls bases his theory on the claim that men live in a world where principles of right and justice are necessary for the constitution and regulation of those co-operative and mutually benefiting arrangements which are required for a society of individuals with common as well as competing interests. (cf Strawson, 1966). In essence, he advocates a social contract theory which holds that particular principles would be chosen by rational persons under appropriate conditions for assessing the various alternatives.

Kohlberg sees this theory as the logical basis for his advocacy of justice as the central principle of morality at stage 6 and for his claim that stage 6 represents a more adequate structure of moral judgment than stage 5:

> "Rawls's theory, when traced back to its natural structural roots, is not merely a 'generalization' and 'abstraction' of the theory of social contract, but derives from a new way of thought, a new system of assumptions, a new decision-making process....we view Rawls's theory as further elaborating a natural decision-making structure only partly specified by Kant and that Rawls's theory can be further elaborated and specified as a decision-structure applicable to resolving individual moral dilemmas" (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 635).

In explaining how individuals acquire what he calls 'the sense of justice' Rawls (1971) distinguishes three stages in the sequence of moral development. The first stage represents the 'morality of authority' and corresponds to Kohlberg's pre-conventional level. The second stage, or the 'morality of association' is parallel to his stages three to five, while the final stage, the 'morality of principles' corresponds to stage six. It is noted that Rawls does not see the superiority of the principle of justice as being a psychological fact.

> "I assume that the final stage, the morality of principles, may have different contents given by any of the traditional philosophical doctrines we have discussed. It is true that I argue for the theory of justice as superior, and work out the psychological theory on this presumption; but this superiority is a philosophical question and cannot, I believe, be established by the psychological theory of development alone" (Rawls, 1971, p. 462).

However, that his position is basically a naturalist one cannot be doubted, as the following extract shows:

> "One may say then that a person who lacks a sense of justice, and who would never act as justice requires except as self-interest and expediency prompt, not only is without ties of friendship, affection and mutual trust, but is incapable of experiencing resentment and indignation. He lacks certain natural attitudes and moral feelings of a particularly elementary kind. Put another way, one who lacks a sense of justice lacks certain fundamental attitudes and capacities included under the notion of humanity" (Rawls, 1971, p. 488)

By introducing the affective and motivational components of justice in this way, Rawls achieves a comprehensiveness in his theory which Kohlberg has precluded because of his cognitive emphasis. It is much harder to hold up a universal prescriptive principle for rationally deciding between competing claims as the supreme moral principle without including natural attitudes and moral feelings. Surely, the formal principle of justice may not be considered the most fundamental principle in some moral systems. Other principles, such as freedom, equality, fraternity may count for more. Furthermore, if we take the principle of justice as being a strictly procedural one for resolving conflicts between general and special rights, how are we to resolve moral problems where the conflicting claims are at the same level? What place will non-moral considerations have in arriving at a just decision. More important, what place will other principles have? Indeed, as Peters has argued, justice may need to be subordinated to the principle of respect for persons, which as a concept can far more credibly be extended to include questions of courage, prudence, temperance, love, generosity, compassion, and so on.

> "Lack of respect for persons seems consistent with treating people fairly. Civil servants can be scrupulously fair in dealing with cases; but they can think of the people whose affairs they administer merely as 'the public'. They can consider people's interests with fine impartiality and with a genuine regard for what is good for them. But they may have contempt for them as persons" (Peters, 1966, p. 142).

Kohlberg has claimed that the only principle of content, other than justice, which has been seriously advanced as having equivalent status, is the principle which has been termed utility or benevolence (1971b, p. 220). Although it is universalizable, however, it is limited, according to Kohlberg, because it cannot resolve conflicts.

> "Concern for the welfare of other beings, 'empathy', or 'role-taking', is the precondition for experiencing a moral conflict rather than a mechanism for its resolution" (1971b, p. 220)

This argument rests on a very narrowly restricted notion of what is to count as a moral problem. Why must moral problems always take the form of a conflict between competing moral demands? Furthermore, why must a conflict always be resolved on the basis of justice? Surely the claim that it should is contrary to another principle, namely freedom, which many would hold is a precondition for moral judgment. Such freedom is not the freedom to decide per se; it is the freedom to decide which principles we will give priority to or, indeed, it may include freedom to adopt reasons which are prudential or utilitarian or concerned, not with principles, but with some ideal of what constitutes the good life (cf Strawson, 1966). Berlin (1969, p. 61) places freedom as only one among many other values. He would say that to speak of freedom as an end in itself is much too general; it exists alongside other values such as justice, happiness, love, the discovery of truth. We might even say that the moral aspect of freedom is the relationship which it bears to these other values. Having the choices open to us becomes less important than the way in which other values limit the alternatives which we would willingly take, so that one's course of action becomes satisfying and self-determined as well as rationally justifiable. Berlin expresses it thus:

> "We are compelled to adjust claims, compromise, establish priorities, engage in all those practical operations that social and even individual life has, in fact, always required." (1969, p. 61).

Perhaps, in the light of such considerations, Kohlberg's whole emphasis on prescriptive principles in morality is unsatisfactory. He states that "mature principles are neither rules (means) nor values (ends), but are guides to perceiving and integrating all the morally relevant elements

in concrete situations....they tell us how to resolve claims which compete in a situation." (1971b, p. 219). But surely, this is only a very small thread in the total fabric of the moral life and acting justly, enjoying freedom, showing generosity, being compassionate and tolerant are among the sort of activities which constitute the wider domain of morality. In this sense both justice and freedom have the meaning of values or ends rather than guiding principles. But when Kohlberg refers to the principle of justice as a guiding principle, it is always directed towards an ultimate value such as human welfare. The problem is, however, that we can only give meaning to a notion such as 'human welfare' by invoking certain moral beliefs or standards. Because such beliefs are far removed from the formal features of moral judgment, they are not defined, and for this reason Kohlberg is unable to show that the principle of justice is always most effective in promoting human welfare. To illustrate this we need only consider the example of the just torturer which is used by Peters to show that a purely formal principle of justice can be morally detestable in the light of other considerations.

> "a torturer could exercise his art on his victims with fine discrimination and impartiality. He would be just, though a torturer" (Peters, 1966 p. 124).

THE CLAIM TO LOGICAL NECESSITY

Probably the most contentious claim in Kohlberg's whole theory, and one which appears to have little support from moral philosophy, is that his stages are ordered in terms of increasing differentiation, integration, and capacity to give definitive resolutions to moral problems, such that each later stage is "objectively" preferable or more adequate by certain <u>moral</u> criteria.

The assumption is that cognitive complexity equates with greater moral adequacy:

> "A more differentiated and integrated moral structure handles more moral problems, conflicts or points of view in a more stable or self-consistent way" (1971b, p. 185).

Furthermore, the sequence is governed by logical

necessity:

> "The sequence represents a universal inner logical order of moral concepts....each new basic differentiation made by each stage logically depends upon the differentiation before it; the order of differentiations could not logically be other than it is" (1971b, p. 187).

Perhaps the most obvious objection to this claim is what might be called the common-sense one, but it is also very persuasive. This is the argument that many philosophers who would be at least as conceptually sophisticated as Kohlberg's stage 6 subjects take positions in moral philosophy that reflect the dominant reasoning of stages 4 or 5. Is it credible to consider someone of the stature of Paul Tillich as a stage 4 person because he espouses a subjection-to-the-will-of-God morality?[10] To pass judgment on the relative quality of moral reasons in this way is at least a reflection of philosophical naivete. Crittenden exposes this fundamental problem in an amusing but convincing way:

> "A general difficulty I find with Kohlberg's types of moral judgment is that most, if not all, do find a sophisticated expression in systems or theories that at least make claims to being moral. Of course, some moral systems combine several of the types, and the relative importance given them reflects the overall structure of the system. I suppose the cult of honour in seventeenth and eighteenth century England would have to be placed as type 3 or 4. Theistic moral systems presumably belong to type 4 (so much for Augustine and Aquinas). Kohlberg himself speaks of Bentham as proposing a stage 2 morality and Durkheim a stage 4. One suspects that something has gone wrong with a scheme in which these people are graded at the same level of moral judgment as Jimmy, Andy, Tommy, John, and those other 13-16 year-olds in Kohlberg's sample" (1972, p. 16).

10. How are we to evaluate the social morality of traditionalist and collectivist types of society (eg USSR)? (cf Peters, 1973a, p. 47). We would need stronger grounds than a developmental theory to say that the dominant mode of thinking of a whole society such as the USSR is morally inferior (stage 4) when one of the main principles of social philosophy on which such a society is based is that autonomy is but an aberration of individualistic societies.

It would seem that these anomalous examples arise from the claim that there is a parallelism between the differentiation of conceptual fields and the adequacy of the moral reasoning which is modal at each stage. The question can be posed as follows: Does the cognitive superiority of a more elaborate conceptual scheme imply the moral superiority of the associated mode of resolving moral problems? (cf Alston, 1971, p. 276). Kohlberg answers this affirmatively (Kohlberg, 1973) but his supporting argument is hardly satisfactory.

The cognitive differentiation and integration of stage 6 is explained in terms of two separate logical functions of moral judgments. Firstly, Kohlberg argues that only at stage 6 are rights and duties completely correlative ie only at this point in cognitive development does the proposition "A has a duty to B" analytically imply "B has a right against A". This means that because Heinz's wife has a right to live, it logically follows that not only Heinz, but anyone, has a duty to steal the life-giving drug. The notion is perplexing. Surely there are instances in which rights are held in relation to a particular person by virtue of the role they occupy. Consider, for example, the right of the human infant to protection and nurturance. Furthermore, Kohlberg is claiming that complete correlativity means that there is a morally right decision for Heinz to make. However, there are moral problems involving rights and obligations, where notions of reciprocity do not provide a moral solution. Crittenden cites two well-known examples:

> "In war time, the Occupation forces may demand that if a resistance leader, known to be hiding in a town, is not handed over for execution within a certain time, ten villagers chosen at random will be killed. A doctor may be faced with the choice of killing an unborn child to save the mother or allowing the mother to die and delivering the child alive by a Caesarian operation" (1972, p. 19)[11]

11. There is also the famous example of Sartre (1957, pp 28-29) concerning the student who was faced with choosing between joining the French Resistance to avenge his brother's death or remaining with his mother and helping her to carry on.

One is forced to the conclusion that by avoiding such controversial moral dilemmas as these, Kohlberg has somewhat 'stacked the cards' of his argument.

The second logical function of moral judgment which is complete only at stage 6 is reversibility. According to Kohlberg:

> "Reversibility of moral judgment is what is ultimately meant by the criterion of the fairness of a moral decision" (1973, p. 641).

This is very close to the Ideal Observer Theory (Hospers, 1961, pp 546-551) and, as Kohlberg recognizes, forms the basis of Rawls's concept of justice.

> "Procedurally, fairness as impartiality means reversibility in the sense of a decision on which all interested parties could agree insofar as they can consider their own claims impartially, as the just decider would." (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 641).

Kohlberg explains reversibility as "ideal role-taking":

> "In the Heinz dilemma, Heinz must imagine whether the druggist could put himself in the wife's position and still maintain his claim and whether the wife could put herself in the druggist's position and still maintain her claim."
> (Kohlberg, 1973, p. 643).

Again, it is not clear how this can be a criterion for moral truth. When the decision is considered to be right by everyone involved, are their views all to count equally? Do they need to be functioning at stage 6 before their claims can be held to be valid? Even if the moral judge were able to assume rational, principled, autonomous moral maturity on the part of all parties, he is still faced with the problem of knowing exactly what their claims might be.

It may be possible to show - indeed, Kohlberg's empirical evidence supports the claim - that a certain level of intellectual development must be attained before certain kinds of reasoning about moral concepts such as rights, duties, just claims, equality etc. can be consistently and logically undertaken. But this is not the same as showing that the moral reasons given by an individual who possesses such intellectual development are superior reasons in the 'moral' sense. This issue is debated in the Discussion Section

of Beck et al (1971) where Crittenden argues as follows:

> "Certainly, I think that it is impossible for him (ie the moral philosopher) to derive from the inner logic of moral concepts a rank order of responses into five or six stages such that stage 1 includes the least moral reasons you can give and each succeeding stage morally better reasons, in a rigid, logically ascending order up to stage 6" (p. 360).

Kohlberg's defence of his position is to restate that these are the stages that can be observed in moral reasoning when you look longitudinally at the same people over time. Essentially it is an assertion of the developmentalist doctrine ie that development always occurs in the same direction: from the simple to the complex, from the general to the differentiated, from the diffuse to the integrated, from immaturity to maturity, from the inferior to the superior. Almost imperceptibly the propositions move from 'is' to 'ought'. It does not follow, however, that because the developing individual becomes better able to deal with arguments and give increasingly more universal, more consistent, more reversible - even more rational judgments, that these judgments are going to be more morally true. It is not contradictory, surely, to say that someone is following a self-accepted autonomous principle of conscience but is still acting immorally. We do not need to look far in the contemporary world to see conscientious (perhaps even mature) people committing moral atrocities.

Kohlberg assumes that "moral" and "rational" are either synonymous or coextensive terms. It has been the purpose of this discussion to show that such an assumption has not been adequately supported and is probably untenable. Margolis (1972) sees the essential criterion of rationality as being consistency:

> "a man who would be rational must reason consistently, use language and make judgments consistently, and act consistently with his beliefs" (p. 287).

However, the moral man may or may not act rationally and the rational agent may be consistently immoral. In Margolis' words, "men may behave in morally acceptable ways without behaving rationally and, insofar as they behave rationally as well, they will adhere to obligations that are binding on agents, qua rational, whether those agents are behaving morally, immorally, or amorally." Consistency

is contained in the minimal notion of moral concern, but it is not the only precept therein. According to Margolis, the moral agent is also obliged to avoid arbitrariness and irresponsibility. By including these additional criteria (which are considered by Margolis to be formal) it is not enough for the moral agent to be rational in the sense of being consistent. Hare's fanatical Nazi (1963, pp 192-200) can thus be considered rational (if his basic belief is accepted) in the sense of being consistent, yet still would be judged to be immoral.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter has been to explore the philosophical problems which are inherent in the cognitive-developmental approach to morality. An examination of the moral concepts entailed in the theory together with an appraisal of the underlying metaethical orientation, has made explicit the following problems:

1. The theory provides no adequate criteria for defining the moral domain and enabling the distinction of moral dilemmas, judgments and reasons from those of a non-moral kind.
2. Emphasis on the cognitive aspects of moral judgment does not give due recognition to the affective and motivational features of morality.
3. There is no adequate explanation of the proposed isomorphism of psychological and normative structure so that the is/ought problem remains unresolved.
4. The theory shifts between formal prescriptivism and a naturalistic claim for the development of a "moral sense."
5. The system assumes that the relative quality of reasons can be evaluated but provides no justifiable criteria for discerning what is to count as a reason for either making a decision or holding a principle.
6. The theory fails to establish formal criteria for the ultimate justification of moral principles.
7. The claim to moral universality appears tenable if certain naturalistic assumptions are made but it cannot be defended on the basis of a purely formal description

of morality when the substantive principle of justice is included in the claim.

8. The theory gives supremacy to the principle of justice without considering the important place of other principles such as freedom and concern for others.
9. The theory places undue emphasis on the place of prescriptive principles in the domain of moral experience and neglects the major influences of moral beliefs, standards and personal ideals in determining human conduct.
10. The theory cannot support the claim to parallelism between cognitive development and moral adequacy. Furthermore, its purported synthesis between cognitive maturity, rationality and moral truth remains untenable.

These problems embody the perennial questions of moral philosophy and, while the developmental psychologist could not be expected to settle such issues from an empirical position, it is incumbent on him to support his theoretical claims with cogent arguments and to make explicit his metaethical assumptions. In this respect, it must be concluded that Kohlberg has been inconsistent and equivocal in contending with the philosophical criticisms of his theory.

A major shortcoming of this elaborate developmental theory is that it is unable to clearly define the domain of human experience to which it relates. In taking a fundamentally cognitivist position, Kohlberg exposes himself to all the criticisms which have been made of Kantian ethics, particularly in explaining the connection between moral judgment and moral action. However, Kohlberg shifts his philosophical ground as he advances through the stages of exposition. In doing so he may strengthen and defend the different parts, but he weakens the total theoretical structure. In establishing formal criteria for moral judgments he appears to adopt the prescriptivism of Hare; yet in arguing for the moral adequacy of the highest stage he adopts a naturalistic position similar to Rawls and Richards. Although espousing a formalist approach, there is a major substantive component in deciding what is morally relevant.

These philosophical limitations to the cognitive-developmental account of morality should not completely over-shadow the very useful explanatory function which the theory serves. It is only because there is a tendency among some psychologists and (of greater concern) some educators to reify the whole stage-sequence approach to morality that it is necessary to critically examine the assumptions on which it is founded. A comment by R.S. Peters is particularly appropriate as a conclusion to this part of the present thesis.

> "His (Kohlberg's) findings are of unquestionable importance, but there is a grave danger that they may become exalted into a general theory of moral development. Any such general theory presupposes a general ethical theory, and Kohlberg himself surely would be the first to admit that he has done little to develop the details of such a general ethical theory. Yet without such a theory the notion of "moral development" is pretty insubstantial." (Peters, 1971, p. 264).

CHAPTER 6

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AUTONOMY: SOME EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The cognitive-developmental theory of moralization has assumed a much wider relevance than the merely explanatory function with which we have been primarily concerned in this analysis. In its implications for teaching it has provided an empirically tested model which has the capacity to shape practice because it rests within a prevailing educational ideology. Kohlberg has called this ideology "progressivism" but it can be reduced to a particular view of man which has been called "developmentalism."

Kohlberg and Mayer (1972) distinguish this ideological position from "romanticism" and "cultural transmission", and they attribute its predominant position in educational thinking to Dewey - developing out of the "pragmatic functional-genetic philosophies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972, p. 454). In this view, the educational goal "is the eventual attainment of a higher level or stage of development in adulthood, not merely the healthy functioning of the child at a present level." It requires "an educational environment that actively stimulates development through the presentation of resolvable but genuine problems or conflicts" because "the organizing and developing force in the child's experience is the child's active thinking, and thinking is stimulated by the problematic, by cognitive conflict." (p. 454).

Two further assumptions, according to Kohlberg, are entailed in the application of cognitive developmentalism to the practice of moral education.

> "One....is the assumption that moral development has a cognitive core. This assumption is central to any intellective approach to moral education and contrasts sharply with irrational-emotive theories of moral development such as those of Durkheim and Freud. The other assumption is of the interactional origins of morality. This assumption is central to an intellective approach to moral education as not a process of transmission of fixed moral truth but rather a stimulation of the child's restructuring of his experience." (Kohlberg, 1971a, p. 43).

These assumptions reflect a theoretical orientation to development which is based on the organismic model of man.

In applying such a model, Kohlberg is able to make statements like the following:

> "Subjects prefer the stage one above their own to their own stage or to all the lower stages because, in developmental jargon, it represents a better equilibrium, because it is more differentiated and integrated than a lower stage" (Kohlberg, 1971a, p. 47).

The implications of viewing the developing organism in this particular way have recently been discussed by several writers (e.g., Langer, 1969; Reese and Overton, 1970). The essential point is that man is conceived of as a living, organized system which is inherently and spontaneously active such that qualitative changes occur in the structure of the organism. The developmentalist seeks to explain the nature of the processes producing these qualitative changes.

The concept of 'stages' (cf Flavell, 1963; Kessen, 1962) implies that development will proceed through an invariant sequence with each stage defined by the cognitive structures of the organism and existing in a hierarchical relationship to preceding and future stages. Movement from stage to stage results from internal motivation (cf Hunt, 1963, 1965) which is the basis of development and involves transformations of cognitive structures due to organization of systems of internal relations through interaction between the structures of the organism and structures of the environment. The direction of development is toward greater equilibrium in organism-environment interactions (Flavell, 1963; Kohlberg, 1969).

However, developmentalism very often entails what has been called the 'sufficiency fallacy' (cf Rachner, 1970). This fallacy is that the structure of a given stage in the sequence provides not only necessary conditions for the growth of knowledge, but also sufficient conditions. If the relationship between cognitive structure and new information or experience is of a certain type (eg optimal dissonance or mis-match) then development must occur. The assumption is always that the higher level of knowledge is logically superior. This is the essence of Piagetian epistemology and is expressed by Piaget in the following way:

> "The theory of knowledge is therefore essentially a theory of adaptation of thought to reality, even if in the last analysis this adaptation (like all adaptations) reveals the existence of an inextricable interaction between the subject and the objects of study" (Piaget, 1972, p. 18).

The developmental thesis thus involves not only a particular concept of man, but a theory of knowledge and, in the moral domain, an emphasis on the growth of cognition as being central to the whole notion of moral maturation.

The question of whether the interactive conditions existing between organism and environment are merely necessary for development to occur, or whether they are also sufficient for developmental change in the fixed direction, is one that has considerable educational relevance.

THE DEVELOPMENTALIST FALLACY

If environmental conditions are sufficient for development to occur then it follows in the view of developmentalists that children will learn better the less they are taught (as they define this concept). The teacher becomes a somewhat passive observer ensuring that conditions for cognitive stimulation exist. In many places, Kohlberg implies this position. For example,

> "For the interactionist, experience is essential to stage progression, and more or richer stimulation leads to faster advance through the series of stages" (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972, p. 459)

He maintains that transition from one level of understanding to another can only be aided by cognitive stimulation and not brought about by explicit teaching. Peters (1971) has argued that this leads to an over-rigid conception of what teaching is, for the child is never developing in a pre-determined direction - the environment is always manipulated in particular ways by the teacher (who knows in advance what he wants the child to learn).

> "Socrates was teaching the slave all right even though he was not telling him things. He was asking him leading questions, getting him to concentrate on some things rather than on others, putting questions in sequences so that the slave came gradually to make certain crucial connections" (Peters, 1971, p. 243).

The tendency for some developmentalists to assume that environmental conditions can provide sufficient conditions for growth arises from the fallacy of applying the biological model in too literal a fashion. This point has been strongly argued by Nagel (1957) when he claims that a misappropriation by social scientists of the mechanistic concept of development found in biology has led to the view that an incompatibility

exists between developmental determinism and the emergence of choice and responsibility. He concludes that:

> "....the assumption that responsible choice and action are manifested as products of developmental processes which have conditions for their existence, does not convert the moral life of man into a sham and illusion" (Nagel, 1957, p. 23).

The essential difference between a developmental view of man and developmental explanation in the natural sciences is that man's development does not simply occur as a 'natural unfolding' process. It is, in part, brought about by the conscious decisions of other people. Furthermore, it can also be influenced by the individual's capacity for reflection, for consideration of future events, and anticipation of the consequences of actions. Unlike the developing biological organism, a man can choose and, "there is no built-in guarantee that only those decisions which are in fact most advantageous for the individual" will be made. (cf Archambault, 1966, p. 306f).

Peters (1972a) has argued that the biological model of assimilation and accommodation, used by Piaget, is only metaphorical in its application to human cognitive development. He adds that:

> "Furthermore, although the physical environment of a plant influences its development, it is in no sense constitutive of it. The plant does not become like the soil or the sun when it takes it into its system. In the mental case, on the other hand, much of the content of development is provided by the social environment. Children model themselves on others.... For human beings develop in part because of their decisions and choices. They make themselves to a certain extent. This way of talking is quite inappropriate at the plant or animal level." (Peters, 1972a, p. 504).

What, then, can empirical data about cognitive development tell us? It cannot provide the sufficient conditions but it can tell us what sort of environmental interaction will enable the development of certain modes of thinking and understanding. In logical terms, perhaps even 'necessary conditions' is misleading and a concept such as Krimerman's 'enabling conditions' (See Chapter 3) may be the most appropriate. The causal relationships linking stage to stage do not determine development in a mechanistic way, but in the teleological sense.

This means that a developmentalist position does not in any way reduce the responsibility which the educator has for deciding what to teach, either in the form of specific content or environmental manipulation. Developmentalism helps to answer the 'how?' question, but we still require justification in our answer to the question: 'Why do this rather than that?'

In applying his theory to education, Kohlberg takes little cognizance of this important consideration and so elevates developmentalism from the level of explanation to a position of ideological significance where it can be presented to justify judgments about what ought to be adopted in educational practice. The following statement is typical of this approach:

> "For the progressive, the problem of offering a non-indoctrinative education which is based on ethical and epistemological principles is partially resolved by a conception that these principles represent developmentally advanced or mature stages of reasoning, judgment, and action. Because there are culturally universal stages or sequences of moral development (Kohlberg & Turiel, 1971), stimulation of the child's development to the next step in a natural direction is equivalent to a long range goal of teaching ethical principles"
> (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972, p. 475).

The facts of human development do not enable the educator to avoid the question of values so easily. In the previous chapter we saw that Kohlberg's own moral position is confused and that his theory of moral development rests on questionable ethical assumptions. We must, therefore, respond sceptically to a comment such as:

> "The distinctive feature of the developmental-philosophic approach is that a philosophic conception of adequate principles is coordinated with a psychological theory of development and with the fact of development" (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972, p.484).

It is also a limitation of any developmental theory that it must focus on only one type of phenomenon at a time and it has been claimed (Wilson, 1973, p.111) that, in theories of moral development, this forces such phenomena as "identification", "temptation-resistance," "cognitive conflict" into separate categories where they automatically become competitors, when in fact they may well be inter-dependent and on the same conceptual level in explaining both knowledge and behaviour at any particular stage in the sequence.

The cognitive theory of decentration can explain the development of "consideration of others" but can it explain the emergence of a virtue like "compassion" without introducing affective elements? Is it possible for children to care for others before they know what others feel? As Wilson (op.cit.) points out, these are partly logical and partly empirical questions. The developmentalist too often assumes that they are purely empirical.

MORAL TRAINING AND MORAL EDUCATION

The concept of moral character and the place of habit in morality have been questioned by the developmental psychologists.

The Hartshorne and May (1928) studies showed that behaviour such as cheating was both situationally specific and also not consistent with how people were rated in terms of honesty or with their own verbally expressed moral values. This raised questions about the existence of stable character traits. However, Kohlberg goes further and makes a dichotomy between traits and principles. He refers to the "bag of virtues" conception of morality which he claims has no place in the psychology of morality. This claim, which runs counter to the research findings of Peck and Havighurst (1960), seems to arise because Kohlberg concludes that the crucial determinants of moral development are cognitive.

However, the place of habit in the moral sphere has been well recognized by R.S. Peters (1963) and he has criticized Kohlberg recently on this point, stating that, in the latter's theory, the "lack of importance assigned to habit goes against a whole tradition of thought about moral development stemming from Aristotle" (Peters, 1971, p. 249).

One of the claims which Kohlberg makes for what he calls "the legitimacy of the developmental approach to moral education" and, presumably, he is comparing it by implication to other approaches which might emphasise character-training or habit formation, is that "the stimulation of moral development defines an educational process respecting the autonomy of the child, whereas any other definition reflects indoctrination." (Kohlberg, 1971a, p. 72).

However, because true morality in Kohlberg's view only emerges at the post-conventional level there is a sense in which morally immature children are less autonomous. They are constrained in their judgments by conditions of reward and punishment or social approval, rather than guided by rationally chosen principles. It would follow, therefore, that some form of training or inculcation of habits would be justified insofar as it prepares the child for the moral autonomy of the later stages of development. It is justified by the intentions of the teacher. Whether we call it 'teaching' or 'cognitive stimulation', it is the teacher's intention which is important.

Snook (1972a) argues that the intention of the teacher is the crucial factor in determining whether or not indoctrination takes place. In this case 'intention' is used in the context of moral evaluation, and:

> "only if there is the intention to impart beliefs regardless of the evidence can we apply the term 'indoctrination'." (Snook, 1972a, p. 50)

Early training in moral values is, therefore, as much 'teaching' at the lower stages, as 'cognitive stimulation' is at the higher stages.

In apparent agreement with Kohlberg, J.P. White (1967, p. 177) states that young children are brought up to obey moral rules largely out of conditions of reward and punishment. They cannot be given reasons for following these rules because their level of development would not permit them to fully understand. Max Black (1967, p. 102) would call this the stage of 'rule covering' behaviour and it is tantamount to indoctrination if we define this concept on the criterion of method. Hare (1964) has argued that early moral education is not indoctrination as long as the teacher's aim is not to stop the growth in children of the capacity to think for themselves about moral questions. (cf Snook, 1972a). However, the main point is that moral autonomy is the end-point of a process whereby gradually external rules develop into guiding principles which can furnish reasons for action.

Moral training leads to moral education but the two are quite distinct as concepts and the transition from one to the other is made as the child's moral understanding develops.

Peters (1967, p. 16) makes the following distinction:

> "The notion of 'moral training' as distinct from that of moral education suggests the learning of a moral code which is tied down to specifiable rules such as 'Thou shalt not steal.' Moral education suggests, in addition, the passing on of the underlying rationale, the understanding of principles"

It appears certain that the point of transition is in some way related to the development of moral judgment but from Kohlberg's schema we have no way of knowing when the child has reached the stage of autonomous judgment. Kant has stated that "judgment is a particular talent which can be practised only, and cannot be taught" (cf W. Hare, 1971) and there is no evidence to show that cognitive stimulation is the most important influence in facilitating its emergence. John Passmore (1967, p. 197) makes an important comment on the attitudinal factor:

> "....to exhibit a critical spirit one must be alert to the possibility that the established norms themselves ought to be rejected, that the rules ought to be changed, the criteria used in judging performances modified. Or perhaps even that the mode of performance ought not to take place at all."

In Kohlberg's terms, this would be possible only at a stage 6 level of thinking.

One must take issue, however, with Kohlberg for undervaluing the role of habit in moral life. It has an important place - even for the fully autonomous person. Oakeshott (1962, p. 65) talks of the flexibility of habits and suggests that habitual forms of behaviour can involve reasoning as well as intelligence in adapting to situations such that one can talk about the habit of reflecting on conduct.

There is another sense in which the cognitive-developmental approach to moral education needs to be tempered by other considerations. It implies that rational (or moral) conduct always entails a rational choice that has included the processes of deliberation and consideration of relevant reasons. Again, Oakeshott (1962) has reasoned against this position by conceiving of rationality as a tradition or an idiom of activity which transcends all that we do once we are committed to it. He states that, "an impulsive action, a 'spontaneous outburst,' activity in obedience to a custom or to a rule, and an action which is preceded by a long reflective process may, alike, be 'rational'" (p. 109).

Rationality is a matter of the intentions or, to use Hare's word, inclinations, of conduct rather than the consequences. Two people may perform the same action but whereas one has been rationally disposed towards it, the other may have had irrational motives or may have acted arbitrarily and, by chance, performed the same action as the rational person.

It is a limitation of the cognitive-developmental approach that it does not acknowledge this notion of rationality in its widest sense and is therefore unable to interpret moral conduct for what it is in common experience. It is a fact of experience that when we make moral decisions there is often not time or place for the ideal cognitive processes which would be said to typify the stage 5 or 6 person. It cannot be denied that in moral situations the most mature person often acts either from habit or on the basis of mere emotion yet is still acting rationally in its widest sense. In both, however, he is acting in accordance with his disposition and this in turn has been engendered by his cumulative experience, including his formal education.

Kohlberg does not deny the importance to moral education of the moral atmosphere of the school.

> "To extend classroom discussions of justice to real life is to deal with issues of justice in the schools. Education for justice, then, requires making schools more just, and encouraging students to take an active role in making the school more just." (1971a, p. 82).

However, he explains the effects of such atmosphere in terms of role-taking opportunities and the greater opportunity for cognitive stimulation by a justice-structure one stage above the child's own. Kohlberg appears to overlook that a just atmosphere is important because it develops habits of justice. He does not acknowledge that much (certainly not all) moral conduct is not preceded by rational justification, yet is not less rational because of that, particularly if our habits have developed in an idiom of rationality. R.S. Peters (1963) discusses this subject fully and makes the following point:

> "The formation of sound moral habits in respect of, for instance, what I have called basic moral rules might well be a necessary condition of rational morality" (p. 59)

The aim of moral education, therefore is to produce a morally autonomous individual who, when he is able to, will justify his judgments according to the canons of rationality, while at other times, when acting from habit or emotion, will be disposed towards conduct which is consistent with rationality in its widest sense. While a cognitive-developmental approach will go some of the way in providing the educational practices that achieve such a goal, it needs to be recognized that it has limitations. Kohlberg and Mayer claim too much for it when they state:

> "the stimulation of moral development through the stages represents a rational and ethical focus of education related to, but broadening, an educational focus upon cognitive development as such." (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972, p. 491).

The 'rational and ethical focus' to which these writers refer is not an outcome of natural development which grows under the nurturance of a neutral teacher. Snook (1972b, pp 283-4) emphasises the direct involvement of the educator in producing the desired outcome:

> "It seems to me self-evident that whenever we set out to educate people we are concerned to develop their rationality.....Children are not born rational and rationality does not develop as the bodily organs develop. It is the outcome of social living and the gradual incorporation of minds into traditions of critical thought. Hence, the problem of developing rationality is a twofold one. It involves teaching pupils those traditions in which rationality is defined and it involves encouraging them to use their skills and understandings in wider and more inclusive ways."

AUTONOMY AND MORAL MATURITY

Another problem which has to be squarely faced by psychologists who venture into the field of morality is that of moral freedom and the concept of autonomy.

Kohlberg firmly holds that moral autonomy is the primary aim of moral education.

> "Following Dewey and Piaget I shall argue that the goal of moral education is the stimulation of the "natural" development of the individual child's own moral judgment and capacities, thus allowing him to use his own moral judgments to control his behaviour." (Kohlberg, 1971a, p. 71).

Freedom from both physical and psychological constraint of an adverse kind is a necessary condition for such moral autonomy. As Fromm has shown, there may be natural psychological forces preventing people from desiring freedom, but the ideal of the educator must be the morally autonomous person who is (a) authentic (in that he adopts a way of life for himself as distinct from one dictated by others), (b) able to reflect rationally on rules, and (c) strong-willed (in that he can hold steadfast in conduct against counter-inclinations).(Peters, 1973b, pp 123-5). He will be a person whose thoughts and actions in important areas of his life cannot be explained without reference to "his own choices, deliberations, decisions, reflections, judgments, plannings or reasonings" (Dearden, 1972, p. 453). It is doubtful, however, whether such autonomy can be achieved by simply stimulating a "natural" developmental process in the way Kohlberg suggests.

One of the qualitative differences between stage 1 and stage 6 morality is in the degree of autonomy exercised by the agent. At the lowest level of maturity the child does not have the cognitive apparatus for full autonomy in that his sense of right and wrong comes from responding to the rules inculcated by adults and older children. At some stage in his development, however, the child no longer needs some authority to order him or govern what he does. The problem is in recognizing at what point in the process of development autonomy has emerged, because it is a concept which is distinct from both freedom and independence (cf Dearden, 1972, p. 452).

Autonomy entails freedom but it includes a notion of choosing with reference to certain criteria (See Chapter 3, pp 59-60). Dearden argues that:

> "Autonomy neither does nor could require the stepping outside of all criteria to engage in some supposedly criterionless choosing" (Dearden, 1972, p. 458).

Kohlberg's theory holds that the criteria for choosing (in moral situations) change from one stage of development to another, but the individual has no direct control over the process. Transition from one stage to another is explained in terms of the Piagetian concept of equilibration which is not

subject to either explicit teaching or self-determination.

Although the developmental process is determined by the conditions under which it occurs, the individual gradually attains a greater degree of responsibility for his own actions. Thus the determinism of the developmental approach does not preclude responsibility for action. The argument has been put by Nagel:

> "The assumption or the discovery that our acts and choices are determined in some fashion does not mean that we are being coerced when we are engaged in deliberation and decision, nor does it mean that acts of deliberation and choice are irrelevant to what we may overtly do." (Nagel, 1957, p. 23).

It was argued in Chapter 3 of the present thesis that an explanatory model for moral behaviour must be anti-determinist and teleological. This is not inconsistent with the developmental approach provided the latter takes into account that, for human behaviour, alternative explanatory modes for the same phenomenon are not only possible but, in the case of moral behaviour, also necessary. When the developmental conditions, as viewed by the observer, are not only the reasons why a person acts, but also his reasons for acting, then the person can be said to be autonomous (see Chapter 3, p. 52).

At the lowest stages of development, the person may be free from external constraints but the capacity for choice is stunted by limitations in the cognitive categoreal apparatus (cf Peters, 1973b). The person at the highest level of morality, on the other hand, is autonomous because he is free from the internal psychological constraints of developmental inadequacy. He may well, however, be governed by the moral principles to which he is committed, but this is not a necessary condition for being autonomous. As with the rational man, the autonomous man can choose to be immoral.[1]

1. Gewirth (1973) has argued that while moral goodness can be said to entail autonomy, it is not necessary that autonomy entail moral goodness.

> "....even if a person may be autonomous without being morally good, he cannot be morally good without being autonomous. For moral goodness consists not merely in doing what is morally right, but in doing it because it is morally right, ie, from one's own independent or autonomous recognition and acceptance of the standards of moral rightness." (p. 39).

THE CONDITIONS FOR MORAL AUTONOMY

Freedom is the absence of obstacles and forces which may limit the range of choices open to us in any one action or course of activities. To be free to choose and not to be compelled from within or from without is an essential distinguishing characteristic of humanity.[2] The freedom is in the choice but the choice is seldom purely random.[3] Men act deliberately when they act for reasons. Reasons do not compel (in the sense defined above) but they constitute the grounds on which action is based.[4] (See Chapter 3 pp 50-2). As was argued in the previous chapter, the concept of morality is based on the assumption that there is a hierarchy of reasons which may justify any action, that reasons are validated according to principles which in turn are vindicated in the context of a rationally chosen way of life (cf P.W. Taylor, 1961, Chapter 6).

2. Although existentialists like Sartre would say that freedom is inevitable, one must at least acknowledge the existence of pathological compulsions, even if one denies that external forces can determine a particular choice. For this reason it seems logically tenable to talk about degrees of freedom.

3. "The notion of 'choice' would seem to require as a condition of its intelligible application that there should be criteria by reference to which the choice is made, and which are not, for the moment at least, brought into question" (Dearden, 1972, p. 457).

4. M.R. Ayers (1968, p. 157) uses an analogy from games-playing to illustrate the difference between real compulsion and being 'compelled' by reasons. In a game of chess we often want to say that a player is compelled to do something, that he has only one possible move because of the situation together with rules of the game. The player's action is not determined by his desires or his will to win and it is only limited because he accepts the rules as reasons for acting. He could always choose to stop playing.

Liberty, or freedom in the general sense, is the type of freedom which is environmental in the sense that social and physical restraints are absent. The emphasis is on the absence of compulsion rather than the grounds for choice. Moral autonomy, however, is more than freedom; it implies knowledge of the conditions within which freedom is exercised (ie a range of available reasons on which to base choice) and knowledge of the outcomes of choosing in one way or another (ie the relative importance of reasons) - this is freedom to decide not only what one will do, but what one ought or, conversely, ought not to do. This is moral freedom in the Kantian sense and it is not simply the absence of compulsion. It is a state in which a person can ultimately decide to surrender the freedom of arbitrariness to the discipline of obeying the dictates of reason.

Kenneth Strike (1972b, p. 274) has recently examined the concept of freedom and proposed that if a person is to be free (ie autonomous in the sense we have been using this term) in that he will be disposed to do free acts, the following three properties must be true of him:

(1) A person must be able to do what he chooses. This includes possessing relevant abilities and skills of execution as well as not being prohibited or physically prevented from taking a chosen course of action.

(2) A person must possess those reasoning skills which enable him to evaluate various courses of action. This is a matter of having learned to apply those criteria relevant to making various sorts of judgments.

(3) A person must be psychologically constituted such that it is possible for the exercise of such reasoning skills to become the actual determinates of choice and action.

If we apply these criteria to the moral situation, and consider such a state of freedom as being a primary goal of moral education, we begin to see the limitations of the cognitive-developmental approach in educating for autonomy.

The first of Strike's criteria refers to 'liberty' or 'freedom' in the general sense, defined above; but, it includes the acquisition of 'relevant abilities and skills'.

This is surely not just a developmental notion, but would include, in the moral situation, having knowledge about the world and being able to predict the consequences of one's actions.

The second criterion could conceivably be identified with cognitive development and might well be achieved, as Kohlberg suggests, in moral education which involves not direct teaching, but exposure of the child to cognitive conflict which will facilitate development towards the stage of principled autonomy.

The third criterion, however, which enables the other two to become sufficient conditions for moral autonomy, is not embraced by cognitive-developmentalism, although it represents the major goal of the moral educator.

It is one of the aims of moral education to develop the skills of reasoning in the domain of moral judgment (producing 'criterion-two' type freedom); but of greater relevance to the moral life itself, is the aim of initiating young people into the conditions of mind whereby enlightened moral autonomy (producing 'criterion-three' type freedom) is possible. This is an initiation into a state of knowledge which Stuart Hampshire calls 'inductive self-knowledge' (1965b). Only when we are not only free from external forces and influences which are too strong for us, but also free from internal limitations which prevent us from even being aware of the range of choices open to us, can we exercise full moral freedom.

This liberation of perception and awareness, so that the maximum of alternatives is open to us and our choice is able to be free of the constraints of psychological inadequacy, prejudice or ignorance, constitutes the distinguishing characteristic of the educated man. It is one thing to know what we intend to do, but it is a different kind of knowledge which enables us to know what must follow as inductive generalizations from either the external laws of nature, or from our own passions, impulses and inclinations. Hampshire (1965b, p. 91) re-asserts the Baconian doctrine that the more a man knows of the laws of nature, the greater his power and his freedom of choice.

Ideally, Hampshire argues elsewhere (1965a), the rational (educated) man is free from himself.

> "He will count himself more free in his thought whenever he is able experimentally to detach himself from his own habits and conventions of thought and to redescribe his own situation and conduct from a new point of view and in new terms."
> (Hampshire, 1965a, p. 213).

This capacity to 'step back' enables the rational man to choose in the face of the forces which shape his behaviour and consequently the correlation between his intentions and his actual achievements is greater.[5] He may hold certain dispositions which he has not chosen, but he can choose whether or not to act on them. Hampshire expresses this view as follows:

> "....an individual who acquires more systematic knowledge of the causes of states of mind, emotions, and desires, insofar as these are not the outcome of his decision, thereby becomes more free than he previously was to control and direct his own life: more free to control and direct his own life, in the sense that there will in general be a closer correlation between that which he sets himself to do and that which he actually achieves in his life. Knowledge of his intentions will be the more reliable guide to his actual future conduct." (1965b, p. 92).

The man who is a chooser in the morally autonomous sense will understand some of the causal determinants of his actions (ie have inductive self-knowledge), will be able to justify his actions (even when they arise out of habit or emotion) by the rational appeal to reasons, will have the power to exercise critical judgment and to reflect on his own conduct; in short, he will be free, within limits, to decide what kind of person he ought to be. This is moral autonomy and, although man is born with the capacity to aspire to this condition, it is not the heritage of the

5. Iris Murdoch questions the sovereign power of reason in Hampshire's thesis. She says:

> "He equates <u>self-knowledge</u> with the opening of possibilities before us in a manner independent of will. He refuses to allow that feelings might put pressure on reason in a way that couldn't be controlled by the will." (In D.F. Pears (ed) <u>Freedom and the Will</u>, 1963, p. 101).

natural world. He must be initiated into this state by the conscious efforts of his fellow men.[6] It is the understanding of this process which is the central concern of moral education.

Towards the end of his paper on autonomy and education, Dearden makes the following point:

> "To become autonomous is not just a purely maturational process, since plainly many do not become so in any significant degree. It is at least in part a learning task set by a particular ideal of human development" (Dearden, 1972, p. 464).

This ideal of human development is something quite different from the developmental aim to which Kohlberg is committed. It is not something which results from the stimulation of natural growth, but an educational objective which is rationally adopted and demands justification in the same way as any other.

The cognitive-developmentalists, by identifying moral autonomy with moral maturity, have adopted a very narrow definition of the moral educator's task in addition to a questionable concept of autonomy. In concluding a lengthy discussion on moral development and moral eduction, Kohlberg and Turiel state:

> "We have defined <u>moral teaching</u> as a process of open discussion which is aimed at stimulating the child to move to the next step in his development.....we cannot really teach internalized principles of moral judgment: We can only stimulate development....the eventual goal of stimulating the development of structure or level of moral reasoning is consistent with enlightened views of the moral content we would like our future adults to have."
> (Kohlberg and Turiel, 1971, p. 461).

This concept of teaching assumes that it is sufficient to provide the conditions which will enable children to learn <u>how</u> to reason about moral problems. But Scheffler (1960, p. 93) has shown an important distinction between 'teaching how'

6. R.S. Peters (1973b) has considered developmental theory and what is logically involved in 'becoming a chooser' in relation to the influence which educational institutions have on the development of autonomy.

which involves the acquisition of skills and 'teaching to' which involves the acquisition of norms and values.

> "We talk of 'citizenship' as if it were a set of skills, whereas our educational aim is, in fact, not merely to teach pupils <u>how</u> to be good citizens but, in particular, to be good citizens" (Scheffler, 1960, p. 98).

'Teaching how' is only one of the goals of the moral educator, and it may well exist alongside other goals.[7] In discussing the logical implications of aiming at teaching children to make moral decisions, Brian Hill writes:

> "If....we grant that education should aim to foster those higher capacities in individuals which are amenable to a teacher's guidance, then we must try to develop his valuing powers. This will mean <u>teaching that</u> certain values are widely espoused, <u>teaching how</u> to make more rational evaluations, and <u>teaching for</u> the acceptance of certain commitments." (Hill, 1972, p. 52)

The 'cognitive stimulation' which Kohlberg discusses would contribute only to 'teaching how to make more rational evaluations.'

CONCLUSION

It has been the aim of this chapter to examine some of the limitations of the cognitive-developmental approach to moral education. This is not, however, to deny its positive contribution. There is surely, in any direct attempts by teachers to foster moral development, a place for the techniques of cognitive stimulation which Kohlberg and his colleagues have presented. (cf Mackey 1973; Kuhmerker, 1973). A problem arises when these techniques are equated with education for moral autonomy in its widest

7. It is not intended, in this context, to discuss the complexities of the concept of moral education, as this would involve more than enough challenge for a further thesis. The aim here is merely to illustrate the limitations of the cognitive-developmental approach when it is taken on its own.

sense. Conceptual analyses of autonomy (Hampshire, 1965b; Dearden, 1972; Peters, 1973b) suggest that this is not a condition which emerges through the natural process of development. It is an educational ideal towards which educators may choose to aspire and their commitment to such an ideal will be consistent with a total ideological or metaphysical stance in the context of which such an ideal might be justified. Kohlberg's ultimate position in this respect is not clearly stated.

He associates his developmentalist position with educational theories on a grand scale.

In one place he states that his position is neo-Platonic:

> "....as I have tried to trace the stages of development of morality and to use these stages as the basis of a moral education program, I have realized more and more that its implication was the reassertion of the Platonic faith in the power of the rational good." (Kohlberg, 1970, p. 57).

In another place (Kohlberg and Mayer, 1972) Kohlberg contrasts his ideological or metaphysical position with the two ideologies of romanticism (as enshrined in the psychoanalytic tradition) and cultural transmission (as exemplified by behaviourism). He claims philosophical affiliation with Dewey in what he calls the "progressivist developmental ideology". As Dewey strongly opposed the Platonist view, however, it is not at all clear how Kohlberg can link his theory to each of these differing views of man.

In using his theory to form a rationale for a proposed approach to the practice of moral education (Kohlberg, 1970; Kohlberg, 1971a; Kohlberg, 1971c; Kohlberg and Turiel, 1971) there appear to be confusions about the places of fact and value in educational practice and Kohlberg appears to have over-narrowly delineated the concept of teaching. The skills of moral reasoning and the capacity to form rational judgments are important, but the educator cannot overlook the places of habit-formation, character-training, and moral example in attaining his educational aims.

Peters stresses that education is a change in our state of being in the Wittgensteinian sense that it involves an attitudinal aspect - a 'way of seeing' or 'seeing <u>as</u>.' In his view "to be educated requires some understanding of principles, of the 'reason why' of things" (1967, p. 6).

Knowledge in itself is not the criterion of being educated; "the knowledge which a man must possess to qualify as being educated must be built into his way of looking at things" (1967, p. 7).

Under such a concept it is clearly not enough to identify the aims of education with development, both intellectual and moral, in the way that Kohlberg would want to. This is not because the approach is altogether too cognitive because, as Peters (1972a) contends "the development of motives and emotions is inseparable from the development of modes of experience each of which has its distinctive cognitive stages" (p. 516). The limitations of the approach consist in the failure to recognize that 'development' as an educational aim, if it can be justified, will more than likely be subordinate to a number of other aims to which many educators would want to give greater weight. This cannot be better stated than in the words of R.S. Peters:

> "Creativity without competence is cant; being critical without a mastery of some content and without training in argument is just being captious; autonomy without an informed awareness of possibilities is merely a romantic protest; and integrity without the discipline of a moral tradition is empty uplift." (Peters, 1972a, p. 519).

CHAPTER 7

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Kohlberg's work belongs within the Piagetian tradition of developmental psychology. This tradition has adopted the Kantian view of man as a being capable of rational autonomy who, through active reason, imposes order on the flux of experience by forming a structure of concepts and categories. The adoption, by psychologists in the Piagetian tradition, of this view of man has coincided with a fundamental shift in the philosophy of social science enabling it to embrace new models of explanation. Such models present alternatives to those employed in the natural sciences and are appropriate to the unique nature of the social and psychological knowledge which the social scientist pursues.

The primary goal of social science is to obtain organized knowledge of social and psychological reality. This reality is more than a sum total of objects and events existing and occuring within the world of human conduct, culture and communication as it might be recorded by a detached observer. If we want to understand social reality; if we want to build theories which will enable us to explain how men become what they are in the social world which they have made; if we want to bring knowledge or enlightened purpose to our social practices; then, we must give attention to the springs of human action; we must attempt to view a social situation from the viewpoint of the participators in that situation; we must recognize that in commonsense thinking we accept and understand our actual or potential knowledge of the meaning of human actions and their products 'from the inside' in terms of 'the way we see the world.' Man experiences perceptions, ideas, emotions, attitudes, and purposes, in the light of what Popper has called 'the logic of the situation.' To understand these phenomena we need to penetrate and map the structure of human consciousness. The theoretical basis and methodology for such a task has been Piaget's great contribution to the science of man.

Piaget recognized in his study of human cognition, what Wittgenstein has expressed in the phrase: 'the limits of language mean the limits of my world'[1] In essence, it means that in learning a language or in developing concepts, our consciousness is progressively structured according to rules for making sense of the world and relating ourselves to aspects of it in various ways. Understanding human behaviour, therefore, depends on the cognitive content that pervades particular forms of social life.

In Piagetian theory, the categories which provide forms of rule-conception are not, as Kant held, innate molds into which specific experiences are fitted, but they evolve or develop as a result of interaction between the child and his physical and social environment. Piaget postulates that a child is born with an intellectual apparatus which he keeps modifying as a result of experience in diverse stages until he achieves the mature adult stage of the community - not a particular cultural community, but the 'human community' in its most general sense. His is a developmental theory, which is constructed as an explanation of how man comes to know the physical and social world during the course of cognitive epigenesis. But Piaget has remained primarily concerned with the development of logico-deductive reasoning and physical concepts. The application of his approach, which has become known as 'cognitive-developmentalism', to other domains of human knowledge is the major task undertaken by developmental psychologists in the Piagetian tradition. For fifteen years, Kohlberg has worked on the elaboration of a cognitive-developmental approach to morality. The domain of

1. There has been controversy over the correct translation of this passage which occurs in Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, 5·62. However, it has been settled by reference to Wittgenstein's corrections to Ramsey's copy of the first edition of the Tractatus. (See Hacker, 1972, p. 79)

aesthetics is beginning to attract the attention of others.[2] The development of other forms of knowledge, such as those which comprise Paul Hirst's classification (eg religion, knowledge of persons etc.) will, no doubt, also eventually be subjected to further Piagetian investigation.

The present thesis, is concerned with an examination of some of the philosophical problems which are inherent in the Piaget-Kohlberg theory of moral development and its implications for moral education.

The importance of this theory in contemporary social science is not disputed and there is a large body of empirical research which gives substance to the cognitive-developmental theory of moral judgment. At the beginning of the present thesis, this research is reviewed, synthesized and evaluated.

It is recognized that the empirical validation of Kohlberg's theory is an ongoing enterprise which now has the attention of a large number of experimental psychologists. There are methodological problems to be solved. There are questions to be asked about the psychological independence of moral judgment as a construct and the extent to which it might be correlated with other cognitive or personality variables. There are theoretical problems concerning stage generality, horizontal and vertical decalage, and motivation, which are yet to be researched. There is still much cross-cultural validation required. But, in addition to these empirical questions, there are a number of unresolved philosophical questions arising out of the assumptions on which the theory rests and it has been the aim of the present thesis to consider some of these.

It is argued that the cognitive-developmental theory of moral development represents an approach to the under standing of man as a moral agent who has the potential for

2. Professor B. Sutton-Smith, Columbia University, New York, has been working on a developmental psychology of the arts, including a cognitive-developmental theory of aesthetic judgment.

rationality in that he is able to consider reasons for acting, to deliberate on those reasons in relation to rules, to act on his deliberations and to be responsible for his actions. An analysis of the explanatory paradigm which is implicitly adopted in cognitive-developmentalism shows that this paradigm takes cognizance of (i) the agent's viewpoint and reasons for acting, (ii) a molar level of behavioural analysis, (iii) enabling conditions for choice, and (iv) cognitive processes of appraisal and judgment. Human behaviour can be explained at a mechanistic level, at a purposive/affective level and at a rational/cognitive level. A consideration of the place of each of these paradigms in the explanation of behaviour indicates that moral development is most adequately explained at the third of these levels. But, because moral action is frequently influenced by habit and moral judgment is frequently influenced by motive, there is a place for explanation at the other levels. An examination of the philosophical basis of the explanatory model which cognitive-developmentalism assumes suggests that the central concepts contained in that model are not sufficiently explicated within the theory as a whole.

The concept of judgment is central to Kohlberg's theory of moral development, yet a close reading of the expository statements which he has made shows a lack of clarity concerning what this cognitive process entails and how it relates logically to other aspects of practical reasoning such as choosing deciding and acting. It is contended that Kohlberg does not make clear what is to be counted as 'judgment', nor does he provide a satisfactory explanation of its relationship to non-cognitive and affective influences such as motive and habit. He appears to adopt a prescriptivist position but this entails the further problems of the logical equation of judgments with imperatives and the disparity which often exists between judgment and action. This thesis maintains that the cognitive-developmental theory does not clearly show the nature of the relationship which it assumes between its empirical data and the cognitive structures which are inferred.

Kohlberg claims that there are invariant sequences in moral development which hold in any culture and that the higher or later stages of moral judgment are preferable to,

and more adequate than, the earlier stages of judgment according to certain moral criteria. The highest stage of moral maturity, which is the optimal outcome of natural development, according to Kohlberg, is claimed by him to involve principled autonomy, whereby conflicts are resolved in accordance with self-chosen ethical principles having logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. Justice is considered supreme among these principles. However, there are a number of metaethical problems inherent in these claims, some of which have been considered in this thesis.

It is argued that the theory provides no adequate criteria for defining the moral domain or for determining the relative quality of reasons within the stage structure. Furthermore, there are no philosophically satisfactory criteria for deciding in every case what is to count as a reason.

Kohlberg's assumption that psychological development is parallel to logical or moral adequacy is not tenable under close critical analysis and, despite Kohlberg's claim to have bridged the gap between naturalistic and non-naturalistic theories of moral judgment, examination of this claim shows that the is/ought problem is not solved by his theory.

It appears that many of these problems arise from the inconsistency in Kohlberg's ethical position as he shifts between formal prescriptivism and naturalism, and claims allegiance to philosophers as far ranging in their ethical positions as Plato, Hare, Dewey and Rawls. A fundamental inconsistency would seem to lie in Kohlberg's dual claims for the formal universality of ethical principles and the natural supremacy of justice as a substantive principle. He evades the important question of ultimate justification for moral principles. Furthermore, in emphasizing the place of prescriptive principles in moral development, Kohlberg neglects the importance of other features of morality such as habits, beliefs, attitudes and personal ideals.

Many of these inconsistencies and problems arise because Kohlberg claims too much for his theory. To hold that a psychological theory of moral development is capable of solving many of the perennial problems of moral philosophy

represents either an over-simplified interpretation or a superficial awareness of the nature of such problems.

In recent years, Kohlberg and his colleagues have attempted to translate their cognitive-developmental psychological theory into an educational ideology. In their view, the process of moral education is to facilitate development towards stage 6 by establishing the child's natural level and providing conditions which will bring about stimulation of the next step of development. "Development" is set up as an aim and it is claimed that the transition from one level of judgment to another can be aided by cognitive stimulation but not brought about by explicit teaching.

This approach to moral education is discussed in relation to its fundamental assumptions about human development and autonomy. It is contended that such an approach is based on a narrow and vaguely defined conception of the educator's role in that it assumes that the stimulation of naturally unfolding development will produce the emergence of autonomy and moral maturity. This conception of education does not recognize the responsibility which the educator has to justify both autonomy and rationality as consciously chosen goals which involve the initiation of the child into a particular mode of self-understanding and a particular view of the world. While the development of moral reasoning capacities is important, it is but one aspect of the moral educator's task.

The present thesis, while acknowledging the importance of Kohlberg's work, has endeavoured to examine the cognitive-developmental approach to morality so as to make explicit the underlying assumptions which it entails. These assumptions are often not considered by those who accept the theory or by those who attempt to apply it in the educational context.

Possibly because of Kohlberg's unceasing efforts to disseminate his ideas and push his theory well beyond the restricted and discerning audience of academic journals, there has been a widespread acceptance of this approach to moral development which has not been qualified by a consideration of its limitations and unproven assumptions.

The moral educator can be considered particularly vulnerable in this respect.

In a world which is perplexed and anguished by gross social problems, political forces which can work for good or evil, conflicts between cultures and individual ways of life, a great responsibility falls on the educator to decide how to prepare children to enter such a world and, hopefully, to change it for the better. Moral pluralism is a fact of Western Culture and indoctrination has pejorative connotations which are repulsive to most present-day educators. The question to be faced, therefore, is 'How do we educate for moral autonomy?' It is not a new problem as the question of whether virtue can be taught has preoccupied educational thinkers from the time of Socrates.

In concluding the introduction to a volume which brings together a number of concepts of the educated man (Nash et al, 1965) the writers make the following point:

> "Most would probably agree that the educated man today is a moral man. Western educational thinkers from Plato to Skinner have all affirmed this. But how do we educate a man to be moral, to be good, or at least to be a better person?" (p. 26)

The question cannot yet be answered. It is not surprising, therefore, that any new light which can be cast on this perennial problem is likely to attract attention. The danger is that under the illumination of that light we will lose sight of other perspectives on the problem. To some extent, this is what appears to have happened in the way the cognitive developmental approach to morality has been received by educators.

In Canada, the Mackay report (1969) on religious and moral education has been heavily influenced by Kohlberg's work. It is easily understood how this arises when one considers the claims which Kohlberg makes for his approach. He holds that it is free of indoctrinative content, that it facilitates 'natural' development towards autonomy, that it leads to an acceptance of justice as a supreme governing principle, that it encourages action which is based on principled judgment. These are all claims which need to be closely examined and Crittenden (1972) has produced an admirable critique of the Mackay report along these lines.

Kohlberg's theory will certainly hold a significant place both in our knowledge of human development and in relation to our educational practices. It is, however, not a panacea or grand solution, and like all theories in the complex study of man, it raises more problems than it is able to solve. It has been the purpose of this thesis to reflect on some of these problems.

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