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Moral Reproach: A Conceptual and Experimental Analysis

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Analysis of the General Problem

Our focus in this thesis will be a particular sort of situation: one in which someone observes another doing something wrong. We ask: when and how will an individual intervene to deter the action or at least express his moral censure? A rough common sense view is that the response will reflect the seriousness of the offense, at least if intervention is not too dangerous or troublesome. This answer, however, fails to consider other more subtle influences on conduct. The aim of this thesis will be to examine: 1) other inhibitions encountered in the making of a moral reproach, and 2) certain consequences of making or failing to make a moral reproach.

People may be inhibited about reproaching another who poses a danger to them, of course, but this is not the sort of inhibition we wish to consider. We hold that, even when there is no threat involved, people may fail to make a reproach even in circumstances in which an outside observer would see that one is clearly called for, and the person himself may give evidence of wanting to do so. We proceed by offering an example of this phenomenon.

The example we wish to consider in which this inhibition seems to occur is drawn from the Milgram obedience studies (1974). Subjects in this series of experiments are ordered by an experimenter to give increasingly

painful shocks to a vehemently protesting confederate of the experimenter posing as another subject. In violation of the a-priori estimates of pschiatrists and laymen, over 60% continued to deliver dangerous shocks until told to stop by the experimenter. Many subjects, while continuing to obey the orders of the experimenter, gave evidence of extreme emotional discomfort. One difficulty that subjects had in attempting to withdraw was that if they were to invoke some moral norm important enough to justify their disobedience, they would imply that the experimenter ought not order them to continue. Thus, any justification they might have offered for refusing to continue would have involved an explicit or implicit condemnation of the experimenter. Faced with the evidence that the experimenter, also aware of the protesting of the victim, continued to order them to go on, subjects were forced to act as if either the moral principle were not so important after all, or the experimenter was evil in not recognizing and honoring it. It would appear to have been very difficult for subjects to act in accordance with the later conclusion. It should be noted that subjects believed that the victim was being exposed to dangerous, indeed possibly fatal, shocks, and that there were no grounds for the subjects to see themselves as threatened by the experimenter.

Not only did a majority of the subjects continue until told to stop, but even the majority who did stop failed to reproach the experimenter for his evil instructions. Yet this is exactly a situation in which a moral reproach was clearly called for: it was one of utmost gravity, without danger to the one who ought to make the reproach, and there seemed to be no other cost to the subject. The utter absence of a reproach in a situation so clearly requiring it is exactly the sort of failure to do the appropriate thing which a commonsense actor explains by the notion of an inhibition: some sort of counter force restraining the most natural response.

Many subjects attempted to have the experimenter stop the procedings by asking, pleading or pointing to the difficult situation of the victim; one revealing attempt to have the experimenter consider the plight of the victim is portrayed in the Milgram (1965) film report of the experiment. This subject said: "I don't mean to be rude, but I think you should look in on him." This formulation is far from a pre-emptive injunction such as, "You have to see if he's alright before we continue." Or, "You have no right to tell me to continue." The subject, himself, explains why he did not use these stronger, more forceful forms; he points out that such reproaches are rude. We treat the subject's explanation seriously: the making of a moral reproach <u>is</u> the sort of action we call rude,

discourteous or unmannerly. We follow Milgram (op. cit., 209) in arguing that this rudeness is a source of the inhibition against reproaching another. Yet the subject's explanation seems unsatisfying or insufficient. This reaction to the subject's account derives not from its being wrong, but from the absurdity of considering courtesy when another's life is at stake.[1] The logical conclusion of this analysis is that people would never reproach another, since they do not do so in a situation of such grave import; yet people sometimes do reproach others. To shed some light on this paradox, let us consider some situations

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[1]Goffman (1959, 13) writes:

> In consequence, when an individual projects a definition of the situation and thereby makes an explicit or implicit claim to be a person of a particular kind, he automatically exerts a moral claim to be a person of a particular kind, he automatically exerts a moral demand upon the others, obligating them to value and treat him in a manner that persons of his kind have a right to expect. (emphasis added)

Making a moral reproach, denouncing another, would be a violation of this right. Goffman's use of moral in this context is both curious and suggestive. This sort of requirement, that we not call into question the identities of others, might better be called a requirement of courtesy than morality; a commonsense actor might well call someone who violated this rule rude or discourtesy, but we doubt he would call him immoral. Goffman seems to use this stronger term to emphasize: 1) the interprentration of morality and the construction of identities (a point to which we shall have occasion to return); 2) that demands of courtesy sometimes compete with patently moral demands (a point well illustrated in the Milgram experiment; and 3) that the violation of these rules leads to a distinct emotional state--embarrassment, a state distinct from shame or guilt which are closely tied to moral precepts, but one which seems a relative of those states.

situations in which people are not inhibited about reproaching another.

We propose that situations in which it is easy to reproach another fulfill two general conditions: 1) the actor must stand in the proper relationship to the wrongdoer; and 2) he must perceive that the action is in the proper relation to the norm to be invoked. (Cf. Garfinkel for an insightful analysis of a closely related problem (1956.)

What relationship does a person making a moral reproach typically have to have to the wrongdoer? The person making such a reproach typically occupies a position of authority[2] over the person he reproaches. Parents, for example, have little difficulty reproaching their children, at least until the children are old enough to call into question whether the parents remain in positions of

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[2]In Garfinkel's language a moral reproach is a transformation of an actor's self into something looked upon as "lowered in the local scheme of social types." That this sort of "transformation" is typically reserved for authorities acting in the name of a collectivity seems to be an instance of the general rule that all transformations of objective identity, the characteristics that an actor is known to have by others of that collectivity, are the prerogative of the community, and are performed by its representatives. Thus, marriage, the awarding of degrees, divorce, and even birth and death are ratified by representatives of the state. Members of groups which would convince others of the value of membership in that group typically petition the state to license that membership (clinical psychologists and chiropractors fall into this class). Even less enduring transformations of one's social worth are forbidden to actors to perform for themselves; attempting to elevate one's own worth is bragging and has the reverse effect.

authority over them. Obviously, priests, ministers, and rabbis, those in positions of moral authority easily address moral reproach.

A person not in authority over another may be in a proper relationship to make a moral reproach, if the transgression involves him directly--if his interests are affected by the transgression, e.g., if a thief steals your radio, holding fear aside, you will not be inhibited about making a reproach. This principle parallels the principle of 'standing' applied in law: to sue another one must show that one's interests in particular are obstructed by another's misbehavior; third-party suits are forbidden under common law, correcting third party's behavior is not allowed in everyday life.

Two recent findings in the 'helping behavior' literature illustrate this point. Gelfand et al. (1973) found that 72% of those known to witness a shoplifting did not report the crime. The authors interpret this failure to report the crime as an unwillingness to engage in 'helping behavior'; from the point of view of the shoplifter, of course, the reporting of the crime is anything but 'helping behavior' it is meddling.[3] Perhaps, one might decry that

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[3]Hanna Arendt points out that the classical Greek term for meddler and tyrant were the same; the two sorts of behavior seem to be similar in that each is an inappropriate invocation of a community's moral norms. Both the tyrant and the meddler attempt to control the behavior

the witnesses simply 'don't care' about the crime, but we would propose that their unwillingness to inform results from their lack of 'standing' in the matter. After all, 'who were they' to intrude themselves into this affair?

As a further example of the centrality of 'standing', consider Moriarty's finding (1975) that a stranger's simple request to "Watch my things?" tremendously increases the likelihood that people will intervene against an apparent thief; the request, according to Moriarty establishes prior 'commitment' thus increasing the probability of intervention. The tacit acceptance 'commits' subjects in that they become the temporary fiduciaries of the stranger involving both a responsibility to him and standing with regard to the theft of his belongings. They know that they are in an unassailable position to give a perfectly acceptable answer to the implicit question, "What business is it of yours?" They know that in deterring the thief they are not acting arbitrarily, but as anyone in their position would act.

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of others in an unauthorized way; they usurp powers derived from and the property of the community as a whole.

We have proposed that an individual's difficulty in condemning another depends not only on the relationship between him and the wrongdoer, a relationship we have just considered, but also on the relationship between the wrongdoer's action and the norms against which it is to be judged. Let us now consider this second relation. In condemning another, one asserts that his behavior is in violation of what is taken to be a pre-existing mutually binding rule. The difficulty in this is that as the labeling theorists (Becker [1963], Schur [1971], Erikson [1964]) suggest, such rules emerge in the process of their application to particular people in particular circumstances.

Agreement at a general level about these rules is often deceptively complete. Much less agreement exists about exactly when some exemption justifies behavior proscribed by a rule, or whether a particular situation is one in which the proper application of the rule is preemptive. To return to our consideration of the Milgram experiment, everyone agrees that people should not inflict pain on others; most would agree that the pursuit of scientific knowledge confers <u>some</u> degree of exemption, but in the concrete reality of the Milgram experiment, at exactly what shock level does this exemption fall to

justify the continued shock.[4] In a prison or a mental hospital how much force is justifiable in maintaining order? Where is the boundary between reasonable force and torture? The argument of the labeling theorists is that moral norms, considered to be these boundaries between the reasonable and the wanton, crystallize around the act of condemning others.

Conflict between norms is not the only source of ambiguity facing those who would apply moral principles. They must also distinguish between 'personal preferences', and 'objective' moral requirements. Language and practice distinguish between those actions an actor doesn't like, and those he knows to be wrong. Likes and dislikes, tastes and distastes are individual reactions not to be inflicted on others. Moral requirements, on the other hand, are 'what everyone would see', or at least they are so treated. They are 'objective' phenomena, things that are, following Berger and Luckman (1966) real, shared, independent of our wants, inclinations and purposes at hand. They cannot be wished away or altered by an act of will. They are known

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[4]The subjects' difficulty here is exacerbated by the fact that the only justification they have for shocking their fellow subject is that they were told to do so by the experimenter; as the shock levels increase from the trivial to the deadly, subjects are less and less comfortable about following his instructions, but, at the same time, the inviolability of these instructions becomes more and more necessary as a justification for their dangerous behavior.

rather than felt or experienced; i.e., they can potentially be perceived by anyone else. Although two individuals may at any given moment have a different perception of a reality they both assume to be objective, they will treat this disagreement as due to differences in their perspective which are in principle interchangable. Sherif (1958) has illustrated the consequences of actors treating a phenomenon as an object to be known rather than as a mere element of subjectivity. He asked people to give their judgment about the extent of motion of a point of light in a thoroughly darkened room. He found that these individual judgments converged about a common norm, even though the source did not move, and the appearance of motion resulted from a well known illusion. That this convergence resulted from actors treating the phenomenon as objective, rather than, for instance, from a simple desire to say the same thing anyone else is saying was nicely illustrated by Alexander (1970). He informed subjects that the apparent motion was an illusion, and found no such convergence.

We would argue that morally reproaching another places one in a position parallel to that of the subjects in Sherif's study. In that study subjects treated the extent of motion of the light as a problem for which a correct answer could be found: as an objective problem; similarly, in reproaching another people assume that such action can be done correctly or incorrectly as judged against some

objective standard for the proper application of moral principles. Just as in the Sherif experiment where subjects could only reach agreement in the process of their judging the extent of motion, the correctness of actors' application of moral principles to wrongdoers is established by their offering such judgments focused about particular others. Paradoxically, one must first act as if the other's behavior were objectively a violation, yet the proof of the correctness of the particular application of the norm is the social consensus which can occur only after the moral charge has been made.[5]

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[5]Latane and Darley (1970) make a similar argument with regard to emergencies. They argue that actors will only treat a situation as an emergency if others in their presence do so also by reacting to it as such. Since an emergency is fully defined as such only after it has been responded to as such by at least one other, they find that similar inhibitions about intervention in emergencies arise.

They also introduce a notion similar to our notion of 'standing' to express the fact that in an emergency with several people present each may fail to respond since each may think: "Why should I be the one to get involved? Maybe someone else will help."; they therefore argue that with many others present there is a 'diffusion of responsibility'. We would argue that their metaphor of diffusion, the dispersion of a preexisting substance through space, misses the important fact that 'responsibility' or 'standing' is generated in immediate interaction out of relationships. More specifically, one has a 'resonsibility' and 'standing' to intervene on another's behalf as a consequence of the contrast between the relationship that an actor has to the party in distress and the relationships that others have to him. These relationships may be spatial (the closest person to another should help), temporal (old friends are called upon to help before new friends), blood (family members have particular rights and responsibilities to become involved), etc.

The Sherif experiment is most directly informative about situations in which a moral consensus has yet to be achieved. The role of the assumption of the objectivity of moral standards, even in obvious, settled situations is illustrated by considering an experiment conducted by Asch (1952). In a judgmental task subjects were asked to select one of three lines which is the same length as a standard line. The judgment was deliberately constructed to be as easy as possible, as evidenced by the fact that when tested alone, subjects are correct over 90% of the time. In the experimental condition confederates gave a patently incorrect response before the naive subject had an opportunity to express his judgment. When subjects were confronted by a unanimous group, even if it consisted of as few as three people, it was found that approximately three-quarters of the subjects gave as their judgment the patently incorrect answer espoused by the confederates. Moreover, all subjects, including those who remained independent of the confederates' influence exhibited anxiety, doubt and confusion. (Jahoda [1959] treats this phenomenon in a particularly illuminating way.) In this case the very obviousness of the correct response seemed to contribute to the doubt and confusion the subjects felt. The correct response was obvious in a double sense. Not only was it obvious in that subjects experienced little difficulty in selecting the correct option when left alone, but it was also obvious in

that they expected there to be no disagreement about the correct answer. Subjects were shocked to discover that others disagreed about such a clearly objective matter. Their conformity to the confederates flowed from this shock; they searched for a way to see their own correct perception as wrong and the group's absurd answer as correct. It was as if they preferred to be wrong than for the objective world to decay into subjectivity. An equivalent reaction can occur in circumstances in which a blatant violation of presumptively certain moral norms occurs, since, as Berger and Luckman point out, members of a culture treat their culture's central norms as indisputable fact, properties not of arbitrary convention, but of an external reality. An actor faced with a blatant violation of a shared, objective, moral norm by another who ought equally well know, and follow it, can similarly be placed in doubt and confusion, and hence be inhibited about reproaching that other.

Not every disagreement about an objective standard forces interactants to doubt the correctness of their judgments; if this were so, it would never be possible to morally reproach another. It is not disagreement <u>per se</u> but the characteristics of both the person disagreeing and the nature of the disagreement which produces the doubt and confusion which infects those faced with a challenge to their view of the objective social world. After all, we

understand that some people, for example, are blind and hence do not respond to light as we do. We have no doubt about the objective superiority of our perception to theirs. Similarly, we know that there are people with flawed moral perceptions, evil people, who may differ with us about an ethical point; their perceptions are equally to be discounted. (If only they would be compelled to carry a cane --perhaps yellow.) It is disagreement only with those who 'ought to know better' which causes doubt. Children with their undeveloped equipment for perceiving the social world 'don't know better', and are hence not taken seriously as moral witnesses. Hence, they are fair game for the reproach of any passing adult. Sometimes such moral blindness is a temporary state; those under the influence of drugs are assumed to perceive both the physical and moral world in a distorted way, thus their opinions can be ignored. The insane are assumed to perceive the world either more or less clearly than other people do (depending on one's culture's preference) and correspondingly are treated as moral arbiters or fools. Strangers to the local scene, recently emerged from the cave, are temporarily blinded to obvious truths; their doubts are to be resolved, not copied. It is even possible to violate a moral norm while participating in its maintenance. As may have become clear to recent American political figures, the very act of concealing a transgression insures that, if

discovered, it will be unreservedly condemned, since it is thus made clear that even the wrongdoer knew that it was wrong to do. The likelihood that one will condemn another, then, depends not only on the degree to which unambiguous moral standards have emerged before the offense, but also on whether the qualities of both the transgressor and the transgression cast doubt on, or substantiate, those standards.

Now that we have examined some sources of inhibition in making a moral reproach, and attempted to show how these inhibitions flow from defects in certain relationships, we shall turn to a consideration of the effects of making or failing to make a moral reproach. One possible effect of making a reproach is that it may deter the wrongdoer from continuing or repeating his transgression. The focus of our discussion will not be on this direct effect of making a reproach, but will be instead on its less obvious consequences to the person making the reproach and on observers of the reproach. In making a moral reproach an individual's subjective, personal, inarticulate, vague moral impressions become externalized[6] for himself and others, and thus a

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[6]We are borrowing language here from Berger and Luckman (op. cit., 61) who argue that every social act has three 'moments': a moment of 'externalization' in which an actor by expressing his perceptions expresses and hence ratifies some aspect of the objective social order, a moment of internalization, at which an actor perceives some aspect of the objective social order, and a third moment at which through his action he expresses or constructs his own identity.

part of the social process. It is an important first step in the crystalization of the consensual wrongness of a particular act in a particular context. The Sherif experiment previously discussed has been taken to be a model of how group norms concerning objective reality emerge. This model, however, fails to consider the question of how actors come to proffer their moral position about the wrongness of an act. In the experiment itself, subjects gave their impressions of how far the spot of light moved, in response to instructions of the experimenter, hence the question of whether it is appropriate to offer this opinion does not arise. In everyday life there is rarely an experimenter present to solicit moral positions, hence the possibility exists that norms will not emerge via the process Sherif suggests. If the making of a reproach clarifies and concretizes moral precepts, the failure to do so allows them to remain unclear both for others and for oneself.

Because the Sherif model does not consider the prior problem of the conditions under which people will take a moral stand, it may mislead us into assuming that norms inevitably emerge. If one makes this assumption, and finds groups of people doing something patently evil, one is led to believe that either the group members are intentionally disregarding the moral aspect of their action, or that they have reached a consensus that the action we see as evil <u>is</u> appropriate. David Matza (1968) discusses a case

in which neither of these is accurate. His subjects were members of delinquent gangs. In analyzing their anti-social behavior, he stresses that the individual members of the gangs actually lacked a firm commitment to their deviant behavior. He reports that each of the boys in the gang was privately disturbed by his behavior, but that each was unwilling to publicly express his reservation. Each appeared to the others, therefore, to be fully committed to the group's delinquency. Although gang members appeared to disdain conventional morality, this disdain may be little more than a facade; a facade, however, which was strong enough to produce a destructiveness which no individual member fully intended.

Traditional moral categories treat misbehavior as being either a product of ignorance, 'he didn't know any better' or as sin, a transgression occurring in the pursuit of some typically understood satisfaction, i.e., sins of lust, greed, gluttony, pride, etc. are readily understood since their goals are the sorts of things taken for granted to be satisfying. (Cf. Silver [1976] for a useful analysis of sins as a category of moral discourse.) The misbehavior which Matza discusses seems not to fit either category, since actors gave evidence of recognizing the incorrectness of their ways, and these actions led to no obvious satisfaction. One might hold that a less obvious satisfaction was involved, remaining a member of the group, and thus

assimilate this case into the second category. The difficulty with this approach is that it assumes that members participate in the group wrongdoing because they realize that if they take a moral stand they will be ridiculed or rejected. We hold, however, that, at least in some cases, if individuals were to realize that this were the only cost, and if they were to know that their private reservations were reflections of the objective immorality of the delinquent actions, they would in fact be willing to incur the cost of loss of connection with the group.

Let us bring our analysis to bear on an instance in which immoral behavior not only occurred, but escalated: Zimbardo's (1973) study of prison dynamics. Subjects in this study were arbitrarily assigned the roles of 'guards' and 'prisoners'. They were all college students of the same general age, social class, race and sex who on the basis of psychological tests had shown themselves to be well adjusted. The study was conducted in a realistically constructed model of a prison environment. Subjects quickly lost their sense of themselves as 'actors' and became their roles. To their shock, the relationship between prisoners and guards became emotionally charged, antagonistic, and brutal. Because the study so well reflected offensive aspects of prison life and produced extreme emotional upset, the simulation which was to go on for two weeks, had to be ended after only six days.

Zimbardo reports, however, that many of his mock guards were "good" guards who did not themselves brutalize prisoners. Their attempts to treat prisoners well reflects a moral sensitivity, yet none of them ever corrected one of his associates for the behavior he found reprehensible. In this study we see 'moral drift' in that as the study progressed the level of antisocial behavior increased steadily. Our analysis holds that this escalation occurred precisely because none of the good guards ever expressed his moral sensitivity publicly, around some concrete behavior. We believe that had such a condemnation occurred, inhibitory moral norms would have crystalized around the condemnation. The knowledge that a moral consensus proscribed certain actions can be expected to inhibit at least some actors from violations of those norms. At the very least, the failure to condemn allows those who ignore simple moral requirements to do so more easily. Hannah Arendt writes, "As Eichmann told it, the most potent factor in the soothing of his own conscience was the simple fact that he could see no one, no one at all, who actually was against the Final Solution (1965, 116).

Our discussion of moral reproach has focused on face to face condemnation which is both rare and inhibited. Another form of moral reproach, however, is common: the condemnation of another <u>in absentia</u>. Moral characterization of another behind his back, the sort of talk we might

roughly identify as gossip,[7] is an everyday constituent of social life. We have held that direct moral reproach, when it occurs, crystallizes judgments of what is appropriate and what is inappropriate. Gossip has a similar effect, i.e., talk about the wrongdoing of another specifies for those present the limits of acceptable behavior. If A lodges a moral charge about B to C, A and C will typically come to agreement about the merits of the charge and thus construct a shared, objective moral principle. Since interesting gossip is expected to be replete with details, gossip well serves to bridge the gap between broad, general principles and concrete action. Gossip is commonly seen as a mechanism of social control in that people may refrain from action lest they be gossiped about. We hold that gossip

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[7]Not all moral characterizations of another behind his back are called gossip; praiseworthy comments about someone to a third party are not typically called gossip. Yet even this sort of comment has much in common with what we would call gossip; it can be just as embarrassing to be overheard making flattering comments about another as it is to be overheard making unflattering comments. A question remains as to whether all gossip includes moral characterization; can the simple exchange of information be called gossip. We would argue that insofar as an exchange involves only the communication of information without a moral component, it is more properly called rumor than gossip. Aronfreed (1976) has suggested that gossip is always light in tone, a playful form of talk. He has suggested that serious charges made behind another's back, perhaps with the addition of a plan to redress the grievance, are not properly called gossip. A more precise articulation of this domain is a worthwhile endeavor, but one that will not be taken up in this paper.

plays a part in the regulation of social behavior in a more important and subtle way in that it comes to regulate the behavior of those doing the gossiping. Perhaps this function of gossip is related to its popularity;[8] Gluckman (1963) claims that it is a constituent of every culture about which we have information.

Gossip and direct moral reproach share a further effect. Durkheim (1893)[9] pointed out that the expression of 'moral outrage' is an important opportunity for the

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[8]A consideration of what is or is not a popular topic of gossip is also informative. Consider that Sutcliffe and Hoberman found in 1956 that their subjects considered adultery to be a serious moral failing. We would propose that at that time adultery was also the juiciest topic of gossip among these subjects. We further propose that the attractiveness of this topic results from the combined effect of its being a violation of an important moral principle and, at the same time, exactly an offense for which only the trespassed partner has 'standing'; outsiders certainly have no standing in the sexual behavior of consenting adults. Gossip seems to allow condemnations which cannot be done directly. Any violation of a community's important principles can become a hot topic of gossip; one can imagine that the news that a famous scientist has altered his data would become a topic of gossip quite as popular in scientific circles as the news that she was enjoying the favors of her secretary.

The relationship between appropriate topics of gossip and the values of a community is highlighted by the difficulty that newcomers have in determining what the appropriate topics of gossip are. In a community that licenses non-exclusive sexual behavior one may find that the news that someone is sleeping with someone else will be greeted with a "so what" rather than the hightening of interest associated with a good item of gossip.

[9]Garfinkle (1956) and especially Dentler and Erikson (1958) have also made this point. For an extended discussion of the relation of gossip and scandal to the maintenance of community ties see Gluckman (1963).

development of affective ties among group members. A similar point has been made in regard to gossip. Gossip often expresses intimacy (Berger 1963); one's willingness to gossip with a person about another expresses an ephemeral closeness between the first two to the exclusion of the third. Thus both direct reproach and gossip help in the construction and solidification of groups.

Although people are not inhibited about gossiping in the way they are about making a direct reproach, they do face a certain danger in gossiping, for instance, they may find out that the person they are gossiping about is an uninvited, unannounced party to their conversation. This discovery is likely to produce an intense, immediate unpleasantness we call embarrassment. Hence, gossip, like the making of a direct reproach, suffers from a social disability. The embarrassment occurs, in this case, at precisely the moment at which the gossip is converted into a direct reproach. This suggests the possibility that the sort of inhibition we have been discussing is related to the sort of action that is embarrassing. This intuition is supported by the fact that the inhibition we have discussed seems best understood by considering it in relation to the immediate structure of interaction, i.e., the relationships that actors have to one another and the relation of their actions to external, objective standards. This is exactly the sort of analysis we believe will be most likely to make embarrassment sensible.

Examining Reproach in a Field Setting

Informative empirical inquiry into the problems involved in making a moral reproach depends, in the first place, on creating a situation in which people observe someone doing something to another which calls for such a reproach. Since we hypothesize that people are inhibited about making a reproach even when the situation calls for it, it seems necessary to select an action which is fully and thoroughly reprehensible; we did not believe that a lesser transgression would overcome bystanders' inhibitions against intervention.

A second consideration involves the target of the immoral act. Although we believe that the inhibition against such reproach arises in a broad class of situations, we are particularly concerned with cases in which an individual is moved to reproach someone on the basis of his action against a third party.

The long term relationships among the three parties involved in the incident would also be expected to have an effect on the nature of the reaction to the wrongdoer; we would expect the situation to develop differently among strangers, friends or relatives. Similarly, the question of whether the act occurs in a situation that people encounter as part of their everyday life should have a bearing on the matter. A reproach is most clearly called for when the wrongdoer is likely to repeat his offense unless firmly sanctioned.

These considerations are not easy to reproduce experimentally. Experiments are best suited to the discovery of effects in situations that develop quickly among strangers in circumstances which are novel. Nonetheless, at this stage in the development of our consideration of moral reproach, information of interest can be obtained while accepting the limits imposed by the experimental method.

The feature of situations which call for a moral reproach we wished to preserve is that they occur against the background of the ongoing flow of everyday life. We, therefore, wished to embed the immoral episode in some field setting rather than create it in a laboratory; we were willing to sacrifice the control of the laboratory for an unsuspicious attitude on the part of the subjects, an attitude difficult to achieve in a laboratory. Although we wished to use a setting in which people were involved in their routine activity, we also wanted one in which they would not be so involved that they would fail to notice our scenario, or be so pressed by their own concerns that they could not become involved in our drama. The subway system is well suited to these requirements.

Riders of the subway enter in order to get from one place to another as a routine feature of their everyday lives. Their pursuit of the goal of getting to a specific

stop is, however, completely passive. Once passengers enter the proper train, there is nothing for them to do to further their own interests other than obtain a seat. Riders are a captive as well as passive audience; from one stop to another they typically do not enter or leave cars. The intervals between stops provide an opportunity to put on a performance with the expectation that the audience will be present from the beginning to the end; the subway system does not seat spectators in the middle of a performance. The subway also provides subjects of differing ages, classes, sexes, etc.

We first tried to elicit a moral reproach by stealing a radio from a blind man. Stealing from a blind man struck us as a thoroughly irredeemable action, one which would demand a reproach.

The theft was quite simple to stage. An experimenter and a confederate carrying a radio and a cane entered a car. The confederate wore dark glasses and used the cane to feel his way towards the seats. The experimenter first walked toward the subway map and pretended to study it; then, as the "blind man" placed the radio on the floor to tie his shoe, the "thief" blatantly snatched the radio and hurried past the seated passengers to the other end of the car. The thief was wired with a tape recorder to record

any moral reproach, and observers were positioned about the car.

We were concerned with the problem of containing the situation. How would we deal with a subject who intervened? We decided that rather than debrief him, we would have the blind man first identify the thief as a friend, and pass off the apparent theft as a misunderstanding among friends. We would then be in a position to thank the subject for his assistance and support his selfless action.

The first time we performed this scenario there was no immediate response to the crime. The confederate, realizing this, began to feel around on the floor as if he were looking for the radio in order to prod a response. His performance was successful, but in an unexpected way; a black man sitting next to him approached him rather than the thief, and asked if he had come in alone. The confederate was unprepared for such a response; he knew that if he identified the thief as a friend, the subject would not pursue the matter further. If he disowned the experimenter, there would be no way he could later enter the situation to contain it. The "blind man," therefore, replied that he had entered with someone, but that he didn't know where that person was now, or where his radio was. The subject apparently concluded that the experimenter was teasing his blind friend. He then approached the experimenter, seized

the radio, and said, "Did you take his radio?" The thief replied, "What?" The subject took the radio and commanded, "Give that blind boy back his radio!" As the car reached the next stop, the subject, thief and victim all left the train. The subject whacked the thief with a rolled-up newspaper in a somewhat playful way as an admonition not to tease his blind friend.

A second attempt at the same procedure produced a similar result. There was, again, no immediate response to the theft. After the confederate cued a response by searching for the radio, a middle-aged white male approached him and asked if his radio had been stolen. From where the experimenter was now standing, he presented a curious but frightening sight; he stared threateningly at the thief, and was poised to run after him, while he stood listening to the victim. He seemed a prototypical example of ambivalence as he glared at the thief, while he listened to the victim. The confederate, aware of the intensity of his reaction, reported that he was a friend of the thief and cooled the situation off.

Our experience with this procedure suggested that: 1) most people did not intervene at all in our scenario; 2) those people who did intervene did so only after checking the situation out with the victim, and perhaps more importantly, enlisting his support in the intervention, even

though the time so spent would have allowed a real thief to escape with the radio. Intervention, then, seemed to require that the victim first announce the crime by looking for the radio, and then confirm that a theft had occurred verbally, thus making a reproach himself first.

We sought to alter the procedure so that subjects would intervene against the thief without first consulting the victim; if we could do this we could provoke moral reproach without removing the possibility of later backtracking by claiming that the thief and victim were really friends. We considered the possibility that our problem arose from the blatant way in which the theft was carried out. Perhaps people could not believe that someone would actually steal a radio in such an obvious way. In the next two trials the experimenter sat near the blind man who placed the radio on the seat between them. The experimenter then put his hand on the radio, gradually drew it towards himself, took full possession of it, and then slowly made his way to the opposite end of the car. In neither of these trials did anyone intervene, even though many passengers were in a position to see the crime. The experimenter's impression, based on exchanges of glances, was that at least some passengers had noticed the crime although they made no response; they were certainly in a position to see the blind man come in with the radio, the

thief take it and walk away with it, and that the blind man no longer had it with him.

Rather than continue with a procedure which seemed not to be producing reproach, we decided to stimulate reproach more directly, even though such an approach increased the risk to the experimenter. In this new procedure as the thief blatantly snatched the radio, the blind man cried out, "My radio!!" The reaction to the victim's announcement was dramatic and immediate. The calm and passivity of the car was shattered. Far too much happened at once for observers to record it all. As the thief made his way down the car, several people called out about the radio, and passed word of the crime down the car. A woman reached out and grabbed the radio, and said, "Give him back his radio!" The experimenter surrendered the radio, and she then ordered, "Get off the train!" A man sitting next to her motioned the thief off. The experimenter walked to the end of the car to await the next stop. As he stood there, he was aware that he was the center of attention of the car; he was also aware that he did not know what would happen next. As the train approached the station, the woman who initially grabbed the radio again motioned him to leave, and then exposed a gold badge of some sort from her purse. It appeared that she would follow him off the car and arrest him, but she remained on the car apparently content that the

radio had been restored to its rightful owner, and that the menace had been removed from the car.

This experience suggested several points. 1) The announcement on the part of the victim was quite successful in mobilizing intervention from the riders. 2) In this case there was no moral statement. The first concern of the witnesses was to restore the radio. What happened to the thief seemed to be an afterthought. Moral reproach seemed unnecessary since it was easy to undo the crime. Further, the strangers on the train did not perceive that it was likely that they would be forced to deal again with his particular menace; moral reproach is more fully called for when one is likely to meet this person doing this crime again. 3) The procedure had an explosive effect. The experimenter realized that the situation was quite out of his control. Once riders had become aroused and prepared to act, the direction of that action was quite unpredictable. It may have been a fortuitous accident that the policewoman was in the car, and that she took firm but controlled action to restore the radio. It is probable that in such a circumstance the first person to act defines appropriate action for others. We abandoned this procedure because, although it was quite effective in calling forth intervention, it also produced a dangerous situation for the experimenter and, perhaps, for other riders.

We made a second attempt to stimulate reproach on the subway by enacting a performance depicting a bully. Bullies raise the problem of a moral reproach in a particularly telling way. Bullies get their way through the use of explicit or implicit threat. Their booty is often easily won as their victim may surrender without testing their will to press the issue. The bully relies on the fact that he can select his victim with the expectation that those who privately condemn his actions will refrain from intervening directly.

The scenario we developed involved a confederate who entered a crowded car and an experimenter who followed slightly later. The experimenter demanded the seat which the confederate had just taken. The exchange developed:

E. That's my seat.

C. What?

E. That's my seat; I saw it first.

C. I'm sitting here.

E. Get up, give me that seat.

The confederate then turned to the person sitting next to him and asked, "Should I give him my seat?" in an effort to elicit support.

In our first attempt at this, both the confederate and the experimenter were young, white males. The attempt to elicit support was unsuccessful as the passenger refused

to acknowledge the question at all. A repetition of the question had no better result, as the passenger stared straight ahead without any sign of recognition. The victim surrendered the seat.

The interchange was carried out in the station before the train had begun to move, so the passengers in the vicinity of the encounter were quite able to hear what was said. None of the passengers intervened, but many reacted. The first and most noticeable reaction was persistent staring at the bully. Secondly, clusters of conversation began. We were unable to hear all of these conversations, but it seemed quite clear that the scenario provided a sufficient stimulus to begin conversations among usually silent riders. One of the conversations we did overhear occurred between two black males. The topic of their discussion was the obvious lack of virility of a man who would surrender his seat to another. Their mockery suggests that it is not only the bully, but also a man who surrenders to one who may be the proper target of a moral reproach. Of course, since this mockery was conducted out of earshot of its target it constitutes not a reproach, but gossip.

Although the procedure produced substantial response, none of it was either reproach or even intervention. We, therefore, modified the procedure by substituting a young, while female as the victim. Nine trials were

conducted with these performers. In these nine trials only one subject who was directly asked for advice intervened; he said to the bully, "First come, first served." This comment articulated the appropriate norm, while stopping short of a reproach. The other eight males questioned by the victim did not respond at all to her plight. In two of these nine trials a bystander intervened by offering the bully his own seat. One such offer came from a man, the other from a woman. By offering their own seat the passengers dealt pragmatically with the problem at hand without dealing with the moral character of the act. As in the case of the radio stolen from the blind man, the first concern of those who intervened was to protect the interests of the victim, not to instruct the wrongdoer.

In the final trial of this series a different experimenter, also a white male, slightly older, more mild-mannered looking, and perhaps less threatening, made the approach. There was no immediate intervention, and the experimenter took the vacated seat as the victim left the car. Approximately one minute later, a man about 50 years old with a slight foreign accent addressed the bully, "That wasn't a nice thing to do." Of the roughly 150 people who witnessed the scenario, this middle-aged man was the first to make a clearly moral reproach. Since the victim had already left the car, this was a pure case of a moral

reproach without an instrumental component. His remark was delivered in a firm but unemotional tone, so the experimenter proceeded to determine how the interaction would progress if he offered no apology. The subject next asked, "How would you like it if I told you to get up?" Having delivered his reproach, the subject here moved to articulate the moral heart of the matter: the notion of reciprocity.

The "bully" was unprepared for this question, and fumbled around for a reply. The subject's next move was quite surprising; he crouched down to look the bully in the eye and screamed, "Someday somebody could kill you for that!" The reproach and the articulation of the principle involved were apparently not sufficient as expressions of this subject's reaction, this next response was a clear expression of outrage and anger.

The subject's expression of reproach had not yet run its course as he next grabbed the bully, screamed, "Get up!!," and shoved him across the aisle. Each of the previous remarks seemed to intensify rather than dissipate his emotional excitement; the subject began this course of action without knowing where it would lead; each step seemed to procede from the prior, revealing intensifying emotion as the process continued.

The subject sat in the seat he wrested from the bully for approximately 15 seconds, and then, perhaps in recognition of the incongruity of the fact that he was now occupying the very seat that he had upbraided the bully for taking, he got up and screamed, "The lady who was sitting here, come and take your seat." The subject appeared quite crazy to us at this point, but this impression is a serious mistake. He was disrupting the situation in a profound way, but in the service of a moral principle he found important. Those who react to a violation of a principle they respect, while others remain silent, may often look crazy, but sanity cannot be judged, regardless of first impression, simply in terms of an individual's adjustment to those around him. This subject was willing to risk the appearance of insanity to respond to an affront to his moral concerns.

The experimenter attempted to calm the subject down by assuring him that the woman was really a friend of his, and that she had by now left the car. The subject sat down again, not so much out of his belief of the experimenter, as for want of anything further to do. An observer then interposed himself between the subject and experimenter. All left the car at the next stop.

Other passengers were, needless to say, quite shocked and surprised by this outburst. None became

actively involved in the interchange, but both the experimenter and the observer believed that they were talking to one another in support of the reproach by the subject.

In a certain sense our procedure was a success. We were attempting to stimulate a moral reproach and we were successful in producing one such response from the more than 150 people who witnessed the exchange. This one event of a full moral reproach was explosive in its quality. We do not believe this explosiveness to be accidental; we believe that in a public place among strangers a moral reproach is often accompanied by this emotional charge. We suggest that only a full-fledged emotion is sufficient to overcome the inhibition against such reproach. This case suggests that, whenever a person is sufficiently moved to express reproach, it will occur in an outburst of emotion rather than in a controlled manner. If this is true, we would expect that, when one reproaches another, he is unlikely to find exactly the measured language he would prefer to use; moral reproach is more likely to be expressed in a somewhat overstated way in an emotional rather than measured tone.

The expression of moral reproach requires the bursting through of the constraints that public places impose on the conduct of individuals; once these inhibitions are overcome, situations move quickly out of control. The

termination of the sequence in violence seemed inevitable. When someone reproaches another it seems required that he back up that reproach with something. If the other one reproaches is a subordinate, some sanction can be imposed; if the other is a friend, one can threaten to alter the relationship; but if the other is a stranger, it seems that nothing can back up the reproach but an act or threat of violence.

It would be valuable to verify these impressions by further observations of people expressing moral reproach in public places, but we were forced to terminate the trials due to the obvious danger to the experimenter and by-standers. In so far as our procedure was successful in stimulating reproach, it constituted a serious danger, not only because the person who was outraged might seriously injure the bully deliberately, but because in such a highly charged environment, injury can result from miscalculation as well as deliberation.

In summary, our experience suggests that moral reproach is a rare event, at least on the subway; only one example was observed from the large number of people who witnessed our irredeemable performances. Reproach also seems to be a secondary consideration to intervention if the wrong can be easily righted. Once the transgression has been undone, people seem willing to ignore the self of the

wrongdoer. When reproach does occur, it happens in an uncontrolled, explosive way.

Our experience with stealing things from a blind man underlines the fact that the clarity, objectivity of a crime is an important determinant of a bystander's reaction. It is a truism to report that people are unwilling to become involved in stopping a criminal until they are sure that a crime has occurred, but it is of interest to see the limits of that rule. Even when people see someone stealing something from someone who is both defenseless and not in a position to know that he has been victimized, i.e. a blind man, they will not intervene on his behalf until he has given assurance that a crime has been committed.

It seems clear that in order to pursue the study of moral reproach we shall be forced to move it into the laboratory, a place where we can maintain control over what happens. If the observations we have made on the subway are more generally true, we shall be forced to make other changes as well.

In the first place, we shall be forced to study cases in which a person is moved to reproach another because of his misbehavior toward him rather than toward some third party. This shift is necessitated by the infrequency of third party intervention. Research by Piliavin et al. (1969) indicates that people are willing to get

involved in aiding another in the subway, a familiar environment, when such aid does not involve a moral reproach against a third party, yet our experience suggests that they will not do it if this intervention involves reproaching another. Since people are less familiar with laboratories than with the subway, we expect third party intervention to be even less common in laboratories.

We shall also be forced to dilute the moral issue, since we believe that when people are deeply touched by a moral affront, they are likely to end their reproach with violence. It would not be ethically warranted to expose subjects to a situation in which their only choices were to forbear another's immorality or come to blows. Experimental inquiry requires a compromise in the form of a situation in which an individual is faced with an infraction of some normative principle, but not one important enough to lead to blows. Since people seem to be more interested in restoring situations than censuring wrongdoers, we shall use a procedure in which people must deal with an infraction as an instrumental act to advance their own interests.

Fortunately, Moriarty (1975) has developed a procedure which may fit our requirements. In his experiment a subject and confederate enter a room together to take some tests. The tests require full concentration but the

confederate plays a radio at a very loud volume. Subjects are forced to confront the confederate or put up with the radio. Only four of twenty subjects confronted the confederate to the point of asking him to turn the radio down, and then, only one of these four pursued the matter past a single ineffectual request. The threat of administering shock to the worse performer had no effect on the results. This basic situation seems suited to our experimental needs.

The situation preserves of the phenomenon we wish to study, first, the possibility of face-to-face confrontation. It might be overstated to claim that the confederate is acting immorally in the sense that someone stealing something from a blind man or bullies someone is immoral, but he is interfering with the subject's right to pursue a legitimate goal. The confederate is acting in violation of some articulable principle or rule appropriate to the situation at hand; he is acting discourteously if not immorally.

The situation also allows us to examine repeated instances of people's attempts to deal with the confederate. We will be concerned with not only whether people overcome their inhibitions against the wrongdoer, and under what circumstances they do so, but also, how they go about constructing a challenge to the confederate. Making a moral reproach is not a matter of selecting some response from

some pre-determined options, but of actively constructing a sequence of actions. We will have an opportunity to observe that process of construction.

A Laboratory Experiment

Method of Investigation

Our basic experimental procedure is borrowed from Moriarty; however, we have introduced some modifications. He used the playing of a transistor radio as the source of disruption; our experience in piloting the procedure revealed that even the most persistent "rock" stations on occasion play rather pleasant, soothing music. Using a radio leaves the experimenter at the mercy of the disc jockey's taste. We therefore substituted for the radio a small tape recorder with a segment of popular "rock" music. We attempted to find the most bothersome, disruptive, unpleasant music available. An album entitled Too Much Too Soon, by the New York Dolls, a popular rock group, seemed well suited to our need. The primitive, incessant overstated beat of this music seemed quite adequate to interfere with our subjects' concentration.

Procedure

Subjects were recruited through an advertisement in the Village Voice offering $4 for participation in psychological research. At the time they responded to make an appointment, they were told that the research would involve their perception and personality. When subjects arrived

for their appointment, they were told that they would be taking the experiment with another "subject" if she arrived on time, but that in the event that the other subject did not arrive, the testing would be conducted individually.

Pilot research indicated that a consistent role had to be constructed for the confederate to be believable as a person who would play a loud tape in an experiment, so the confederate, as soon as she arrived, asked, "We're getting $4 for this, aren't we?" Subjects seemed to note this request and respond to it non-verbally as out of place and rude even though they themselves came, at least in part, because of the $4.

Subject and confederate were led to the experimental room, and asked to sign receipts and fill out some brief forms requesting biographical information. Then, in order to maintain the impression that the research involved personality and perception, they were asked to take a personality test. A bogus personality test was needed; the first 41 true-false questions of the CPI were used (Gough, 1956).

The experimenter left the subject and confederate alone for approximately five minutes while they filled out this form. The room itself was 10 feet by 9 feet; each subject was placed at a separate table eight feet from each other. (This detail seems important; in pilot study

the subject and confederate were placed at the same table. Subjects almost invariably saw through the deception. It was apparently much more difficult for the confederate to dissemble in such close face-to-face contact.) When the personality testing was completed, the experimenter returned to administer the next task. The instructions varied from condition to condition; we begin by describing the baseline condition replicating Moriarty's condition.

Baseline Condition

The experimenter told the "subjects" that they would be taking a test of sensory processing related to "cognitive or intellectual abilities." This test was administered by projecting through a two-way mirror at the back of the room slides of the Raven's Progressive Matrices Test (1962). Subjects were asked to solve a sample problem from this series, and the correct answer was explained. The instructions continued by reporting that 35 slides would be projected on the wall each for a period of 25 seconds, and that, since the timing was so important, the projector was automatic. They were told that, "if the projector should stop or break I [the experimenter] will be just down the hall in room 622." The experimenter added that he would return in 15 minutes to conclude this test, and begin the next part of the experiment. As the

experimenter left the room, the confederate asked matter-of-factly, "This whole thing will be over by X o'clock, won't it?," and the experimenter replied that it would. This line was included to continue the impression that the confederate was the sort of person who would play the tape.

Recording the Subjects' Behavior

Because of the physical arrangements of the laboratory, the experimenter was unable to observe the subjects, but he was able to hear them through a concealed microphone, and a tape recording was also made.

The Manipulation

Approximately three minutes into the testing session the confederate turned on the cassette she was carrying at a fixed, loud volume. If the subject made some complaint about it, she replied, "It's not too loud." If the subject persisted, she replied, "I just bought this tape, I want to hear it." This was included because our pilot study indicated that unless some reason for the playing of the music was provided, subjects became very suspicious that the confederate was part of the experiment. If the subject pressed her again, the confederate replied that, "We got our $4, what difference does it make?" This rejoinder further explains the confederate's behavior without

justifying it. It also offered the subject an invitation to treat the experiment less than seriously. We expected that by using this reply we would assist subjects in drawing the moral issue.

These responses depart from Moriarty's procedure. His confederate was instructed to reply, "When this number's over." to requests to lower the radio. That reply temporizes; it offers a promise in response to the request for a favor, postponing the moral issue until the number was over. We felt that it served to muddy the waters in terms of determining how subjects would react to someone acting inappropriately.

If the subject did not terminate the procedure early by leaving the room to find the experimenter to tell him of the confederate's misbehavior, the experimenter returned in 15 minutes as promised. By the time he returned, the confederate had turned the music off. He asked the "subjects" to answer some questions: "Do you have a cold or headache or other ailment that could interfere with your vision or concentration?"; "Have you taken any drug or medication in the last 12 hours that could affect your vision or concentration?"; "Is there anything else we should know to help us interpret your test scores, like, excessive fatigue, you left your glasses home, extreme stress. . . ." These questions were included to allow the

subject an opportunity to report the confederate after the fact. When they had answered these questions, the experimenter told them the experiment was over, waited for the subject and confederate to prepare to leave, and then debriefed them.

The experiment ended with a structured interview about the subjects' experience during the session. The interview focused on the questions: "What went through your mind when she turned on the tape?"; "What did you think of her when she turned on the tape?"; "Did you think of asking her to lower it?"; "Did the music bother you?"; "Did you think of coming to get me to tell me of the disruption?" The interview was open ended and followed any additional points the subject or confederate raised.

Authority Condition: Hypothesis I

The experimental variations of this basic condition were intended to illustrate and explore the notion of "objectivity" of the wrongness of the confederate's act, a concept central to our analysis of moral reproach. We held that it would be easier for a subject to begin a reproach if she perceived that the confederate's action was objectively wrong (would be seen as wrong by anyone who happened to be there to see it), than if the subject merely knew that the music was bothersome to her. Our analysis

holds that the perception that an act is improper is both a condition for and a consequence of the making of a moral reproach. To heighten this aspect of the confederate's behavior in the authority condition, the experimenter added to his instructions the claim that, "This test requires concentration and silence." This instruction was intended to leave the subject in little doubt that the confederate was behaving improperly in playing the tape rather than an alternative perception, that she was being overly disturbed by it. It was also included for a secondary reason. One of the prods which Milgram's experimenter used to induce the subject to continue the experiment was, "The experiment requires that you continue" (1974). We were interested in finding out whether subjects in our experiment who had been primed with this similar line would pick it up and use it against the confederate, or whether it is the exclusive domain of authorities to point out or define task requirements. It is a question for sociolinguistics to map linguistic forms onto structural positions of interactants; as an empirical matter people do not always say what they might say, or what it would be most effective for them to say; insofar as saying or not saying something displays structural regularities, it is a matter of note.

Relaxed Condition: Hypothesis II

The authority condition was an attempt to make it clear to the subject that the confederate was wrong in playing the music; the relaxed condition was an attempt to make this perception less clear. To do this, the experimenter told the subjects, "It is important that you be relaxed as you take this test, so make yourself comfortable, smoke if you like. . . ."

We hoped to create the libertarian dilemma: how are potentially conflicting rights brought into mutual limitation. In this particular case subjects knew that the confederate had a right to be comfortable. It seemed that the playing of the music helped her to be comfortable and was, therefore, an expression of that right. At the same time, the subject knew that the music was disrupting her own performance and thus was an infringement on her own right to be comfortable. The classic resolution of this dilemma, that one's rights end where another's nose begins, leaves unclear the exact boundary of one's nose. Philosophers of a utilitarian bent argue that a gain-loss calculus can resolve such a dilemma, but it is difficult to see how it would be possible, even in principle, to determine "how much" the other is being helped by the music, and "how much" one is being bother by it. (Cf. Hart (1964) for a brilliant exposition of the libertarian position.)

Our interest was in determining how in this concrete, specifiable instance a number of people would deal with the problem. Presumably, some notion of reasonableness or appropriateness must always be invoked to resolve these conflicts. We hold that an outsider to our situation would agree that playing a loud tape recorder during a test is hardly a reasonable expression of one's right to be comfortable. We wondered whether subjects could bring this outsider's perspective to bear on this face-to-face interaction.

Hearing Test Condition: Hypothesis III

All of our variations discussed thus far have relied on the instructions of an authority to influence the objectivity of the offense. While it is an important function of authority to articulate such specifications, especially in novel circumstances, such instructions are not necessary for people to distinguish right from wrong. While it is a program for research much broader than ours to catalogue and organize the specific contexts which establish and maintain this perception, we were interested in illustrating one situation in which people would certainly see that the confederate's behavior was an inappropriate intrusion.

In this condition the experimenter began the instructions for the sensory tests, "One of you will now take a hearing test, and the other a visual test." (One of the tables in this condition had a set of earphones on it; the other did not. The confederate was instructed to take a seat at the table without the earphones. The experimenter was able by momentarily checking the subject to insure that the confederate always entered the room first.) The experimenter explained that, since she had taken the table with the earphones, she would do the hearing test, while the "other subject" performed a visual test. They were told that they would then switch tests. (This instruction was included to make sense of the fact that they were taking the tests together in the same room.) The experimenter gave the confederate a visual task to perform, and then instructed the subject: "Your task is very simple; you will be hearing a series of sentences through the earphones played at a low volume. What we would like you to do is simply write down the sentences just as you hear them. Although the sentences are very simple, they are played at such a low volume that people make mistakes, and it is the sort of mistakes they make that is of interest to us. As you might imagine, it is important that the volume be constant, so I will not be speaking the sentences, they are on tape. If the tape should stop or break,

I will be just down the hall in room 622." Subjects were given three series of the C.H.A.B.A. Sentences Test, a standard hearing test, supplied through the courtesy of our Speech and Audiology Department. This test consists of a series of 30 sentences separated by pauses long enough for the subjects to copy them. The entire test required 15 minutes, approximately the same amount of time as the Raven's test used in the other condition. The confederate in this condition waited until the subject wrote the first few sentences (approximately two minutes), and then turned on the music. The hearing test tape was played at a constant volume selected in pilot study to be low enough to be credible as a hearing test, but loud enough to be heard over the confederate's music.

The structure of the hearing test was similar to that of the Raven's test in that each involved a stimulus presented at predictable intervals. In each test subjects knew when they could expect another stimulus to be presented to which they must attend. Further the music interfered with the subjects' performance in both cases. In the case of the visual task, however, the interference was "internal," it involved concentration; in the case of the hearing test the interference was "external," the two sound waves interfered with each other. Interference in concentration is difficult to point to, document, or

discuss; it is subjective, in the domain of psychology; interference in sound waves is objective, specifiable, relatively easy to document, measure and discuss coherently; it is in the domain of physics. The two tasks shared a further similarity. We believed it possible to complete either even with the interference. In either case it was physically possible for subjects to go on with the test if subjects tried to "screen out the music"; it was possible to do either task in a way that it is not possible, for example, to dig a hole if someone has stolen your shovel. It is an empirical matter to determine whether the two tasks were equally easy to perform with the music on.

It is important to understand that it was an empirical matter for subjects to determine to what degree the music caused a diminution of their performance; i.e. there was no way for the subjects to determine to what degree the music affected their performance, since they did not know how well they would have done without the music. This is important since one might be tempted to argue that the music interfered "more" with the hearing test than it did with the visual test. Such a statement may or may not be true, in terms of decrement of performance, but in either case, such information was not available to the subjects at the moment they were bothered by the music and

had to confront the subject. Differences in their reaction to the confederate, then, can not be attributed to differences in their knowledge of how much their performance was affected by the music, then, since they had no such knowledge, but rather to their immediate apprehension that playing music in the middle of a hearing test is blatantly out of place in a way that it is not in the middle of a visual test.

Characteristics of the Subjects

Subjects, as mentioned above, were recruited through the Village Voice, and are probably unrepresentative of much of the American population. Readers of the Voice are, one suspects, a rather sophisticated group, both in the general sense of the word, and, in particular, in regard to psychological experimentation. Many potential subjects had participated in research before; we attempted to screen out subjects who had been in other deception studies, but we cannot be certain that we were entirely successful.

We believe that the sex of the confederate and the subject would have an effect on the nature of the situation as our subjects would perceive it. Although each of the four possible sex pairings of subject with confederate is of interest, limited resources required that such variation be limited. Since we were primarily interested in the

notion of objectivity, we sought to minimize other inhibitory aspects of the situation. We, therefore, restricted our research to female subjects, and used female confederates minimizing the threat of physical violence inherent to such situations.

Confederates

Two different confederates were used in the experiment. Due to their relative availability to participate in the research, they played the role an unequal number of times. Each confederate was used, however, an approximately equal number of times in each condition. One confederate was 22, the other 24.

Subjects' Responses

Rates of Intervention

How did the subjects respond to the confederates' misbehavior? Overall (collapsing across conditions) 46% of the subjects (38/83) made no attempt to have the sound lowered. These 38 people sat through 15 minutes of "The New York Dolls," while trying to do either the Raven's Progressive Matrices Test, or while taking a hearing test. It would seem on the face of it that some inhibition must have occurred, since a common sense view of the situation calls for some attempt to have the volume lowered.

As Table 1 indicates, these 38 people were not randomly distributed among the four conditions.

Table 1[a]

Numbers of subjects who asked the confederate to lower the music by experimental condition

	Relaxed	Baseline	Authority	Hearing Test	Total
Attempted to have music lowered	4 (20.0%)	14 (63.7%)	11 (52.4%)	16 (80.0%)	45 (54.2%)
Made no attempt to have music lowered	16 (80.0%)	8 (36.3%)	10 (47.6%)	4 (20.0%)	38 (45.8%)
Total	20	22	21	20	83

[a] $X^2 = 15.67$, $p < .01$

Closer analysis of these results reveals that there was a reliable difference between the hearing test and relaxed conditions ($X^2 = 12.1$, $p < .01$, corrected for continuity). Also, subjects in the baseline condition were reliably more likely to attempt to have the music lowered than were those in the relaxed group ($X^2 = 4.76$, $p < .05$, corrected for continuity). The difference between the relaxed condition and the authority condition did not reach the usual criterion for reliability ($X^2 = 3.39$, $p < .10$, corrected for continuity). The differences between the

hearing test and the baseline and authority conditions were not reliable. In summary, in the hearing test condition most subjects attempted to have the music lowered, while the relaxed condition led most to endure the music without complaint; the baseline and authority conditions were intermediate in this respect, and not reliably different from one another.

These results bear on our analysis of moral reproach, since we hold that silently putting up with the music can only be understood by assuming that people were inhibited about asking that it be lowered, and that this inhibition derived from fact that a request to have it lowered, in this specific context, implied a reproach, or in dilute form approached such a criticism. We, therefore, hypothesized that the rate of such intervention would vary with the degree to which the context made the playing of the music objectively out of place rather than simply bothersome. This hypothesis seems generally supported by the results, but we must proceed to examine them more closely.

One feature of these results which is striking is that in Moriarty's study, conceptually similar to our baseline condition, only four of 20 subjects made any attempt to have the distraction lowered, while in our baseline condition 14/22 did so. How can this difference be accounted for? It might have been the case that some feature

of Moriarty's procedure heightened the inhibition against making a point of the music with the confederate; the use of male subjects and confederates might increase this inhibition. Moriarty's subjects may, on the other hand, have differed in some other relevant way from ours. Each possibility is, of course, open to further empirical investigation, but the rather sketchy report of his experiment makes such an analysis at this point impossible. We can point out, however, that our relaxed instruction exactly reproduced the rates Moriarty found. Whatever may account for the greater passivity of his subjects, it was possible to produce this passivity by "subjects" to make themselves comfortable. We turn now to an examination of the relaxed condition.

Relaxed Condition

In this condition, as we hypothesized, subjects seemed to assume that the confederate used the tape to aid her in her concentration. This belief was certainly quite sensible, given our instructions. Was it, however, a sufficient reason to put up with the music? That an action is useful to someone else does not entail that it should be tolerated without complaint; most deviant or immoral action is of some use to another. Subjects in this particular context accepted their own discomfort as the way of resolving the conflict between their own comfort and ability to

concentrate and the confederate's, but this resolution when viewed from the outside borders on the absurd. The inability of subjects to reach this outsider's perception, led to their acceptance of a ridiculous imposition by the confederate on their peace and quiet, as well as a breach of the propriety and integrity of the testing situation.

Authority Condition

We were also surprised that although we were able to reduce the rate of intervention below the baseline rate by instructions designed to confuse the objective impropriety of the act, we were unable to make subjects more willing to improve the situation by instructing them that the test required silence and concentration. The essentially identical rates of intervention in the baseline and authority conditions were unexpected.

Again, several possibilities present themselves for post-hoc explanation. One possibility is that our subjects fully perceived in the baseline condition that the confederate's playing of the radio was wrong, and that the authority's further instructions did nothing to enhance the clarity of this perception. On this account, the forbearance of subjects in both the baseline and authority conditions must be explained in terms other than their perception of the appropriateness of the confederate's act, fear of

the confederate, or the belief that protest would be futile, for example. This approach seems inadequate, since subjects in the hearing test condition were more active although the confederate remained as threatening and intransigent.

Another possibility, suggested by one of the confederates, is that subjects in the authority condition were inhibited from saying anything about the music by the very instructions used to create the clarity of perception in the first place. After all, the experimenter did tell them to be silent; asking the confederate to lower the music was an act of disobedience. That subjects would resist asking the confederate to lower the music because they had been told that the task requires silence is a possibility that did not occur to us before the fact, and it seems to us, now, implausible. We assumed that subjects would treat our instructions sensibly and reasonably. We treat this possibility seriously because Milgram (1974) has amply demonstrated that people cannot always be relied on to use judgments of the reasonableness of instructions as determinants of their following or disobeying them. Of course, this issue can be decided empirically by constructing a distraction or impediment to the experiment which is not auditory; a confederate smoking a cigar during a taste test after being instructed not to smoke would create such a situation.

Some Alternative Explanations

Before we continue with the discussion of the subjects' responses to the experimental situations, we should address some pertinent objections. Perhaps our analysis is wrong-headed from the start in that subjects were not really bothered by the music, and that is why they did not object; how do we know that those who did not object were bothered or distracted? Perhaps they were all "New York Dolls" lovers. One source of evidence is the subjects' replies to the question posed by the experimenter at the end of the experiment, but before the debriefing. The experimenter asked subjects to report any "physical ailment or other problem which might have affected their test scores." Nine subjects who had not asked the confederate to turn the music down reported her at this point. Although it is clear that these nine subjects were bothered by the music, it is not clear that those who did not mention it were not bothered by it; reporting the music not only informed the experimenter about the distraction, but turned the confederate in. Subjects who were bothered by the music might well have refrained from "ratting" on the other "subject"; in fact several subjects who did ask to have the music lowered did not mention it to the experimenter. An additional 20 subjects who neither asked the confederate to lower the noise nor reported the distraction to the

experimenter reported the distraction in the post experimental interview. Only nine of the 83 subjects, then, gave no indication of being bothered. These nine subjects, however, were not evenly distributed among the four conditions. Six of these nine were in the relaxed condition, with one in each of the other three conditions. This uneven distribution can have two interpretations. Either by the luck of the draw six of the nine "New York Dolls" lovers found their way into the relaxed condition, and this accounts for the low rate of intervention in that condition, or the self report of being bothered at the end of the experiment was itself affected by the condition to which subjects were assigned. Since the subjects were randomly assigned, the probability that the first interpretation is true is less than .02 ($X^2 = 10.00$, $p < .02$). It should not surprise us that some subjects would be unwilling to report being disturbed by the noise; the debriefing offered subjects an opportunity to explain their behavior. Dissonance theory (Festinger, 1967), balance theory (Heider, 1958), and self-perception theory (Bem, 1967) all predict that in such circumstances some subjects who had not asked to have the music lowered would be moved to report that the music was not bothersome, especially in the realxed condition where they cannot perceive that the confederate was inconsiderate, rude, and behaved intolerably. It would, then,

seem safer to conclude that the reported liking of the New York Dolls by the relaxed condition subjects was a consequence rather than a cause of their putting up with the confederate.

Another objection may be raised to our interpretation, one focused on our interpretation of the hearing test results. We argued that it was possible to perform the hearing test, while the music was on. What evidence do we have for this? Perhaps subjects were equally inhibited about asking to have the music lowered in this condition, but they found that no matter how hard they tried, they simply could not hear the sentences. To assess this possibility we examined the results of the subjects who completed the hearing test. Of the 20 subjects assigned to this condition, 14 actually finished the test (six left the experimental room to find the experimenter). We found that of these 14 none got fewer than 27 of the 30 sentences entirely correct. Six answered perfectly, and the average score was 97% corresponding to an error on a single sentence. It seems clear, then, that at least these 14 subjects heard quite well. It is possible that the six subjects who terminated the experiment early could not, and that is why they left. We would point out, however, that these six typically left the room very shortly after the confederate turned on the tape, and that this time would

only allow them to hear a sentence or two, and that even during this period they were arguing with the confederate. We suggest, therefore, that their leaving was not a result of their knowledge or considered judgment that the test was impossible, but rather their immediate perception that the confederate was behaving intolerably.

Persistent in Complaint

The variations in situations affected not only whether subjects complained to the confederate, but also how persistently they pressed the point. The confederate was provided with 3 rejoinders to use against the confederate if she protested; the number of rejoinders that she used was recorded and this number seems to reflect the subject's persistence. Subjects were also able to break off the experiment by leaving the experimental room to report the confederate. This act seemed an even more forceful way of pressing the argument, thus subjects who did so were assigned the number "4" for persistence. Figure 1 presents these persistence scores as a function of the experimental condition.

Figure 1

Percentage of Subjects at Each Level of Persistence
For Each of the Four Experimental Conditions

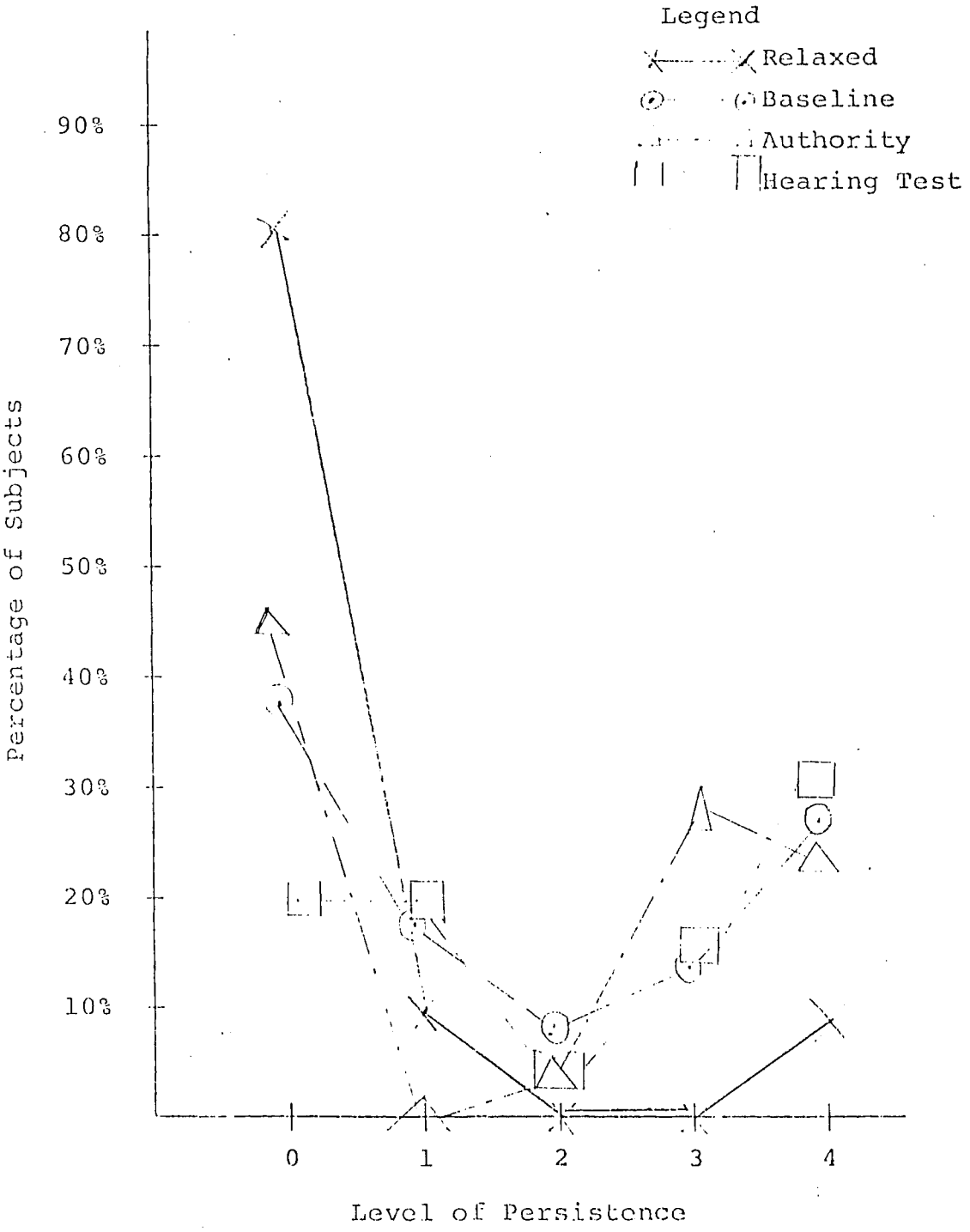

Table 2 shows the median scores for the four conditions.

Table 2

Median Scores for Persistence
(number of rejoinders)

Condition	Median
Relaxed	0.0
Baseline	1.5
Authority	2.0
Hearing Test	2.5

The median scores increase as expected; apparently although the authority condition did not enhance the probability that subjects would begin an attempt to quiet the confederate, it had some effect on how persistently they pressed the point. To examine this more closely, we compare the baseline with the authority condition using only those subjects who made some complaint. Table 3 compares the two conditions in terms of those subjects who persisted beyond the second rejoinder with those who stopped at the first or second.

Table 3[a]

Number of subjects stopping at 1st or 2nd rejoinder vs. number persisting beyond the 2nd rejoinder in the Authority and Baseline conditions

	Condition	
Number of subjects:	Baseline	Authority
Stopping at 1st or 2nd rejoinder	5	1
Pressing beyond 2nd rejoinder	9	10

[a]Fisher exact probability - .182, two-tailed.

The differences in Table 3 are not reliable, hence we can only report that in the particular occasion we investigated subjects were more persistent; we cannot give better than 5-1 odds that, if the same conditions were repeated, the same result would occur.

Age

Subjects of different ages appeared to react rather differently to the testing situation. Further, it seemed that the relationship between the age of the subject and her persistence and pressing the confederate was curvilinear, that younger and older subjects were less persistent, while those of intermediate age were more persistent. To examine this, we divided our sample into three groups: those 21 and younger, those 21-40, and those older than 40. Table 4

presents the rates at which subjects of each age group remained silent or protested.

Table 4

Speaking up or remaining silent as a function of age

	Age			
Number of subjects who:	17-21	22-40	41-55	Total
Remained silent	13 (56.5%)	21 (38.8%)	4 (66.7%)	38
Complained of noise	10 (43.5%)	33 (61.2%)	2 (33.3%)	45
Total	23	54	6	83

These data, although curvilinear as we suspected, do not yield statistically reliable differences. If we examine the data for the other end of the persistence dimension, the number of subjects breaking off the procedure to find the experimenter, we do find reliable differences.

Table 5[a,b]

Breaking off as a function of age

	Age			
Number of subjects who:	17-21	22-40	41-55	Total
Broke off	1 (4.4%)	17 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	18
Stayed till end	22 (95.6%)	34 (66.7%)	6 (100%)	62
Total	23	51	6	80

[a] $X^2 = 9.53$, $p < .05$.

[b] The total N for this table is reduced by 3, since in 3 cases the confederate turned the radio off after the subject had passed beyond the 3rd rejoinder. In two cases the subject pleaded with her in such a touching tone that our kind hearted confederates could not resist the temptation to turn the music down. In the third case the confederate lowered the music out of fear of physical violence. These three cases could not be assigned to either group.

Further comparisons of the extreme groups with the intermediate group were carried out. The comparison of the 17-21 group with the 21-40 group yields a X^2 of 4.64, $p < .05$, corrected for continuity. The comparison of the 21-40 group with the 41-55 group yields a Fisher exact probability of .106, two-tailed.

That young people would be more inhibited than those from 21-40 was expected, and is not very surprising. That those over 40 would be less active is more surprising; however, the small numbers involved and the unreliability

of the result makes talk about this difference dangerous. With this difference aside, what can one make of these age differences? Surely the differences between age groups do not result from the simple fact that time has its effect; the relation between age and activity in our experiment is not like that between the age of a crystal and its structure. We wonder whether this decline in activity at which our data hints is real or ephemeral, and whether it would also be observed at the same age in men, or whether it is confined to women.

Differences Between Confederates

In the analyses presented above the data from the two confederates have been combined, since no reliable differences between them were found, but differences were present nonetheless, as can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6

Comparison of responses to the 2 confederates

	Responses			
	Remained Silent	Complained	Stayed till end	Broke off
Confederate 1	12 (40.0%)	13 (52.0%)	17 (70.9%)	7 (29.1%)
Confederate 2	26 (44.9%)	32 (55.1%)	45 (80.4%)	11 (19.6%)

Confederate 1 was 22, confederate 2 was 24. Their apparent ages seemed to us to be more divergent than their real ages. We believe that whatever minor differences do exist are a result of this difference in apparent age.

Reporting the Confederate

At the conclusion of the experiment subjects were given an opportunity to turn the confederate in for the playing of the music. Did the situational differences we created affect the rate at which subjects took advantage of this opportunity? Before we present these data we should point out that 18 subjects left the experiment in the middle and reported the confederate directly to the experimenter. For purposes of this analysis we have included those subjects with those who simply turned her in in response to the experimenter's questions. Table 7 presents the data relevant to this question.

Table 7

Reporting the Confederate as a Function of Condition

	Experimental Condition			
Number of subjects who:	Relaxed	Baseline	Authority	Hearing Test
Reported the confederate	6 (30%)	11 (50%)	13 (62%)	9 (45%)
Did not report her	14 (70%)	11 (50%)	8 (38%)	11 (55%)
Total	20	22	21	20

These differences are not reliable. What is more surprising is the relatively low rate found in the hearing test and authority conditions. We expected these rates to be much higher. Some subjects commented after the fact that they found that they could concentrate after all, and that if they weren't going to confront the "subject" face to face, they shouldn't report her to the experimenter. Some subjects claimed that they were going to tell the experimenter privately on the way out, but we don't know how much importance to attach to this statement of intent. It seemed to us that those subjects who resigned themselves to being bothered by the confederate carried this resignation to its conclusion and decided to allow her transgression to go unreported. They wanted no more than to be done with the experiment and especially the confederate.

An Analysis of Subject-Confederate Exchanges

Criteria of a Reproach

Thus far our discussion has focused on the relatively simple matter of whether or not subjects attempted to have the music lowered, as well as how persistently they pressed that attempt. Our thesis, however, is about a much more specific action, a moral reproach. We must turn, now, from a consideration of how much subjects said, to examine exactly what they said. As a first step, we must deal very closely with the question, "What exactly is a moral reproach?"

The notion of a reproach seems straightforward: a reproach is a rebuke, or an unfavorable criticism. The question of what is a moral matter is, on the other hand, quite problematic. We cannot, at this point, begin a review of the problems encountered in conducting an analysis of the notion of a moral precept or assertion; we can only deal with a difficulty or two and elaborate the decisions we have made for our purpose at hand, determining who did or did not make a moral reproach.

Our starting point is a very useful discussion by H.A.L. Hart in which he elaborates the "4 cardinal features" of rules and standards most commonly called moral (1961). He argues that moral standards are always: 1) seen as

something of great importance to maintain, 2) seen as immune from deliberate change, 3) concerned with voluntary (vs. involuntary) action, and 4) enforced by appeal to the violator to respect rules which he presumably shares (pp. 164-180). On Hart's account, our experiment fails as an embodiment of some moral matter, since it does not seem to involve some matter of great importance. While we would agree that, compared to murder, rape, robbery, etc., playing a radio during a test seems like a rather minor offense, it is not as clear that the rule violated by the action, respect for others, returning a measure of effort and self-control to someone who has paid you, acting in a reasonable, sensible way is so clearly not a moral matter.

Hart's second criterion is closely related to our notion of "objectivity" of the moral order in which we have followed Berger and Luckman (op. cit.) and Schutz. The central point of these notions is that actors treat moral standards as external, in-the-world objects, not subject to their whim, mood, state or interest, that they perceive them as things others can and ought to perceive as they do. Features 3 and 4 taken together come close to offering a definition of a moral reproach. They imply that a moral reproach is a calling upon an actor to do as he <u>can</u> and <u>ought</u>. A fully developed moral reproach would, then, articulate some rule and assert that the other ought to follow it.

In a similar vein, Garfinkel (1964) offers: "From the point of view of sociological theory the moral order consists of rule governed activities of everyday life" (225), although he does not support such a view. This broader definition excludes the question of importance, and emphasizes the "rule governed" quality of moral claims. The notion of a "rule governed activity" is difficult; presumably it is one intermediate between an activity which "follows a rule" and is "in accordance with a rule" in Wittgenstein's terminology (op. cit.). That is, it is an activity which can be judged after the fact to have been right or wrong, when compared with some presumably shared standard, although the actor need not have been aware of or able to articulate that standard at the moment of acting.

This conception of a moral reproach seems too limited. A natural response to someone who is stealing is to yell, "Thief!"; such a characterization seems as full a reproach as the statement, "You ought not steal." Characterizations of an actor or his action in socially undesirable terms seem often to serve as a moral reproach. That this is so brings our attention to the role of selves or identities in the construction and maintenance of the moral order; it suggests that, at least in some cases, the characterization, typification, or evaluation of others is the more direct and immediate response to their

transgression, and that rules or standards are sometimes derived from these reactions rather than having served as preconditions of the evaluations. If we follow this view and focus on actors' social selves, we would call any comment which in Garfinkel's phrase ". . . transforms (someone's identity) into something looked on as lowered in the local scheme of social types" (op. cit.), a moral reproach. There is a danger in pushing this point too far. All sorts of attributes which we would not call moral matters can lead to another's being lowered in the local scheme of social types; race, sex, physical grace, inherited wealth are all attributes by which one is raised or lowered in social status, and yet, since they are not voluntary actions, they would not seem to be in the moral domain. We can, perhaps, illustrate this problem with an anecdote which involves Lady Astor and Winston Churchill. She encountered him one evening, and found him in an inebriated state. She rebuked him, "Mr. Churchill you are thoroughly drunk!" He replied, "My dear Lady Astor, you are thoroughly ugly, but in the morning I shall be sober." Her attack seems clearly a moral reproach, pointing to a failing in his voluntary behavior. But is his reply a moral reproach? Certainly being ugly is not a failure to follow a rule; it is not a voluntary matter. We might call being drunk a moral matter; we would not call being ugly such, yet he

met the charge that he was drunk with the charge that she was ugly. The anecdote draws its point precisely from the impression that the charge and counter-charge seem to go together, that the second claim seems to "answer" the first. The two attacks seem to be move and counter-move in a "language game." Calling someone drunk and calling someone ugly seem in this context, at least, to be functionally equivalent. If this is so, ought they not be described with the same term?

Fortunately, we do not need to resolve these issues in general to proceed; in the context of our experiment the voluntary quality of action is self-evident. For our purpose at hand, we will designate as a moral reproach any comment which: a) articulates some standard of behavior against which the action or actor fails, or b) characterizes an actor or his action as low in the local scheme of social types. In the context of our experiment, we will consider a statement like, "You ought to turn the radio down, because it's not fair to the experimenter," and "Turn that radio off, you bitch" as equivalent.

A further difficulty awaits our analysis of the verbal exchanges between the subjects and confederates. How explicit must a reproach be before we call it a reproach? Surely in some contexts a well placed question serves to point to an objective standard, "What do you

think you're doing?," for example, might so serve. Ought we not consider any comment which calls attention to the playing of the music a reproach, if only an implicit one? The answer must be negative on the following grounds. As Garfinkel, among others, points out:

> For the sensible character of an expression, upon its occurrence each of the conversationalists as auditor of his own as well as the other's productions had to assume as of any accomplished point in the exchange that by waiting for what he or the other person might have said at a later time the present significance of what had already been said would have been clarified. Thus many expressions had the property of being progressively realized and realizable through the further course of the conversation. (1964, 229)

Garfinkel's comment is about specific recorded conversations, but it seems more general; the significance of an utterance can only be properly assessed as it emerges during the totality of interaction. In specific, a question about some behavior which causes the behavior to cease might well be classified retrospectively as a moral reproach; the same question which had no effect on the behavior in question, and which was not followed by a more forceful expression, we would better see as a tentative comment which might have been the first step in the construction of a reproach, but which was not further developed. Some verbal expressions, for example those taking the form of a question, fall short of being reproaches. They are tentative positions from which retreat can be made. A listener cannot

determine from the first expression on the way to a reproach whether it will eventually lead to such a statement, nor can the actor himself tell where it will lead. In our experiment, early comments did not result in the confederate's lowering the radio, hence we will not call many of the early expressions we encountered reproaches.

A Typology of Comments

Our experimental procedure allowed us to examine subjects' comments over the course of their interaction with the confederate. We proceed with our report by constructing a typology of these responses. Typologies, of course, can be constructed in many ways, and may be sensitive to different aspects of the material under examination. Ours will be constructed with one eye on a full blown reproach. We will be concerned with articulating how each class of comment approaches, falls short of, or is an alternative to a reproach.

First Stage

Table 8

First Stage Comments by Subjects to Confederates

Type of comment	# of instances[a]
Would/Could/do you mind/ would you mind	30
I can't concentrate/hear	11
It's very loud/it's interfering	2
Where is it coming from/what are you doing	5
Do you have ear plugs	1
I thought he said there was he wanted quiet [sic]	1
You'll have to turn that off	1*

[a]There were 41 analyzable cases, however some subjects used more than one of the above forms, hence the frequencies total to 51.

*classified as a moral reproach

Forty-one cases of initial comments to the confederate were available for analysis. As can be seen in Table 8, 30 cases included a request to the confederate to turn the music down or off. This was accomplished by saying, "Please . . . ," "Would/could/can/do you mind/would you mind . . ." followed by turn it down or off. In ten cases the request was accompanied by some justification, typically either, "I can't concentrate" or "I can't hear." In five

cases subjects reported either difficulty without an explicit request to lower the music. In an additional five cases the subject began by asking where the music was coming from, or more specifically, whether it was coming from the confederate. One subject set out in a more inventive direction by asking whether the confederate had ear-plugs. This was a particularly interesting first move in that it didn't at all imply that she shouldn't listen to the music, and if she replied that she did have ear-plugs, it would have been very easy for the subject to ask her to use them. If the confederate had been able to use ear-plugs, a compromise would have been reached. This subject's initial question would have developed the grounds for such a compromise in advance.

In two cases subjects' comments approached a moral reproach. One subject said, "I thought he said there was he wanted quiet" (sic). This response of a subject in the authority condition warrants further comment. The subject seems to begin by reporting, "I thought he said there was supposed to be quiet," a dilute second-hand reproach, but one which includes a statement of an objective standard. In mid-sentence the expression is changed to, "I thought he said he wanted quiet." The switch from the experimenter's pointing out that there should be quiet to his wanting quiet exactly undercuts the objective nature of his initial

remark. In the subject's recounting the experimenter's articulation of the requirements of the task is converted into a statement of his psychological state, his wanting quiet. If there is supposed to be quiet, then the confederate ought to be quiet as an appropriate response to the social setting; if it is merely that the experimenter wanted quiet, then turning the tape off would be a matter of humoring the experimenter. This subject, at least, had demonstrable difficulty in using the objective, moral mode of talk we supplied her in the initial instructions.

Another subject said, "You'll have to turn that off." The "You have to . . .," "You should . . .," or "You ought to . . ." form of talk is ambiguous. Such phrases may be properly used to point to an instrumental, "You have to use a hammer to drive that nail," aesthetic, "You have to find a better bridge passage between the first and second theme," or moral, "You have to respect the lives of others," requirement. The moral and aesthetic forms are distinguishable from the instrumental form by the absence of an explicit or implicit goal (to drive the nail). Our subject's comment could be made sensible as an instrumental form if, and only if, it can be shown that it was an attempt to assist the <u>confederate</u> in the pursuit of <u>her</u> goal. The subject's comment in this case seems directed not towards helping the confederate pursue her

goal, but rather at controlling her behavior so that the subject can work at her task at hand. If the comment is not instrumental, it must be aesthetic or moral. We attempt no general resolution of the problem of differentiating moral from aesthetic claims (a troublesome analytic problem); for the instance at hand we feel secure in claiming that the subject was more interested that the situation become one in which minimal consideration was displayed, rather than one in which some object of great beauty was produced. We hold, then, that the subject pointed toward some rule of behavior, turning off the radio, and asserted that the subject ought to do it, and thus made a moral reproach.

In summary, three-fourths of the subjects used the form of a request or favor to influence the confederate to lower the music. A favor is a curious form of social behavior. A favor is something one does for another for no other reason than to advance that other's interests. One may be loosely be said to do another a favor in the expectation of some quid pro quo, but to the degree that one expects such a return the action is not a favor, but an exchange. Similarly, one may do as a favor that which one ought to have done in the first place, but this too fails to be a favor. In its pure form asking for a favor carries no moral implication; of course, what is formally a request

for a favor may conceal a quite different attempt to influence another. Superiors, for example, often "ask" subordinates to take care of some matter, but resting behind the form of a favor is the expression of authority. Our subjects used the form of a favor, but it seems clear that they were not asking the confederate, a stranger, to do something for them for no reason; they, rather, were suggesting that the confederate do something she ought to have done in the first place, turn down the music. By making the first approach in the form of a favor, however, they had a line of retreat prepared for themselves; when the confederate refused it was possible to treat the initial request as an asking for a favor in pure form. Since the obligation to turn the music down which made the asking for a favor reasonable in the first place was left implicit, it could easily be ignored for the remainder of the testing session.

Favors have another property of interest to an analysis of moral reproach. Although one does not do a favor to advance one's own goal, one does them in order to advance the interests of another. Asking for a favor is sensible only if it is clear that the action requested advances one's own interests. It would be strange to ask a favor for a third party unless the person making the request could slow some special relationship to that third party; just as we argued above that the making of a moral

reproach requires "standing" so too does the asking for a favor. We point this out to suggest that if asking for a favor is the typical way that people point out to others their moral obligations, it is one unsuited to third party intervention. In everyday life asking for a favor as a way of calling another to his duty may be quite effective as a substitute for a moral reproach; its deficiencies, however, are twofold: 1) it cannot be used easily in third party intervention, and 2) it leaves ambiguous for the person making the request, for the person honoring or refusing it, and for any audience whether the action requested was an objective obligation or a matter of the target's discretion.

The second most common course of action as a first attempt to get the confederate to lower the music, used by one-third of the subjects, was simply to report that the music was bothersome. Such a comment is related to a reproach, but it is not yet one. That something someone does is bothering another does not imply that the actor should stop doing it; merely reporting one's psychological state does not constitute a claim on another's conduct. Such an attempt may be seen in relation to a moral reproach by considering it as an enthymeme in which the major premise and the conclusion are left implicit, i.e. the full content of such a reproach would be: "You ought not interfere with

my concentration." "What you are doing interferes with my concentration." "Therefore, you ought not do what you are doing." Such attempts to influence others are, as with favors, probably successful in everyday life, but they rely on others' perceiving and accepting the major premise, agreeing on the application to the particular case, and drawing the proper conclusion. They do not in themselves articulate the obligations of others. That such a form is used, however, illustrates a point that Mills (op. cit.) and Louch ( ) raise, that the expression of need in everyday discourse is not a simple matter of reporting some empirical content, but rather is a typical form of influence over others. Such comments have both empirical content and are "performative utterances" (cf. Austin, 1970).

Second Stage

If the subject made a first complaint, the confederate replied, "It's not too loud." This rejoinder was an implicit denial of the initial request, but one which offers an explanation of sorts for the denial. We might have instructed the confederate to say flatly, "NO." Our reply denied the request, but it acknowledged that the loudness of the music was relevant; it allowed for further discourse by continuing the impression that the confederate was at least sane, and in some measure reasonable. The

maintenance of this impression seemed to us a precondition of continued interaction.

Table 9

Second Stage Comments of the Subjects to the Confederates

Type of comment	# of instances
O.K./All right	3
I can't hear/concentrate/it's bothering me	16
It's too loud	6
This (hearing test) tape is very low	4
It will distort the findings	1
I have to stop this right now. Do you know where he is?	1
I think that's very nasty, we're taking a test. You're not dealing with an idiot	1
He said there should be quiet in here	1
That's inconsiderate	1*
Turn it off	1

*classified as a moral reproach

Second Stage Comments

Of the 44 subjects making a first attempt, eight pressed no further leaving 36 second comments, one of which was inaudible. Three subjects muttered O.K. or all right at this point more in resignation than agreement.

Sixteen subjects included the report that she was being bothered by the music, couldn't hear, or couldn't concentrate. Six disputed the confederate's claim, and insisted that it was too loud; four subjects in the hearing test condition replied that the tape they were listening to was very low. One claimed that the music would distort the findings. All of these cases are developments of the facts of the matter, but not direct reproaches.

One subject articulated a moral imperative, but one which descended upon herself; she said, "I have to stop this right now. Do you know where he is?" She then left to find the experimenter.

Another subject reported, "He said there should be quiet in here." This subject, in contrast to the one mentioned above, could use the actual language of the experimenter. Her comment is almost a reproach; however, it is second hand, encapsulated in the quotation. It articulates the behavioral standard, but stops short of claiming that the subject ought to follow it.

In one case a subject offered another comment very close to a reproach: "I think that's very nasty, we're taking a test. You're not dealing with an idiot." "That's very nasty" would constitute a full moral reproach. The insertion of the "I think," as discussed in the introduction, is a way of undercutting the moral claim.

One subject did make a moral reproach; she simply said, "That's inconsiderate!" Thus, she labeled the action as something undesirable, and pointed to the exact standard by which it failed. Her characterization was unqualified and direct; she was in the authority condition.

The subject who at Stage One had made a moral reproach at this point followed it up with, "Turn it off!" The failure of the moral claim led this subject to issue a command or order, interposing herself as a representative of the moral order. The subject here has moved from instructing the subject about the objective requirements to issuing a command; she has "taken it upon herself" to straighten out the confederate.

Stage Three

Subjects who persisted this far next heard the confederate reply, "I just bought this tape, I'd like to hear it." This rejoinder has nothing to do, of course, with the propriety of playing the tape, it merely "motivates" the behavior; it was intended to explain her behavior without justifying it.

Table 10

Third Stage Exchanges Between Subject and Confederate

Type of comment	# of instances[a]
I can't hear/concentrate	12
Please/would you mind/could you/would you turn it off	6
I really object to it	1
O.K. Well wait a minute I'm going to get	1
Look, I'll do it after you	1
Oh come on, this is a scientific thing, turn it off	1
Tapes must be new to you it's like a toy	1*
Yeah, but you have to have it off. O.K.?	1*
I said, turn it off	1

[a]There were 23 analyzable cases, however, some subjects used more than one of the above forms, hence 25 comments are listed above.

*classified as a moral reproach

Stage Three Comments

Twenty-three analyzable cases remained at this stage. As Table 10 indicates, 18 of these subjects continued either to assert that the music was distracting, or asked that it be lowered. The popularity of these expressions this late in the exchange suggests a perseveration on a strategy that clearly was not working. One additional

subject reported that she really objected to it, reporting on her reaction, not the objective requirements.

Two subjects apparently gave up on the confederate, and prepared to leave to find the experimenter, but they did so without making a moral reproach. One said, "O.K., well wait a minute, I'm going to get. . . ." The other offered, "Look, I'll do it after you." They recognized that it was absurd for them to continue, but did not claim that the confederate should stop.

The "Oh come on, this is a scientific thing, turn it off" offered by one subject is again an enthymeme with the major premise unstated, "You shouldn't screw up scientific experiments." We do not yet call it a reproach.

One subject made a clear moral reproach, "Yeah, but you have to turn it off, O.K.?," although this O.K. tacked on the end undercuts it to some degree. She, as did the subject above, articulated a rule and stated that the subject had to follow it.

One case meets one of our criteria for a moral reproach, but we are uneasy about so classifying it. She said, "Tapes must be new to you, it's like a toy." This comment places the behavior of the confederate's action in the category of a child's, lowering it in the local scheme of social types. But the comment is diffuse, off the mark, it does not articulate the proper behavior; it seems

more an insult than a reproach. The problematic relation between derogatory comments about another's self and a moral reproach is made evident by this subject's comment. For purposes at hand we include it in the category of a reproach following our prior determination. We leave for future analysis the general question of the relation between a reproach and an insult.

The subject who first made a reproach, and then issued a command, here repeated the command, but prefaced it with "I said." Rather than repeat the command, she treated the situation as one in which the subject needed reminding of what she had already said.

Stage Four

The last rejoinder we offered persistent subjects was, "What difference does it make, I got my $4." This response was intended to "lay the confederate's cards on the table," to establish clearly her motives and her relationship to the experiment. It completed the picture of her, till now implicit, as a person simply interested in the $4 without concern for the experiment or the subject. Garfinkel (1956) proposed that social degradation is performed on the basis not of an actor's behavior, but rather on the ground, reasons or motives for that behavior; we expected that this reply would clarify why the confederate was doing what she was doing, and hence stimulate reproach.

Table 11

Fourth Stage Exchanges Between Subjects and Confederates

Type of comment	# of instances[a]
Forget it/I know but/Shit	4
Would/could/please lower it	4
I can't concentrate/hear	1
Yeah, well I'm supposed to hear it properly	1
Well look I'll do it after you	1
You do it your way, and I'll do it my way	1
He said there was silence in the room (sic)	1
What do you care what difference it makes, it's too fucken loud	1*
I'm not here for the $4	3*
Well I'm sorry, I can't hear. You know you may have come here for the $4, but that's not the right way to go about it	1*
Courtesy. (what?) A little courtesy	1*
Well you're being selfish about it	1*
Listen, turn off the radio. I mean unless there's been . . . you know, it's not fair. It's not fair. Turn off the radio it's not fair. O.K.	1*
Yes but you ought to do something in return. I don't understand why you're doing this. Are you psychotic? I think you're being silly	1*
I said, turn it off	1*

[a]There were 20 analyzable cases, some subjects used more than one type of comment.

*classified as a moral reproach.

Stage Four Comments

Twenty analyzable cases are available at this stage. These responses are more diverse than were comments at earlier stages; they are less easily summarized. As Table 11 shows, four subjects simply gave up, four persisted in asking the confederate to stop, and one reported that she could not concentrate. Another subject articulated a moral obligation which applied to her, "Yeah, well I'm supposed to hear it properly."

The two subjects who had proposed that, since they couldn't do the test with the music, they would take it alone, continued with that strategy and left to find the experimenter.

Another subject in the authority condition attempted to echo the experimenter's instructions, but she too made an interesting transformation in mid-sentence. She started to say, "He said there was supposed to be silence in the room," but her actual sentence was, "He said there was silence in the room." In mid-sentence she dropped the "supposed to be," the operative phrase from a moral point of view. Of the three subjects, then, who attempted to repeat the authority's instructions two could not actually carry it out, and created a jumbled phrase instead.

The next comment on Table 11 is counted as a reproach because of the degradation involved in the use of

the "fucken." Four subjects demeaned the confederate's motives with some variant of, "Well I'm not here for the $4." We hold that the distancing between the subjects' "high" motives and the confederate's "baser" motives constitutes a degradation of the confederate and a moral reproach.

The next two comments, "Courtesy" to which the confederate replied, "What?" and the subject repeated, "A little courtesy," and "Well you're being selfish about it," are straightforward instances of reproach.

The repetition of "It's not fair" classifies the next case as a clear reproach. The next case illustrates how easily a moral characterization of action can slip into a pseudo-scientific classification. The subject begins with, "Yes but you ought to do something in return," a clearly moral statement. The subject then slips into, "Are you psychotic?" and then returns to, "I think you're being silly." Szasz (1963) has made the general point that psychiatric classifications are disguised moral characterizations; this subject illustrates how one passes between the two ways of talking.

The subject who first offered a reproach and then a command continues to remind the subject of her command, and she then left to find the experimenter.

Moral Reproach and Age

Of the 12 people who made a moral reproach two were younger than 22; nine were between 22 and 40, and one was older than 40. Expressed in terms of percentages, 8.6% of those under 22 made a reproach, 17.3% of those between 22 and 40, and 16.6% of those over 40 did so. The direction of these results are consistent with the age effects we reported earlier, but the differences are too slight to be reliable.

Summary of Interactions

Inspection of the above tables reveals that in the first three stages comments were largely confined to asking the confederate to stop, and claims that the music was bothersome. A very few subjects, principally in the authority condition, made reproaches in these early stages. Not until the Fourth Stage, when the confederate's motives were made clear, did larger numbers of subjects actually make a reproach.

In all 13 instances of a moral reproach were constructed by our subjects. (One subject made two, thus 12 subjects made a reproach.) Moral reproach was a rare event, the outcome of the experiment for only 14.4% of the subjects. These 12 subjects who made a reproach were evenly distributed among the baseline, authority and hearing test

conditions. The differences among the conditions we created affected whether or not people began influence attempts against the confederate, but not whether these attempts resulted in a reproach. The reason for this seems clear. As the interaction progressed, subjects were responding not only to the relation between the confederate's behavior and the testing context, but also to the confederate's replies to their attempts to have the music lowered. By the last exchange where nine of the 13 reproaches occurred, the subjects' attention had shifted from the confederate's behavior to the reasons she offered for it, and these reasons were held constant across conditions. Of course in the long run, anything which affects the first step in an exchange, whether it is begun at all, will affect the outcome. In particular, since motives do not typically come into play until they are called into question, some circumstance which affects whether they will be called into question will affect the rate of reproach (cf. Peters, op. cit., to this point).

Reporting the Confederate and Moral Reproach

Berger and Luckmann's social construction perspective (op. cit.) holds that those who make a moral reproach would be more likely to act further on that moral perception than would those who did not verbalize their moral censure.

This position holds that talk externalizes, makes real, objective, and socially shared, perceptions and cognitions which, when unexpressed, have a less firm, less real quality. If this is so, then subjects in our experiment who made a reproach ought to have been more likely either to leave to find the experimenter, or to turn the confederate in at the end of the experiment than were subjects who did not make a reproach. The appropriate comparison is presented in Table 12.

Table 12[a,b]

Comparison of subjects who made a reproach with those who did not in terms of their reporting the confederate to the experimenter. Figures in table are numbers of subjects.

	Made no reproach	Made a reproach	Total
Turned the C in	29	10	39
Did not turn C in	40	1	41
Total	69	11	80

[a] $X^2 = 43.2$, corrected for continuity, $p < .001$

[b] Total N = 80, excluding those cases in which the confederate lowered the tape.

As can be seen in Table 12, the action of making a reproach was reliably related to further moral action. This finding admits of two interpretations: 1) the making of a reproach

is causally related to turning the confederate in, or 2) some other aspect of the individuals or their situation accounts for both the making of the reproach and their turning the confederate in. The second position amounts to the assertion that those who both turned the confederate in and made a reproach would have turned her in even if they had not made the reproach. Obviously, our correlational data cannot discriminate between these two interpretations. Our finding is consistent with, not proof of the first position.

Moral Reproach in the Post-Experimental Interview

We have relied throughout this thesis on the notion that moral reproach is inhibited action, but have thus far offered no direct evidence or systematic analysis in support of this position. One source of evidence was presented earlier, that something a common sense actor would expect to occur did not occur; we know that people were bothered by the music, yet many did nothing about it, and others stopped short of a reproach, although they did make some attempt to influence the confederate. But the mere absence of an action we would expect does not satisfy the conditions needed to justify talk of an inhibition. We must show further that people at least thought of making a reproach; after all, if it never occurred to people to

make a reproach, we could hardly claim that they were inhibited about it. We might in that case claim that they were blind to the moral implications of the confederate's actions, but not that they were inhibited about expressing them.

To gather some evidence that subjects were inhibited, we examined the post-experimental interview records for evidence of moral reproach, especially responses to the questions, "What went through your mind when she turned the tape on?" and "What did you think of her when she turned it on?" These data are not without their problems. We cannot be sure that what people said occurred to them really did so at the time, rather than at the time of retelling after the experiment, but it is the best evidence we can gather on the subject. As can be seen in Table 13, 71% of the subjects' records contained reproachful comments.

Table 13

Post-Experimental Interview Instances of Reproach

	Condition				
	Relaxed	Baseline	Authority	Hearing Test	Total
Reproach	14 (70.0%)	16 (72.7%)	16 (76.2%)	13 (65.0%)	59 (71.8%)
No evidence of reproach	6 (30.0%)	6 (27.3%)	5 (23.8%)	7 (35.0%)	24 (29.2%)
Total	20	22	21	20	83

The difference in rate between reproaches delivered in face-to-face interaction and those reported in the post-experimental interview is presented in Table 14.

Table 14[a]

Comparison of rates of reproach during the experiment with rates of such content in the post-experimental interview.

	During		
	No Reproach	Reproach	Total
Post-experimental reproach	48	11	59 (71.8%)
Post-experimental no reproach	23	1[b]	24 (28.2%)
Total	71 (85.6%)	12 (14.4%)	83

[a] $X^2 = 43.2$, corrected for continuity, $p < .0005$

[b] In the post-experimental interview this subject reported that the confederate was emotionally disturbed, had psychological problems. She demonstrates again the sloppiness in distinction between moral categories and popularly accepted psychiatric jargon.

The difference between 14.4% of the subjects who actually made a reproach during the experiment, and the 71.8% who reported thinking in such terms during the experiment is quite striking. It is also interesting to note that there was no variation by condition in the post-experimental rate of reproach. That our conditions did not

produce difference in the frequency with which subjects thought of the confederate in moral terms, while they did produce differences in the rates at which people tried to have the music lowered is of interest. It would seem that our manipulation of the objectivity of the offense, of the demonstrability of its inappropriateness affects not the fleeting, subjective impressions which subjects formed of the confederate, but rather their action with respect to that confederate. If our findings are more generally true, attitudes, impressions and other subjective tugs are sensitive to the moral character of action, the expression of that moral content is a much more restricted phenomenon.

Conclusion

What might be learned from the attempt to come to terms with moral reproach empirically? The great difficulty we encountered in producing such expressions reinforces our idea that people are inhibited about making such comments. Even our rather extreme behavior on the subway was almost totally unsuccessful at stimulating forceful moral reproach. Our interviews with subjects after the experiment confirms our impression that moral characterization of offensive others as an element of phenomenology is a relatively common experience, but that such characterizations rarely enter face-to-face interaction.

Both our experience on the subway and the results of our experiment underline the importance of "objectivity" in terms of action against another who is doing something wrong. The fact that riders on the subway would check with the victim allowing the "thief" time to flee before becoming involved illustrates how important it is for people to know themselves to be right before confronting another in a moral matter. Our experimental results were consistent with this view, in that subjects in the baseline, authority and especially hearing test condition were more willing to make some attempt to confront the confederate's misbehavior.

The instance of moral outrage we witnessed in the subway with its emotional charge raises further questions. Is it typical that those who do make a moral reproach do so in such an emotional way? Do they typically appear to be crazy? Does this emotional tone detract from the effect that such statements might have in terms of the establishment of moral norms; does this emotional quality lead others to discount the significance of a moral reproach? If a moral reproach is typically delivered in such an intense way, it would seem to be easy to dismiss those who make them as hysterics, or "nervous nellies."

Our empirical research did not touch on the role of moral reproach in the emergence of group standards; a problem worthy of empirical investigation. It also did not examine gossip, perhaps the most common occasion for the expression of moral criticism. Ethnographic study of gossip will probably repay the effort it will require.

Just as the role of moral reproach and gossip in the life history of groups has yet to be investigated, so have the role of these phenomena in the biographies of individuals. Moral reproach is such a rare event, at least with adults, that people probably can report on instances of their telling another off, or their being told off by someone else. We would like to know what provoked them to such an act, how were they related to the

person they told off, and what effect did their censure have on the relationship.

The last question we would raise deals with the cultural specificity of the phenomenon we have studied. Robert Wolff had written, "The genius of American politics is its ability to treat even matters of principle as though they were conflicts of interest. (It has been written that the genius of French politics is its ability to treat even conflicts of interest as matters of principle.)" (1965, 21) The unwillingness to reproach others may be seen as an extension, sometimes to an absurd degree, of this American ideal of tolerance for others. Tolerance for the wrong-doing of others may be a reflection of American pluralism. As an empirical matter would we find such inhibitions in cultures of communities less accustomed to compromising heterogeneous values?

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