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THE EFFECTS OF AWARENESS OF CONSEQUENCES AND
GROUP DISCUSSION ON LEVEL OF MORAL JUDGMENT.

The City University of New York, Ph.D., 1975
Psychology, social

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**THE EFFECTS OF AWARENESS OF CONSEQUENCES
AND GROUP DISCUSSION ON
LEVEL OF MORAL JUDGMENT
by
ANNETTA BARRON NADLER**

*A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in Psychology in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
The City University of New York*

1974

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my deepest appreciation to my mentor, Professor Florence Denmark. She has been a source of stimulation, a guide, and a role model throughout my graduate education.

Also I wish to thank Professor Herbert Kraus and Professor Leonard Kogan for their contributions as members of my dissertation committee. Professor John Van Laer was of great help in moments of crisis. I would like to give special thanks to Professor Linda Solomon and Professor Hank Solomon for their valuable criticisms and suggestions.

I am indebted to the following people who assisted in various aspects of this research: My mother, who constantly urged me to finish, Roseanne McConville, Kate Genut, Nadja Pats, and Geraldine Confessore.

Finally, I express my appreciation and love to Hank Nadler who with rapidly fraying patience still supported me and took care of Courtney more than half the time.

ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS OF AWARENESS OF CONSEQUENCES AND GROUP DISCUSSION ON LEVEL OF MORAL JUDGMENT

by

Annetta Barron Nadler

The present research was designed to test empirically Kohlberg's concept of an invariant and irreversible pattern as applied to the development of moral judgment. Appropriate variables for empirical evaluation of moral judgment were suggested to include the influence of both public feeling of responsibility and group discussion procedures. Also examined were personal family stressors and their relation to the level of moral judgment displayed by the subject. The hypotheses of the present study were that the conflicts which are created by making public the subject's judgment, the discussion procedures, and family stress produce change in moral judgment.

Subjects were divided into six conditions. The basic 2x3 factorial arrangement of the two variables was as follows: public vs private; isolated individual vs group with discussion vs group no discussion. Portions of the Kohlberg moral judgment interview were administered to 72 white female college freshman ranging in age from 18.0 to 19.10.

All subjects were exposed to Kohlberg's Heinz and Dising protocols. These stories accentuated the conflict between individual and society. It was expected that this conflict heightened the influence of the group on the subject. Anonymity might be expected to minimize the possibility of another's influence.

A significant disordinal interaction was the main finding. That is, there was a significant interaction effect such that moral reasoning scores between public and anonymous subjects was greater in the discussion condition than in the no discussion condition. Of further interest was the finding that as severity of stress in the individual's family history increased, the moral reasoning score decreased. Accordingly, several of the hypotheses of the present study were supported.

These results were discussed in terms of previous findings in group research, privacy, and stress data. Also considered was the effect of present day societal organization as compared to earlier more tradition bound structures.

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of morality was first recognized as an issue for study by the philosophers. Stated briefly, the issue of morality revolves around the opposing concepts of a sense of relativity on one side versus a universal understanding of 'ideals.' This initial dichotomy established by Plato (427-347 B.C.) has served as the source for our interest from that point until recent time. While today's armchair philosopher is set to argue that the principles of one culture are not to be judged as better or worse than the principles of a second culture, he also has the nagging uncertainty that there are certain things that are just morally wrong. What one is asked to look at then, are the rules of society versus general ideals that are independent of any given society.

In discussing morality from the psychological point of view, one is concerned not only with the content of morality, but also with the course of development of the individual's sense of morality.

Piaget (1932) is credited with making one of the first attempts to deal with the issue of the development of morality. Although better known for his primary focus on cognitive development, he has also investigated several areas of interpersonal development and considered them under the same rubric. According to Piaget, moral judgment is based on the development of a cognitive structure.

Piaget defines development as an inherent, unalterable, evolutionary process. For each individual developmental areas are seen to proceed according to an invariant and irreversible sequence. While a given individual may pass through the stages more slowly or more quickly than a contemporary, the order of progression is never varied. The sequence of development has been ordered according to phases or stages. Such stages in

development become more and more complex, and moving from one stage to the next represents a fundamental reorganization of the present existing cognitive structures.

According to Piaget stage movement is always founded on the interaction between the child and his environment. A previous stage (or behavior pattern) is seen as inferior in dealing with the present interactional situation and serves as a basis from which to model the next stage. Each individual is attempting to function in a state of equilibrium. The attempt to gain this equilibrium in a changing interactional situation is difficult as the individual tries to relate his concepts of himself to his concept of society's demand as he sees it at that moment.

In dealing with the development of moral reasoning, Piaget delineated two stages which he labeled heteronomous morality and autonomous morality. The first stage, heteronomous reasoning, utilized by children three to eight years of age is basically an initial amorality characterized by egocentrism and unilateral respect. In this stage rules are seen as fixed, sacred, and eternal. They are established by higher ups such as adults and God. In the second stage, autonomous reasoning, morality is perceived as realistic and as developing from group consensus.

The child's immediate interactions ignore the existence of rules, and the child proceeds to act in a manner consistent with his desires. He is unable to relate from another's point of view, and the belief (fear of) in punishment causes him to focus on the consequences of his actions. As the child's egocentrism lessens and he is able to see another's point of view, he tries to treat others as he wants them to treat him. The golden rule is the focus.

Reciprocity is the key word in the stage of autonomous morality. No longer are rules totally unchangeable. At this stage modification is permitted and the concept of the intent of the action is understood. This growth of mutual respect occurs in children eight to twelve years of age.

Piaget investigated the moral development of the child using short stories. Each child received two short stories. One described a well intentioned child whose actions led to severe consequences, the other an ill intentioned child whose actions led to negligible consequences. The subject was asked to consider the extent of guilt for each of the children. Piaget found that the subjects under seven years were caught up in the results of the action and paid little or no attention to the motive. Older subjects emphasized the intent of the action and felt that the consequences were a secondary consideration. The first situation is called objective responsibility, the second subjective responsibility.

Piaget has attempted to explain the development of moral judgment according to his model for cognitive development, but his conception of moral judgment appears far less clear and complex. For moral development, as for cognitive, the movement from the lower stage to the higher stage is explained in terms of interaction. That is, as reliance on and exposure to peers increases, reliance on and exposure to adults declines, and as a result the individual moves from one stage to the next. However, the nature of the interaction between these social factors and the progression of cognitive abilities is not explained.

Kohlberg (1963,1968) based his early research of moral development on the findings of Piaget. Kohlberg agrees with Piaget that as the child progresses through stages, he is reorganizing his concept of the world. Movement from one stage to the next is dependent on the individual's

developing concept of justice. Kohlberg and Piaget are, thus, in agreement that the development of moral stages is not the result of the maturation of neurological structures or, as commonly believed, the direct internalization of societal values, prohibitions, and commands.

However, Kohlberg disagreed with Piaget on three major issues. First, Kohlberg questioned the ages at which various types of judgment first appeared. Secondly, he questioned Piaget's assumption that moral development concludes upon reaching moral autonomy. Lastly, Kohlberg suggested the existence of several intermediary steps to Piaget's schema.

Kohlberg's early work dealt with the issue of age related developmental trends. Subjects at different age levels were presented with situations in which a dilemma had arisen based on the conflicting needs of the different participants. Most of the stories presented a conflict between society or authority's rules and the needs of a given individual. The most well known story, Heinz, is a clear example:

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 the 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.

The subjects were asked to discuss the situation. Kohlberg attempted to evaluate, in terms of developmental level, the content of the subject's justification of his feelings concerning the dilemma. Kohlberg based his evaluations on the way in which the subject defined the conflict and his use and understanding of such moral concepts as intent, reciprocity, and justice. Kohlberg postulated that concepts such as these are present in all societies, but that individuals at different stages of moral development understand and use the concepts in different manners.

Based on this early research, Kohlberg expanded Piaget's original two stage theory to one of six stages, or three basic moral levels consisting of two stages each. Each stage represents a different way of dealing with the conflicts of society and/or individuals. The six stages were labeled and may be defined as follows.

Schema of developmental types

Level 1. Premoral

Awareness of consequences is the focus. The desire is to avoid punishment. The right is dictated by an external world.

Type 0 (stage 1): Obedience and punishment orientation.

This stage is characterized by egocentrism, lack of relativity, and conformity to superior powers.

Type 1 (stage 2): Naive instrumental hedonism.

The right action is that which is satisfying to the individual. Concern for others is based on reciprocity. Rules lessen in importance as the hedonistic value to the individual increases.

Level 11 Morality of conventional role conformity.

Fear of the power structure is lessened and respect for authority and social structure replaces it. The intent of an action is considered for the first time.

Type 2 (stage 3): Good boy (nice girl) morality.

This is the orientation to obtain social approval. The desire is to conform to the stereotyped appropriate behavior.

Type 3 (stage 4): Authority and order orientation.

Law and order have priority over all. There is necessity to maintain social order by strict adherence to rules regardless of circumstances.

Level 111. Morality of self accepted moral principles.

There is the concept of universality of moral values.

Type 4 (stage 5): Contractual legalistic orientation.

The understanding that rules and laws may be somewhat arbitrary. Respect for other individuals and the avoidance of any violation of the rights of others is paramount. While rules are adhered to to provide a basis for the functioning of society, a deviant act may be justifiable.

Type 5 (stage 6): Universal conscience or principle orientation.

The individual's conscience is the motivating agent leading to the development of universal and consistent moral principles.

Kohlberg's theoretical work has stimulated empirical work in a variety of areas. For instance, Turiel (1966) conducted research to test the subject's acceptance and integration of moral reasoning at stages different from his own. Turiel postulated two concepts: (a) since the stages form an invariant sequence, a person would better understand and be more influenced by reasoning a single stage above his own level than the reasoning found in any more advanced stage, and (b) since each stage represents a basic reorganization of thought, the subject would reject reasoning at a stage below his own and be less influenced by it. Turiel, in a pretest, established the predominant moral stage of each subject using one set of Kohlberg's moral dilemmas. In an experimental session, he administered a second set of the Kohlberg dilemmas in such a way that each subject was exposed to explanations of the resolution of the dilemmas at one of three levels.

Subjects in one condition were exposed to reasoning one stage above their own predominant level; subjects in a second condition received explanations at two stages above their own predominant level; and subjects in a third condition received explanations one stage below the subjects own predominant level. A control group, receiving no explanations, was also included.

Turiel found a significant pre-post test difference in the condition in which subjects had been exposed to a level of reasoning one stage above their own. Subjects in that condition showed significantly greater use of the advanced stage on the posttest as compared to the pretest. Posttest scores for those subjects who had been exposed to more advanced reasoning two stages above their own level showed no use of this reasoning. While those subjects who were exposed to explanations at a lower stage did tend to increase their use of that stage in the posttest, the increase was not statistically significant. Turiel interprets his findings as support of his first hypothesis that moral judgment forms an invariant developmental progression. In a similar study, Rest, Turiel and Kohlberg (1969) attempted to assess the individuals preference for moral reasoning at stages both above and below his own predominant stage. They found that the subjects consistently preferred moral reasoning at a stage above the subject's predominant stage.

Both Kohlberg and Turiel therefore argue strongly for the following two notions. First, when an individual has progressed to a higher stage of moral reasoning involving the necessary reorganization, he is no longer able to accept reasoning of a lower level; in other words, regression does not occur. Moral development like cognitive development is unidirectional. Second, if the individual is exposed to thinking that is too far beyond his own level, he is unable to comprehend it. Therefore when presented with more advanced

reasoning, a subject can, if ready, move to a stage of reasoning one stage above his own predominant level, but not further.

These conclusions of Kohlberg and Turiel clearly hold for the situation in which the subject is merely presented with reasoning more or less advanced than his own. However there is reason to suppose that other conditions might lead the individual to either regress or advance further than one stage from his predominant level of moral reasoning. The present study will investigate the effect of several of these conditions on moral decision making.

It has been suggested (Schwartz, 1971) that recognition of moral accountability influences one's decisions. Therefore the present experiment will investigate the effect of the subject's awareness of possible consequences of his decision on his decision making process. Individuals do not appear to be completely consistent in regard to conformity to personal or societal social norms. Explanations have been offered for such inconsistencies in terms of group pressure (Merton, 1957) and opportunity (Cloward, 1959).

The group has been suggested as being other than the sum of its parts (LeBon, 1896). Differences in behavior between the individual acting independently and the individual acting as part of a group have been extensively discussed (Latane and Darley, 1970 for example). In general the research indicates that groups engage in more antisocial behavior than do individuals. In terms of the moral judgment process, this suggests that those subjects acting as part of a group may resolve moral judgment dilemmas differently from those subjects responding as isolated individuals. Therefore small group discussion has been included as a second independent variable in the present study.

Each of the variables, awareness of consequences and acting as part of a group, will now be discussed in detail.

Awareness of Consequences

Schwartz (1971) investigated the use of norms such as considerateness, reliability, and helpfulness. He presented subjects with stories requiring moral choice decisions. These stories presented the subject with a conflict between what the individual in the story wanted to do and what he had been obligated to do. For example (in summary): Bob's alarm went off at 7:30 AM reminding him that his friends were picking him up in half an hour. He had been out late the previous night and had no desire to get up and go out in the cold. Subjects were asked to indicate what Bob might be thinking at this time, what he might do, and why. Schwartz felt that these decisions would be perceived by the subjects as moral choices if two criteria were met. First, if the subject were aware that Bob's actions would have consequences for the welfare of others, and second, if the subject felt a sense of responsibility for these acts and their consequences.

Schwartz found that when these two conditions were fulfilled, then the decisions and justifications for Bob's actions were discussed in terms of the appropriate moral norms. On the other hand, those subjects who had no awareness of consequences and felt no internalized locus of responsibility responded in terms of avoidance or denial of responsibility and consequences.

While Schwartz was primarily concerned with individual differences among subjects, his findings suggest that inducing a perception of awareness of consequences and feeling of responsibility could affect the level of reasoning in moral judgment dilemmas. It seems reasonable, therefore, that when one is aware of consequences and feels responsible, the level of moral judgment would be higher than in the corresponding control situation.

To test the hypothesis that awareness of consequences and ascription of responsibility affect the reasoning presented in response to the Kohlberg moral judgment dilemmas, a public-private manipulation will be performed. In the "public" condition, subjects will be informed that while these stories may seem irrelevant, they are in truth allegorical representations of similar incidents that have happened among college students. Subjects will be asked to make a personal statement that they understand how the stories could relate to college age students. They will be further requested to give permission for their decisions to be used should such incidents occur in the future. Finally, their signature on this agreement will be required. It is expected that subjects in this public condition will show a higher stage of reasoning than subjects in the private condition.

Acting as part of a group

In 1896 LeBon wrote that the age we are about to enter will in truth be the age of crowds.¹ He goes on to suggest that the psychological crowd thinks, acts, and feels in a manner different from the isolated individual. Certain negative ideas and feelings tend to occur more commonly in a group. LeBon further states that the individual forming part of a group acquires a power which allows him to yield to his instincts which he, if alone, would have held in check. The group is anonymous and therefore irresponsible. Being a part of any group imparts to the individual a spontaneity, violence, and ferocity that he does not possess alone.

More recently Latané and Darley (1970) suggested that in a group, the individual cannot be held responsible for his actions or decisions. Responsibility is lessened because it is shared. According to Latané and Darley (1970), responsibility is diffused and therefore diminished. For an

¹LeBon's use of the word 'crowd' refers to the psychological crowd, i.e., any number of people who share a common objective.

isolated individual the responsibility for dealing with a situation is greater and he is personally held to account. If others are present, no one person is held solely responsible.

In view of these hypotheses, it would appear that being part of a group might have an effect on moral reasoning. In order to test this hypothesis, a group–individual manipulation will be carried out. It is expected that those in the group condition will display a regression in level of moral reasoning.

Other investigators who have studied the concept of relaxation of moral values when in a group have distinguished between the anonymous and non-anonymous group. For instance, Festinger, Pepitone, and Newcomb (1952) held that when individuals lose their identity in a group situation, there is a “reduction in inner restraints.” Singer, Brush, and Lublin (1965) found that being in a group in which loss of self consciousness and feeling of individuality occurs, leads to the ability to perform hitherto unfavorable acts. Zimbardo (1970) suggested that conditions which induce feelings of remoteness lead to lowered self consciousness, less embarrassment, and reduced inhibitions about punishment.

The concept of deindividuation according to Zimbardo then may be considered as a change in the perception of self and others which leads thereby to a lowered threshold of normally restrained behavior. When deindividuation is present, individuals “release” behavior (feelings) in violation of prior established norms of appropriateness. Hostile and revenge seeking antisocial behavior may therefore be expected.¹

In view of the above research, it seems that the effect of the group manipulation may interact with the public-private variable. While regression is

¹*It would appear that LeBon was one of the earliest advocates of the concept of deindividuation.*

expected to occur in any group situation, it may be greater in the private (anonymous) group than in the public group.

Despite the argument advanced above, one could make a case for an alternate prediction based on an early group image notion of LeBon. He suggested that a group thinks in images rather than in consideration of underlying issues. If the images are sufficiently vivid and exciting, then sentiment takes full control. Reasoning does not enter the decision process. Therefore, it is possible for the group to be as easily heroic as criminal, and moral judgments in the group might be dependent upon the sentiments invoked rather than any universal concepts of the issue.

In the story of Heinz (see appendix) one might expect more hostility leveled toward the druggist and the judge rather than towards the law breaker—Heinz. The major issue, the value of human life, might not even be considered. If the above occurs in the group condition in the present experiment, one might perhaps expect a positive influence of group membership on moral judgment.

Environmental influences on decision making have been the subject of prior investigation (Glasser, 1970, A. Freud, 1968). Such research indicates that family background and composition influences one's later life decisions. In a secondary focus to this study, an attempt will be made to explore the relationship of certain life history variables to the subject's level of moral development. These may be considered as stress variables.

The individual does not grow up in an isolated condition. He is usually part of a functioning family unit. This unit may have two parents, one parent, or no parents. There may or may not be siblings. The composition of

the family is important in terms of how the individual views life. Similarly, people of foreign extraction may view the issues under consideration quite differently from those individuals part of a native born American family. There are also various situations in a family that may operate to influence a decision made at a particular time, for example, the occupation of the breadwinner. It would seem likely that such life history variables would affect the level of moral reasoning.

However, since the number of stressed subjects will undoubtedly be low and this issue tangential to the main problem, no specific predictions can be made at this time.

In summary, the present study was designed to explore the concept of an invariant, unidirectional pattern as applied to the moral judgment of the young adult. In questioning this widely accepted notion, two major areas will be investigated. The experiment will test the effects of a personal feeling of public responsibility on moral judgments. Further, the study will test the influence of group discussion procedures on moral decision making. We will also examine family history stressors and their effects on the individual's level of moral judgment.

The hypotheses may be restated as follows:

1. The moral reasoning score will be higher in the public condition than in the anonymous condition.
2. The moral reasoning score will be higher in the group discussion condition than in the individual condition.
3. There will be an interaction effect such that the difference in moral reasoning scores between public and anonymous subjects will be greater in the group discussion condition than in the individual condition.

METHOD

Subjects

The Ss of the present investigation were 72 undergraduate students. (An additional 200 students took part in pre-experimental pilot studies. See below.) All Ss of the experiment proper were enrolled in introductory psychology classes at Hunter College, City University of New York, and were white, females aged 18 to 20. Ss were recruited as volunteers for an experiment to take place outside of class time. No monetary rewards or class credits were offered as inducements.

Pilot Studies

Pilot study #1.

Each of the ten situations from Kohlberg's moral judgment interview (1966) was considered for possible use in the experiment proper. Sixty two white, female freshmen at Hunter College and John Jay College were presented with two to four of the situations and either verbal or written comments to the questions were elicited (see appendices). This was done repeatedly over the many subjects until each story had been tested several times in both an oral and a written format. Each of these initial sessions lasted from one to two hours.

Based on these Ss' written and oral responses to the conflicts, as well as S's subjective responses in reference to which of the stories seemed most contemporary, applicable, and/or thought provoking, four dilemmas out of the original ten were chosen for further testing in the second pilot study.

Those dilemmas chosen were Heinz¹-part 1 (should a husband steal a drug in order to save the life of his wife), part 2 (mercy killing), Joe (young boy giving his self earned camp money to his father), and Diesing (leaving an assigned air raid post to check on the safety of his family. See Appendix A). These four stories with two different types of question arrangements were then used for a large scale formal pilot. The two type of question formats for each story differed only in degree of extensiveness.

Pilot study #2.

Ninety-nine students in several introductory psychology classes at Lehman, Baruch, and Hunter Colleges served as subjects. During a regularly scheduled class period each student was asked to take part in a class experiment. There were no refusals. Each student then received a booklet with two stories and the appropriate questions in either a full or an abbreviated selection form. (See appendix B). Based on the prior study and with the hope of shortening the time required of the subject, it was anticipated that responses could be judged equally accurately from either question format. An example of the type of question employed was: Should Heinz have done that?, Why?, Was it actually wrong or right?. The instructions requested the subjects to answer as fully as possible and to avoid a simple yes/no response. A full half page was allotted for each answer. As a result, lengthy responses were elicited.

The selection of stories, the order, and the question format were systematically randomized. Following completion of the booklet—a procedure taking 45 minutes to an hour—a class discussion was instituted. This discussion and the necessary explanations as well as the usual request for secrecy often required an additional class period.

¹While the experimenter was aware of a possible bias due to ethnicity of the protagonists names—it was decided, for the present experiment, to remain faithful to the Kohlberg nomenclature.

Kohlberg (1966) has suggested that all measurement be done by an analysis of two situation units. The two stories are grouped together on the basis of requiring a judgment of conflicts concerning similar issues. This leads to an increase in the reliability of scoring. (Scoring explained on page 21.)

The results of the second pilot in terms of detail of the responses and congruity of the story issues led to the selection of Heinz—part 1 and Dising dilemmas as the situations to be used in the experiment proper. Ss answered the questions with lengthy meaningful responses. This was equally true of the shortened question format. Thus, it was determined that only a selection from the full question format would be required.

The Experiment Proper

Overview of final design.

The study investigated the effects of the following two independent variables: group discussion and anonymity. The dependent measure was the level of moral development on the Kohlberg scale. The basic 2x3 factorial arrangement of the two variables is as follows: (2) public vs private; (3) information; i.e., isolated individual vs group—no communication vs group with discussion. In addition possible stressful life history information was noted.

The public condition was manipulated in two ways. First, all Ss in that condition were requested to introduce themselves and tell a little about their background. In the individual condition this discussion was held with the E. The E reciprocated in a similar manner. In the group condition, several minutes were spent by the E and the Ss in this discussion. Secondly, these Ss were asked to sign the last page of the booklet. They were requested to write a personal statement giving the E permission to make public the S's

opinion. They were further led to understand that it is possible that a similar situation might occur within the college community and that their responses would be used to aid in making the necessary decisions. Therefore prior to beginning the booklets, all Ss in the public condition know each other and have promised to sign and give permission for their material to be made public (attributed to them) and to be used for decision making on a local college level.

The effect of a discussion of the dilemmas was investigated in the following manner. One group of Ss was told that a five minute period had been set aside for a discussion of the issues raised in each story. One member of the group was given a timer and requested to set it at five minutes prior to the beginning of each discussion period. It was impressed upon the Ss that there is a necessity for each member of the group to state his views. They could then talk freely in an effort that each S might clarify for himself the issues. When the time was up, each was to write his own personal views in answer to the questions.

Moral development was measured by scoring the stage of response (according to Kohlberg) by each S to the questions posed by the moral dilemmas.

The after only attitude design entailed a single experimental session lasting approximately forty five minutes.

Procedure

Recruitment

Teachers of all undergraduate classes in introductory psychology at Hunter College C.U.N.Y. were contacted by the investigator. In the initial

weeks of the semester each class was visited by the E with a request for volunteers to take part in an experiment in social psychology. At this time the students were told that the experiment would involve the giving of opinions in writing concerning the handling of several difficult situations. It was further explained that the experiment would take between thirty minutes and one hour and would be held at a mutually convenient time in a place near the main Hunter College building.

Printed forms were distributed to all members of the class. These forms repeat the basic information and leave spaces for name, age, class status, and telephone number. Students were requested to fill in all the information and return the form.

An attempt was made to contact each female volunteer personally by phone. An appointment was arranged for one to eight days in the future. No further explanations were offered on the phone. Students from the same class were not scheduled at the same time.

Experimental area

Ss were received in a small anteroom where the E is seated in front of a desk. There were several comfortable arm chairs placed around the desk for the Ss. All instructions and introductions, where applicable, were given in this anteroom. At the completion of the orientation period Ss were taken individually into the experimental area. They were seated in specific seats by the E.

The experimental area consisted of a room 12 feet long by 8 feet wide. In the group conditions, the Ss were seated in writing arm chairs clustered in a 6x6 area. In the individual conditions, a single chair was situated in the same restricted area.

Initial introduction

Upon arriving to take part in the experiment Ss were seated in the anteroom and greeted by the E. She introduced herself as a graduate student in social psychology and thanked the students for volunteering to take part in the experiment. The information that had been previously given on the telephone was repeated. For those Ss in the public condition, it was suggested that they introduce themselves to the E and to the other members of the group (if in a group condition). Information concerning their classes, schedules, and teachers was either offered spontaneously or elicited by the E. The layout of the booklet was then explained along with the appropriate instructions depending on the condition. Ss were repeatedly counseled as to the complexity of the issues to be raised and the idea that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers was underscored. In the group discussion conditions, details of the discussion process and of the timing were explained. A guarantee of anonymity was made to all Ss except for those where the experimental conditions require a public statement of the position held. Comments were then solicited. Questions at this juncture were, as expected, rare and easily handled by repeating information already given. Ss were then escorted individually into the experimental area where complete privacy was assured.

Experimental booklets were distributed once all Ss were seated in the experimental area.

Four to five Ss were scheduled for each one and one quarter hour period. They were randomly assigned upon arrival to one of the six conditions.

Booklets

Each S was given a booklet with the detailed instructions for the appropriate condition repeated on the cover sheet. Each booklet contained two of the Kohlberg moral judgment situations (111 and 1X). These are two situations designed to tap many of the same moral issues. Each situation consists of a moral dilemma followed by a series of questions. The questions require detailed responses to the complex moral issues raised by the situations. The S's responses to the questions served as the measure of predominant moral stage. A final page consisted of questions regarding biographical information. (For a complete booklet see Appendix C.)

After the test booklet was completed, the S left the experimental room and returned to the anteroom where the E was waiting.

Group and individual debriefing sessions were then conducted. Ss in the individual condition were debriefed singly and Ss in the group condition were debriefed as a group. This was done in order to obtain reactions to the study as well as to answer any questions that might have arisen on the part of the Ss as a result of the experiment. The purposes of the study were briefly explained with the promise of a more detailed explanation of the results to be offered, when available, to any S who so requests. All Ss were cautioned not to speak about the experiment for the remainder of the semester. The need for such secrecy was carefully explained.

Scoring

As described above, each of Kohlberg's moral judgment situations taps various moral issues. Many of the same issues are brought into question in more than one situation. According to Kohlberg (1971b), issues define the actual concerns or values of an individual in a moral situation. The moral dilemmas are organized in such a way as to create a conflict in the

individual between two opposing concerns. Heinz, when faced with the issues of going against the law by stealing and also acting in such a way as to save the life of his wife is placed in a dilemma. Both issues are important to him, but they are in conflict with each other in this story. Heinz is forced to make a choice between these two issues. Therefore in order to solve the moral dilemma, a conflict between important but opposing issues must be resolved. Similar conflicts are created in the Diesing story when Diesing is required to go to his assigned air raid post but is beset with concern over the safety of his own family.

Kohlberg's issue scoring method was used in assigning moral maturity scores to each S. Initially, each issue discussed by the S was identified and a tentative stage score was assigned to each. This allowed for an in depth analysis of the Ss thinking in terms of moral judgments. While the two stories tap a number of different issues, many are similar. For example, feelings of affection and attitudes towards rules and laws as well as punishment are in conflict in both situations. Together the two stories chosen tap most of the moral issues identified by Kohlberg.

As is often found, a Ss score reflecting his judgment of an issue may differ from one response to another. If the S uses the same level of judgment on the same issue at least 75% of the time, his score for that issue is that level. If the S does not use the same level of judgment at least 75% of the time, a weighting system is used. For example, the stage which is used at least one half of the time but not 75% becomes the major score and assumes a weight of 2. The stage used at least one fourth but less than one half becomes the minor score and is weighted once. The sum of the major score and the minor score after weighting is then divided by three. This gives us the Ss judgment of a given issue or his MMS-moral maturity score. After all issues were scored in this way, an attempt was made to assign the S a single score. This global moral maturity score reflects the S's dominant usage

of a stage across all issues. A more detailed explanation of scoring will be offered below. For present purposes, the possible range of scores is from 1.00 to 6.00.

The present investigator scored all protocols used in this study. In order to ensure objectivity and lessen any chances for bias, the following precautions were taken. All booklets from each of the six conditions were placed in random order. Each individual booklet was then separated into four sections: the face sheet identifying the condition; the Heinz story with its accompanying questions; the Diesing story with its accompanying questions; the last page with all biographical information and signed statements.

Each of the four parts was then stamped with an identifying four digit number. Therefore prior to the actual scoring, there are two groups of protocols, one of the Heinz story and the other of the Diesing story. It was impossible to identify the condition in which any situation belongs without matching it to both a cover sheet and a final page with the same identifying numbers.

Scoring was done on a situation by situation basis rather than a subject by subject basis. In other words, all of the protocols with the Heinz story were scored first and then all of the protocols for the Diesing story were scored. A scoring sheet was prepared for each S. All of the issues tapped by the given stories were listed with spaces for the moral maturity score for each issue; as well as the global moral maturity score for each story, (see appendix for example of scoring sheet). Thus for each S there was an individual moral maturity score on the specific issues tapped by each situation and a global moral maturity score for each of the two situations. These final two scores indicate the dominant stage usage by the subject across the individual issues.

Reliability of scoring

The present investigator was trained in the issue method of scoring by an experienced Kohlberg scorer. In order to assess the reliability of the E's scoring, four protocols from each of the six experimental conditions were selected at random and independently scored by both a trained Kohlberg scorer and the present investigator. The outside judge was not aware of the design or hypothesis of the present experiment.

Separate interjudge reliability coefficients were obtained for the moral reasoning scores of each of the two moral judgment measures. A two way classification analysis without replications (Guilford, 1956) was used to obtain interjudge reliability. Two independent judges scored each of twenty-four protocols. Two of each of the two stories were randomly selected from each of six conditions. Intraclass correlations between the two raters were computed. The typical reliability of a single judge's rating for the first moral judgment measure was .992. The typical reliability of a single judge's rating for the second moral judgment measure was .973. The analysis of variance for each of the two measures is presented in Tables 1 and 2.

In order to determine if the moral reasoning score on the first dilemma alone could be employed for the purpose of statistical analysis, the following analysis was undertaken.

Using a repeated measures analysis of variance design (Bruning and Kintz, 1968) a test retest reliability coefficient was obtained comparing moral reasoning scores on dilemma one with moral reasoning scores on dilemma two for the subjects. Simultaneously, this served as an estimate of the

reliability of the Kohlberg judgment scales. The reliability coefficient was .997. This is significant at the .001 level. This high reliability coefficient supports the reported validity of the Kohlberg judgment scale. The analysis of variance for this estimate can be found in Table 3.

As mentioned before, it was considered desirable to use as a dependent variable the moral reasoning score received on the initial dilemma with which the subject had to contend. Since the reliability coefficient was significant, we can assume that for our purposes, there is no difference between the two stories. That is, that the situations accurately measured moral reasoning and further that the two situations were producing a similar pattern of response for each subject. In order to diminish the possibilities of practice and fatigue effects and thereby to reach the most sensitive appraisal of the subjects moral reasoning level, it was decided to use the moral reasoning score reported on the first dilemma for all future statistical analysis.

RESULTS

The purpose of the following section is to investigate whether the data confirmed the specific predictions made earlier. As a reminder for the reader—these predictions were:

1. The moral reasoning score will be higher in the public condition than in the anonymous condition.
2. The moral reasoning score will be higher in the group discussion condition than in the individual condition.
3. There will be an interaction effect such that the difference in moral reasoning score between public and anonymous subjects will be greater in the group discussion condition than in the individual condition.

As mentioned earlier, twelve subjects were randomly assigned to each of the six conditions. The means and standard deviations for each condition are presented in Table 4. The analysis of variance of mean moral reasoning scores is presented in Table 5. The Anova yielded a significant public-anonymous disordinal interaction ($F=9.38$, $df=2/66$, $p.005$). Neither main effect was significant. The form that the interaction effect took is illustrated in Figure 1.

The Scheffe post hoc comparisons as described by Hays (1963) were used in order to determine the direction of significant findings. All pair wise differences between means were examined. The interaction comparison was

also examined. The results of The Scheffe post hoc comparisons are reported in Table 6.

There were four significant findings. The moral reasoning scores of subjects in the anonymous discussion condition were significantly higher than the moral reasoning scores of subjects in either of the other anonymous conditions, individual and group without discussion. Those subjects in the individual public condition had significantly higher moral reasoning scores than subjects in the anonymous group condition. The comparison of mean score differences for subjects in the discussion condition, both public and anonymous and subjects in the individual condition both public and anonymous was also significant.

Examination of the findings indicate that at least one of the predictions regarding this study was confirmed. There was a significant interaction effect such that moral reasoning scores between public and anonymous subjects is greater in the discussion group than in the individual condition.

To examine the relationship between public and anonymous subjects, a mean moral reasoning score was computed for all subjects in any of the three public conditions. This score was compared to a) subjects in the anonymous discussion group condition and b) subjects in the anonymous individual and group conditions. Bonferroni's Inequality test as described by Feller (Vol 1, p.100) was used in order to determine significance.

The overall level for both comparisons is significant at the .001 level.

Perhaps the most important contribution of the analysis of moral reasoning scores is seen in terms of the disordinal interaction effect. That is,

those subjects in the anonymous group discussion condition instead of indicating the lowest level of moral reasoning as predicted, performed at the highest level of moral reasoning.

In an attempt to investigate other possible influences on moral reasoning scores, certain key background factors of the subjects were examined statistically. Family stress, birth order, religion, and occupation were analyzed. Indications of chronic stress in the subjects background were determined from the questionnaire each subject completed following the experiment. Stress was defined as severe if, for example, the death of a parent was indicated. It was considered moderate stress if, for example, there was an indication that the breadwinner was unemployed.

An indication of mild stress was a difference in religion between the two parents. For many subjects there was no indication of any stress factor. A significant relationship between degree of stress and moral reasoning score was found ($p > .02$). As the stress in the individual's background increases, the moral reasoning score decreases. These results are presented in Table 7. There were no other significant findings.

Finally, partial correlations of regression were obtained. By means of partial correlations one can determine the true interaction between the experimental conditions while holding one or more factors constant. Since stress was found to be significant, i.e., it correlated with moral reasoning scores, it was important to determine if stress played a role in the original interaction effect. Table 8 indicates the means of the moral reasoning scores in the six conditions when stress was held constant. The regression analysis

of variance table including both stress and birth order is presented in Table 9. Since the probability of the interaction before being adjusted for stress is .0005 and the partial regression analysis probability is .0003, one can determine that it does not make any difference if stress is allowed to vary.

TABLE 1

Analysis of Variance for Interjudge Reliability on Moral Reasoning Score of Moral Judgment Situation 1.

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Total	19.0382	23	—	<1	
Judges	0.0048	1	0.0048	266.76	>.01
Subjects	18.9623	11	1.7238		
Error	0.0711	11	0.0064		

Intercorrelation of two raters or reliability of a single raters rating .992.

TABLE 2

Analysis of Variance for Interjudge Reliability
on Moral Reasoning Score of Moral Judgment Situation 2.

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Total	15.6018	23	—		
Judges	0.0630	1	0.0630	3.335	<.10 (barely)
Subjects	15.3309	11	1.3937		.05
Error	0.2079	11	0.0189		

Intercorrelation of two raters or
reliability of a single raters rating .973

TABLE 3

**Parallel Forms Reliability Measures for Experimental Subjects
Comparing Moral Reasoning Scores on Moral Judgment Situation 1
with Moral Reasoning Scores on Moral Judgment Situation 2.**

$r=.977$

$t=14.46$

$df=10$

$p < .001$

With 10 df, at a t value larger than ± 4.59 is significant
at the .001 level.

TABLE 4

Means and Standard Deviations of Moral Reasoning
Scores for Each Condition

	Public		Anonymous	
	Mean (N)	SD	Mean (N)	SD
Individual	3.42 (12)	0.41	2.78 (12)	0.28
Group	3.22 (12)	0.30	2.58 (12)	0.50
Group Discussion	2.90 (12)	0.72	3.70 (12)	0.43
	3.18		3.02	3.10

TABLE 5

Analysis of Variance of Mean Moral Reason Scores

Source	MS	df	F	p
Total	5581.825	71		
Between	21180.598	5		
A (Setting)	9422.250	2	2.1414	0.1236
B (Privacy)	4449.719	1	1.0111	0.3195
A x B	41304.719	2	9.3872	0.0005
Within	4400.129	66		

TABLE 6

Scheffe Post Hoc Comparisons of Differences Between
Means of Moral Reasoning Scores

Group	Mean	2(IA)	3(GP)	4(GA)	5(DP)	6(DA)
1 (Ind. Pub.)	3.42	.64	.20	.84*	.52	.20
2 (Ind. Anon.)	2.78	—	.44	.20	.12	.92**
3 (Grp. Pub.)	3.22	—	—	.64	.32	.48
4 (Grp. Anon.)	2.58	—	—	—	.32	1.12***
5 (Disc. Pub.)	2.90	—	—	—	—	.80
6 (Disc. Anon.)	3.70	—	—	—	—	—

Interaction: (DA-DP) - (IA-IP) $p = .0230$

***The 99 percent confidence interval for each comparison difference is 1.10.

**The 95 percent confidence interval for each comparison difference is .93.

*The 90 percent confidence interval for each comparison difference is .84.

TABLE 7

**Correlation Coefficients of Stress, Birth Order, and
Moral Reasoning Scores With Probability Values**

N = 72

	Stress	B O	MRS
Stress	1.00 (.00)	.1013 (.5984)	-.2585 (.0266)
Birth Order	.1013 (.5984)	1.00 (.00)	.1813 (.1236)
MRS	-.2585 (.0266)	.1813 (.1236)	1.00 (.00)

TABLE 8**Mean Moral Reasoning Scores When Adjusted for Stress**

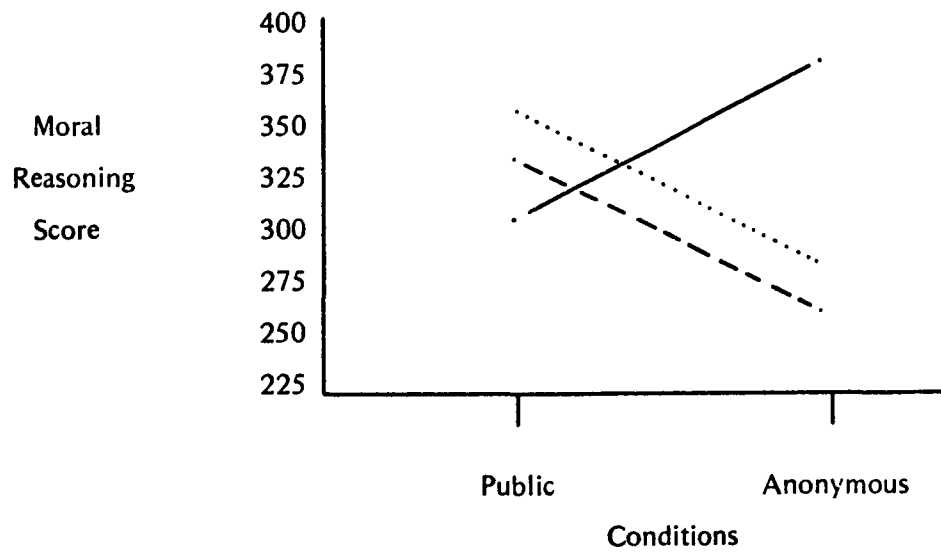
	P	A
Ind.	352 (341)	280 (278)
Grp.	321 (322)	262 (258)
Grp. Disc.	283 (290)	362 (370)

() Indicate raw mean.

TABLE 9

Regression Analysis of Variance for
Additional Variables: Stress, Birth Order

Source	df	F Ratio	Prob > F
Stress	1	6.7	.0058
B O	1	4.4	.11
A (Ind x G x GD)	2	1.7	.20
B (P x A)	1	1.3	.24
AB	2	10.5	.0003



IND

GROUP

DISCUSSION

Figure 1

DISCUSSION

The effects of the variables of setting and anonymity upon moral reasoning will be discussed in terms of the hypotheses mentioned in the introduction. Since the data were analyzed in terms of post dilemma exposure moral reasoning scores, the results will be considered in terms of an after-only design.

This was a study of moral dilemma solving and the way in which such variables as group discussion, anonymity, and public acknowledgment affected the individual's moral reasoning. The effects of previous experience of stress were also noted.

Of major importance to this study was an examination of the main effects of the variable of setting on moral reasoning. It was hypothesized that a higher level of moral reasoning would be found in the individual condition as compared to a group discussion condition. This prediction was based on previous research that indicated that the lessening of restraints found in the group processes led to less mature (moral) levels of behavior (Festinger et al., Latané and Darley). Based upon the analyses presented in the results section, as predicted, subjects in the public condition did indicate a higher level of moral reasoning when performing as individuals as compared to subjects in the public group discussion condition. However when the subjects were anonymous, the prediction of a higher level of moral reasoning in the individual condition as compared to the group discussion condition was not supported. Instead, subjects in the group discussion displayed a significantly more advanced level of moral reasoning than did subjects in the

individual condition. This important and far reaching finding will be discussed later.

It was further hypothesized at the outset of this research that a higher level of moral reasoning would be displayed in the resolution of the dilemmas by those subjects in the public setting as compared to subjects in the anonymous setting. The conformity findings of such researchers as Schachter (1951) and Argyle (1967) indicated that the differences in public and private statement of views are considerable. The individual forced to give public statement of his view conforms with his expectations of society's views. James (1964) interpreted this as a way of creating a favorable impression or at least avoiding an unfavorable one. As predicted, in the individual condition, subjects in the public setting indicated a higher level of moral reasoning than did those in the anonymous setting. However in the discussion condition, a reversal of expectations was found: that is, subjects in the public setting indicated a lower level of moral reasoning than did those subjects in the anonymous setting. If this reversal had not been present, i.e., if the main effect of anonymity had held constant, then a main effect of setting would presumably have occurred as well. Each of these findings will be discussed in detail at a later point in the discussion.

The most striking outcome of the data was the interactive relationship between setting and privacy. The data patterns indicate that anonymity in a discussion group was important in increasing the level of moral reasoning used to resolve the moral dilemma. This reversal of expectations will be considered in terms of several theoretical interpretations. Research in present day society and the socialization process, the individual's motivation for identity, as well as the functions of the individual's decision making

process offer possible explanations for the data. Admittedly the explanations are at best partial, but they provide a general framework for discussion.

In order to assess the variations in level of moral reasoning displayed by the subjects in different situations, it is necessary to examine the influences on moral reasoning in general. In simplest terms, level of moral reasoning is subject to the influence of the individual and the culture. In the following pages we will examine the culture or society in which our subjects were raised. We will refer again to Kohlberg's view of the individual (unidirectional development) as well as the views of other researchers. We will further try to understand the interaction of the various determinants of moral reasoning. It is hoped that such examination will serve to clarify the unexpected results generated by the present research.

To facilitate our understanding of the moral decision making process, it is necessary to begin at the earliest conceptualization of the nature of human morality. A philosophical investigation of man and morals implies a dichotomy between the followers of Hobbes (1588-1679) and those of Rousseau (1712-1778). That is, man is considered by the former to be inherently bad and by the latter to be innately good. Of course, neither of these views is given unquestioning acceptance by psychologists. Hollander (1967) summed it up in an interesting manner by saying:

"Given human susceptibility to the forces in the social environment, the best response seems to be that Man has the capacity for extremes of high morality and conscience as well as the basest forms of degradation in his treatment of fellow man."

Culture, then, is seen as providing a social reality for moral decision making. In a simplistic way, culture provides the individual with answers and a concept of what is appropriate for those moral dilemmas faced in life. In these terms, culture is seen as influencing the individual in two ways. Firstly, it indicates the range of what is considered as reasonable expectation. Secondly, it shapes the individual's ultimate behavior. It is crucial then to examine the culture to which the present sample of subjects was exposed.

Vincent (1974) studied the development of the current generation of adolescents. He indicates that in 1973 there were ten million 18 to 20 year olds. They had been brought up under the most affluent and permissive parental era experienced in this century. They belonged to a group sheltered from financial and occupational responsibilities. Their overwhelming numbers made them a prime target of business and commercial groups.¹

Individuals who have been exposed to a dominant social structure, according to Osgood, Ware, & Mortis (1961) generally display a degree of consistency in their value systems. The society in which the present adolescent developed however has been characterized as one of rapid social change and technological advances. That such a societal pattern clearly contributes to change in cultural patterns has been aptly illustrated by Margaret Mead (1956) in her study of the Manus. This group in new Guinea was studied at one period in time and again 25 years later after

¹*Obviously Vincent's description is most clearly applicable to the middle class. However, the researcher feels that this is the socioeconomic class of the present sample.*

they had experienced World War II. Similarly Mumford (1963) documents the enormous effect the automobile has had on our culture. M. Brewster Smith (1969) indicated that such changes inevitably involve the lessening in respect for authority. Keniston (1962) goes on to suggest, that this further leads to a decline in the power of the family, the established church, and even the state. Thus at the present time it seems logical that confidence in the traditional power structure has weakened. Individuals growing up at this time can no longer take the established moral values for granted. The protestant ethic or old morality depends upon the existence of agreed upon ground rules. With the lack of a stable respected culture, these traditional values are not transmitted.

One suspects that the lack of respect for parents and other adult figures as models has caused a dissatisfaction with traditional values. When there are no guideposts to be followed, a common attitude is to lean to a relativistic or pluralistic point of view.

According to Kohlberg one would have expected that the overall level of moral reasoning would have been higher than the level that was actually observed in the present sample of 18 to 20 year olds. But it appears clear that the lack of a guide, the lack of a power authority to which to relate may be considered a cause of the present levels. The old fashioned views have not been promulgated with sufficient force. The lower level of public group discussion as compared to all other conditions indicates that the individual sees the group as holding a position different from his own. This is not a unique finding. As early as 1932, Schanck introduced the concept of "pluralistic ignorance." That is, an individually held value is

believed to be far different from the values held by others. Therefore, in this public group, the individual adheres to the values he perceives others to hold. In the present case, the perceived public value proved to be one of lower moral reasoning than that displayed by the individual alone. This once again supports the notion that society has failed to provide those guidelines for a higher level of moral reasoning. This concept will be discussed again at a later point in the discussion.

Having discussed culture as a determinant of the moral decision making process and related that to present day culture and our data, let us next consider the notion of inner determinants of the individual as affecting the moral decision making process.

A closer look at the individual indicates that a sense of identity may be considered the first requirement for utilization of any cognitive response in the decision making process. Identity has been generally defined as—the individual as he sees himself in society—. In Kohlberg's terms, the individual at *stage 2* sees himself in terms of "exchanges and needs satisfaction," at *stage 3*, in terms of "maintenance of legitimate expectations," (1963). In *Childhood and Society*, (1950) Erikson introduces the concept of the "continuing I." Identity, then, includes the relationship of self to self, of self to others, and of self to social institutions.

Josselyn (1964) suggests that our culture makes heavy demands upon the adolescent but "fails to provide him with a preconceived and carefully outlined pattern to help meet these demands" [p. 26]. The individual needs to feel himself as part of a larger society as well as a unique and

separate person. But according to Josselyn, the concepts of individual growth and conformity to a pattern are incompatible. So the individual is torn between his needs to identify with ideas accepted by some concept of society as well as maintain his integrity as an individual. The concept of acceptable or right behavior is a confused one and the adolescent encounters difficulties in relating to the environment. This is most clear in terms of moral values or issues according to M. Brewster Smith (1969).

In 1923 Freud introduced the concept of a moral agency. He called it the superego. Freud found a sense of morality completely lacking in infants and young children. He therefore postulated that the superego did not exist at an early age. He considered the superego to begin development at age five to six. The superego is determined by the individual's exposure to experiences involving his parents and other authority figures. Its development depends upon cultural, familial, and individual elements. The superego can be defined as the individual's internalization of his parents' interpretation of the traditional moral values and ideals of society. Having achieved this internalization, the individual is able to decide, independently, right and wrong in accordance with moral standards of society. Perhaps the main ingredient ensuring continued functioning of the superego is fear. This is fear of an overpowering internal sense of guilt. Fear of guilt allows the individual to resist the temptation of 'immoral' choices as well as allowing him to feel great self esteem over the 'right' choices.

In relating this to the notions of society presented earlier one may readily assume that twenty years ago less anxiety was evoked in terms of the moral decision making process. In Freudian terms, one might say that

the superego was stronger. Custom, parental, and/or societal views were clearly defined and incorporated into the superego. Thus the ego had specific direction, conflict was lessened, and choice was easier. Today these factors are no longer as influential. According to Keniston (1965), we live in a "cult of the present" where the potential for self contradiction is increased. The individual, being asked to respond to a moral dilemma, is often unable to decide. In other words he has an identity crisis. There is no sense of what Davis (1970) calls unity of the self as object and actor. The adolescent has developed his concept of identity in terms of a shifting group of peers. He is not sure what the view of society is and finds it difficult to even guess where society is at and what role he is expected to play. On the other hand, due to the lack of internalization of moral values, he can no longer make choices he thinks may be society's and remain true to some vaguely held concept of his own integrity.

Returning to the data, we can examine the findings in terms of the individual's inner ambiguities. Let us consider that the moral reasoning score in the anonymous no discussion condition reflects where the subject thinks he stands on the moral dilemma at this time. The public no discussion condition may be considered his perception of what society would expect as an appropriate moral response. Examining the public group discussion condition, we find that it is the mean of the two previously mentioned positions. In other words, the subject has "given in" partly to his concept of society's views while partly maintaining his own views. There is a sense of precision about the compromise. The indication of a lack of any internalized moral value is clear. Further there is an indication that the willingness or ability to communicate publicly one's inner feelings to another is not seen as desirable.

One further attempt will be made to explain the finding that the highest level of moral reasoning was found in the anonymous group discussion condition. It is in this one condition only, anonymous group discussion, that one has the opportunity to test with no recriminations or loss of face, what he personally holds to be the 'right' solution to the dilemma. We find that what we have considered the old fashioned view of moral values are still around. It would appear that these subjects freed from constraint are able to test out their most morally idealistic impulses. It might appear then, that a majority moral value actually exists, but, as in Schanck's concept of pluralistic ignorance, is thought by each individual to be only a minority view.

Turning now to a further framework for organizing the data Katz (1960) suggests the decision making process as a function of four possible motivations. First, he discusses a utilitarian function yielding social rewards. This has been discussed earlier with examples such as the individual's desire to create a favorable impression. Second, he suggests an ego defensive function which is self protective and allows the individual to avoid examining too closely confused or ambiguous areas. This will be explained in greater detail as we see how the individual utilizes this level of functioning to avoid the decision making process in its entirety. Third, he suggests a knowledge function, an attempt to seek predictability and constancy in the world.

Finally he speaks of the value expressive. This is used to express the individual's commitments, to affirm his positive self concept. A demonstration of the applicability of this final point will also be made.

Returning to Katz's second point of ego defense, one way to characterize this function is in terms of avoidance. When confronted with a moral dilemma, one may utilize the avoidance response in any one of several possible forms. He may give a simple brief response without any explanations. He may choose to be very pseudo-logical and present a case for both sides and so refuse to come to any decision at all. Another possibility is to deny that there is any issue. The individual feels that there are no possible alternatives, that in essence there is no dilemma. Finally he may vent his anger over being placed in this position (having to resolve a moral dilemma) by strongly aggressing against someone in the conflict or even some peripheral figure.

The subjects in the present research chose all of these alternatives as ways of avoiding the conflict that the study requested. Following are several examples of each type:

Simple response (Direct answers to questions)

Yes he should steal the drug.

It was right.

Pseudo Logical

It is difficult to say whether it is wrong or right.

I think maybe it is both.

It is wrong because... and it is right because...

Denial of issue

Heinz was not wrong in any way.

Druggist had no right whatsoever.

He certainly shouldn't have taken the drug.

Stealing is wrong.

Stealing is not a solution.

Displacement of Agression

The government should have paid the balance.

Medicine should be socialized.

The druggist should be brought to court.

Let us return at this point to the original Kohlberg research. The ability to think in progressively higher moral terms has been investigated by Kohlberg in terms of a developmental schema. According to Kohlberg, the individual develops in a unidirectional manner and by interaction (role taking) with his social environment. Kohlberg does not see the individual as reflecting the external values of his culture as he comes to understand them, but rather as organizing the external world to fit his personal developmental needs. In the present study, a logical extension of Kohlberg's theory was investigated and it supported the present researcher's

hypotheses that level of moral reasoning as applied to solutions of moral dilemmas are a function of the immediate situation.

Kohlberg rejects several possible explanations for the development of higher levels of moral reasoning. He rejects maturation theories as well as any of the socialization theories such as psychoanalytic theory, learning theory, and peer group influences. He implies the platonic belief in eternal truths, i.e., the existence of Platonic Ideals. For example, there exists a perfect circle to which all other circles are but approximations. If it were not for the existence of the perfect, there would not exist the concept of the circle. He states that the child is aware of a difference between his ideas and his experiencing of the real world. This conflict is a prerequisite for continued moral development. If we look briefly at just one of the Kohlberg rejections, we see cause for further study. Kohlberg dismisses Freudian concepts. But as Peters (1971) points out, Kohlberg assumes that Freud was dealing with the same questions about moral development as Kohlberg himself. Since it is not at all clear that this is so, Freudian explanations in terms of identification need to be reconsidered. For instance, in the interpretation of the present data. Freud's notion of superego proved useful when considered in the light of cultural changes.

While the major focus of this study was on the immediate situation as determinant of moral reasoning, the design of the post experimental questionnaire also allowed for consideration of the relationship between the historical variable of family stress and moral reasoning. It was expected that severity of family stress would affect moral reasoning and this prediction was confirmed. As degree of stress increased, moral reasoning scores decreased.

The effects of family stress have been considered in both developmental psychology and psychoanalysis. Anna Freud (1968) found that separation from the parent (due to prolonged absence or death) was the one factor most frequently found in dissocial or delinquent individuals. In another study (1951), she indicates that early loss of the parent (mother) produces retardation in ego attitudes and increased restlessness and aggression. Kolb (1973) defines a chronic stress reaction. In dealing with individuals who have lost families, he finds increased restlessness and erosion of superego functions. He further indicates the loss of "more mature volitional, cognitive, and affective process." [p.441].

Recent research has linked the stress factor directly with moral reasoning. Working with the concept that wartime places greater stress upon a polity than does peace, Farmer and Kraus (1972) compared state of the union messages given during wartime with those given in peace. They found that the level of moral reasoning was significantly lower in the wartime messages. They further comment that "more primitive and less differentiated" [p. 31] levels of moral reasoning were used.

The present research also found that in cases of severe stress thinking became less differentiated. This is clearly illustrated in the following examples chosen from among protocols of those subjects who had suffered the loss of a parent.

He should steal it.

No other choice.

If you don't have a friend, you don't do it.

He had too. She would otherwise die.

It appears that stress (whether of an immediate or a long term continuing nature) puts pressure upon the individual to act. The reasoning then is at a level that will facilitate action. The ability to remain in conflict, anxious, or frustrated is diminished. The special personal factors experienced by the individual have created tensions that appear to force distortions in the decision making process.

Looking at the study as a totality, then, one can see that the importance of both the immediate situation and historical variables in affecting moral reasoning has been demonstrated. Further research has also been indicated. For instance, since stress proved crucial as a historical variable, one might predict that stress in the immediate situation would also be important.

Future research might also consider the implementation of different levels of anonymity. Such variables seem of importance not only in the interests of science but also to further elaborate effects of present day society on those who are affected by it.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A

The drug didn't work, and there was no other treatment known to medicine which could save Heinz's wife, so the doctor knew that she had only about 6 months to live. She was in terrible pain, but she was so weak that a good dose of a pain-killer like ether or morphine would make her die sooner. She was delirious and almost crazy with pain, and in her calm periods, she would ask the Doctor to give her enough ether to kill her. She said she couldn't stand the pain and she was going to die in a few months anyway.

1. Should the doctor do what she asks and give her the drug that will make her die? Why?
2. Life is usually a precious thing to preserve, but in this case she'll die soon anyway and is in pain, and wants to die. What, if anything, would make it right or worthwhile to preserve her life in this case?
3. Does the woman have the right to decide what to do with her own life in that case? Why?
4. When a pet animal is badly wounded and will die, it is killed to put it out of its pain. Does the same thing apply here?
5. How about an infant who is born a hopeless imbecile vegetable, what should one do in a case like that?
6. Would you blame the doctor in any sense for giving her the drug? Why?
7. Suppose she had asked her husband for the drug, is that the same as for the doctor?
8. Some countries have a law that doctors could put away a suffering person who will die anyway, some do not. What would be right for the doctor to do where it was (n't) against the law?
9. Should the law permit or prohibit it?
10. The doctor finally decided to kill the woman to put her out of her pain, so he did it without consulting the law. The police found out and the doctor was brought up on a charge of murder. The jury decided he had done it, so they found him guilty of murder even though they knew the woman had asked him. What punishment should the judge give the doctor? Why?

11. Would it be right or wrong to give the doctor the death sentence?
12. Do you believe that the death sentence should be given in some cases?
Why?

Joe is a 14-year-old boy who wanted to go to camp very much. His father promised him he could go if he saved up the money for it himself. So Joe worked hard at his paper route and saved up the \$40 it cost to go to camp and a little more besides. But just before camp was going to start, his father changed his mind. Some of his friends decided to go on a special fishing trip, and Joe's father was short of the money it would cost. So he told Joe to give him the money he had saved from the paper route. Joe didn't want to give up going to camp, so he thought of refusing to give his father the money.

1. Should Joe refuse to give his father the money? Why?
2. What would be the most important reason for refusing his father the money?
3. What would be the most important reason for giving his father the money?
4. Who has the right to the money and the trip, the son or the father? Why?
5. What should be the authority of a father over a son in a case like this or in general? Why? What is the base of it?
6. What should a son do for his father here or in general, what if anything does a son owe his father? Why? What is its basis?
7. In terms of fairness, what is the important issue in this story?
8. Why should a promise be kept, by the father or by anyone?
9. If the son breaks promises to his father, is that better or worse than if the father breaks promises to his son? Why?

(Actual booklet had green cover sheet.)

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Appendix B

INSTRUCTIONS

Follow all instructions carefully.

Read the story on the first page of your booklet. As soon as all members of your group have finished reading, there will be a period of discussion. You will be permitted five minutes. Then return to your booklet and without further discussion answer each of the questions on the following pages. Take your time and think about your answers. Be as complete as possible. Write in detail. Do not read ahead. Once you have answered a question do not go back and add additional information. When you have completed all of the questions pertaining to the first story, read the second story. A five minute discussion period will follow. Return again to your booklets and answer the questions pertaining to the second story.

Thank you for participating.

INSTRUCTIONS

Follow all instructions carefully.

Read the story on the first page of your booklet. When you have finished, answer each of the questions on the following pages. Take your time and think about your answers. Be as complete as possible. Write in detail. Do not read ahead. Once you have answered a question do not go back and add additional information. When you have completed all of the questions pertaining to the first story, read the second story and answer the questions about it.

Thank you for participating.

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 the 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.

1. Should Heinz have done that? Why?

2. Was it actually wrong or right?

3. From what (If any) point of view is it wrong for him to do that?
Why?

4. Is it a matter of going against the druggist's rights? Did the
druggist have the right to charge that much when there was no law
actually setting a limit to the price? Why?

5. Is it the husband's duty or obligation to steal the drug for his wife if he can get it no other way? Why?

6. If the husband does not feel very close or affectionate to his wife, should he still steal the drug?

7. Suppose it wasn't Heinz's wife who was dying of cancer but it was Heinz's best friend. His friend didn't have any money and there was no one in his family willing to steal the drug. Should Heinz steal the drug for his friend in that case, would that be different? Why?

8. Suppose it was someone dying who wasn't close to you, but there was no one else to help him. Would it be right to steal the drug for such a stranger, is it something he should do for a stranger?

Heinz broke in the store and stole the drug and gave it to his wife.

He was caught and brought before the judge and the jury found him guilty of stealing.

Should the judge send Heinz to jail for stealing, or should he let him go free? Why?

During the war in Europe, a city was often bombed by the enemy. So each man in the city was given a post he was to go to right after the bombing to help put out the fires the bombs started and to rescue people in the burning buildings. A man named Diesing was made the chief in charge of one fire engine post. The post was near where he worked but it was a long way from his home. One day there was a heavy bombing and Diesing left the shelter in the place he worked and went toward his fire station. But when he saw how much of the city was burning he got worried about his family. So he decided he had to go home first to see if his family was safe, even though his home was a long way off and the station was nearby and there was somebody assigned to protect his family's area.

Appendix C**Complete questions for situation 1**

1. Should Heinz have done that? Why?
2. Was it actually wrong or right?
3. From what (if any) point of view is it wrong for him to do that? Why?
4. Is it a matter of going against the druggists rights?
Did the druggist have the right to charge that much when there was no law actually setting a limit to the price? Why?
5. Is it the husband's duty or obligation to steal the drug for his wife if he can get it no other way? Why?
6. If the husband does not feel very close or affectionate to his wife, should he steal the drug?
7. Suppose it wasn't Heinz's wife who was dying of cancer but it was Heinz's best friend. His friend didn't have any money and there was no one in his family willing to steal the drug. Should Heinz steal the drug for his friend in that case, would that be different?
Why?
8. Suppose it was someone dying who wasn't close to you, but there was no one else to help him. Would it be right to steal the drug for such a stranger, is it something he should do for a stranger?
9. This is a case of stealing to save a life, what is there about the wife's life which would make a person think it is right to steal?

10. Suppose it wasn't his wife who was dying but the man's pet dog which he loved. Would he be justified to steal the drug for the life of his loved pet? Why?
11. Suppose you yourself were dying of cancer, would it be right, would you have an obligation to steal the drug to save your own life?
12. Heinz broke in the store and stole the drug and gave it to his wife. he was caught and brought before the judge and the jury found him guilty of stealing. Should the judge send Heinz to jail for stealing, or should he let him go free? Why?
13. The judge might think he would steal too if he were the husband. The judge might also think about upholding the law. How should he decide between the two?

Abbreviated questionnaire for situation 1

1. Should Heinz have done that? Why?
2. Was it actually wrong or right?
3. From what (if any) point of view is it wrong for him to do that? Why?
4. Is it a matter of going against the druggist's rights? Did the druggist have the right to charge that much when there was no law actually setting a limit to the price? Why?
5. Is it the husband's duty or obligation to steal the drug for his wife if he can get it no other way? Why?
6. If the husband does not feel very close or affectionate to his wife, should he steal the drug?
7. Suppose it wasn't Heinz's wife who was dying of cancer but it was Heinz's best friend. His friend didn't have any money and there was no one in his family willing to steal the drug. Should Heinz steal the drug for his friend in that case, would that be different? Why?
8. Suppose it was someone dying who wasn't close to you, but there was no one else to help him. Would it be right to steal the drug for such a stranger, is it something he should do for a stranger?
9. Heinz broke in the store and stole the drug and gave it to his wife. He was caught and brought before the judge and the jury found him guilty of stealing. Should the judge send Heinz to jail for stealing, or should he let him go free? Why?

Debriefing Questions (Individuals and/or groups)

1. How did you feel about taking part in this study?
2. Did you find the experiment interesting?
3. Do you think you know what the purpose of the experiment was, or what we were investigating?
4. Which story did you find most complex? Why?
5. Did you feel you really gave your own opinions when you answered the questions?
6. Are you aware of any sources of influence upon your response? If so, what were they?
7. Was it difficult to respond to the questions about the stories?
8. (If applicable) What was the effect of the group discussion?
9. Do you feel that the decisions you made about these stories are similar to problems you might face in your own life?
10. Did you change your opinions at any point during the experiment? If so, at which point do you think they changed? Why did that occur?