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The art of scientific morality: A study of John Dewey's moral method

Teehan, John Patrick, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1992

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THE ART OF SCIENTIFIC MORALITY:
A STUDY OF JOHN DEWEY'S MORAL METHOD

by

JOHN TEEHAN

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
Philosophy in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City
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1992

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JOHN TEEHAN

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

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ABSTRACT

THE ART OF SCIENTIFIC MORALITY: A STUDY OF JOHN DEWEY'S MORAL METHOD

by

John Teehan

Adviser: Professor Bernard Baumrin

A great deal of the attention paid to John Dewey's moral philosophy tends to focus on his critiques of more traditional, foundationalist, moralities; and with good reason since this is an important part of Dewey's life work. However, he also had a constructive moral theory which deserves greater attention. Dewey himself is partially to blame for this somewhat one-sided treatment, for he never laid out and defended his constructive moral method in an explicit and concise manner (despite having written a book length work dedicated to ethics). The focus of this project is to undo this situation. Pulling from his larger philosophical position of naturalism, this work hopes to show that Dewey's moral method is a consistent development out of this more general philosophical world view, and cannot be appreciated or defended apart from this position. The work begins with a general discussion of Dewey's philosophical mission, as he saw it, and the introduction of naturalism. Chapters two through four apply this naturalism to metaphysics, epistemology

and social philosophy. The major notion to come out of these chapters is that of 'transactionalism'; this claims, in particular, that the concepts 'individual' and 'social' are abstractions--useful for some projects, but not ultimate distinctions. This Deweyan notion did not receive full treatment until late in his life, and yet it is claimed in this work that this is the central notion supporting Dewey's philosophy. In the opinion of the author this notion has been relatively neglected in the literature; this work will attempt to develop this notion and place it as a necessary component of Dewey's constructive moral method.

In chapter five the moral method of Dewey is laid out and explained in detail. As developed by Dewey this method seems to have a major flaw in that it looks to be incapable of placing any constraints on moral choice, and is open to being used to justify any evil action as long as it meets the requirements of intelligent reflection. At this point the notion of transaction is used to provide such a constraint on moral choice. Even though Dewey did not make use of the concept in this way it is the opinion of the author that the broader philosophical approach taken in this work warrants such usage. This addition completes the method and makes it a non-foundational alternative to the extreme positions of moral foundationalism and moral anarchy. It is believed that the approach taken in this work throws a fresh light on not only Dewey's moral philosophy, but on his general philosophy. One result of this fresh look is to see the development of the moral self as the central task of Dewey's moral method (in contrast to the more typical emphasis placed on his social philosophy).

To My Wife, Patricia

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Given the transactional perspective emphasized in this work, acknowledging the contributions of those in my intellectual environment is especially appropriate. However, given the complex of factors that nurture any academic work, this is particularly difficult to do, adequately. Still, I feel it fitting to formally express my appreciation for the contributions of several prominent members of that environment. My supervisory committee, through each step of this project, provided astute guidance in a fashion that challenged me to see more deeply into my work. They deserve credit for many of the virtues of this work, while I reserve credit for any flaws that remain. So my sincere thanks go out to Prof. Charles Landesman and Prof. William James Earle. In addition to his advice on the writing of this work, I would like to thank Prof. Bernard Baumrin for his role as dissertation supervisor and for his assistance with the various challenges faced in completing a dissertation. I would also like to thank Prof. Steven Cahn for his comments on an early draft of this project, and for the contribution he made to my appreciation of Dewey. In a broader, though no less significant, sense I owe thanks to Prof. Stanley Nevins, whose contagious enthusiasm for the subject started me on the professional path which has lead to this project; and to my wife, Patricia, whose support and encouragement provided, as always, an environment conducive to growth.

All naturalism in morality, that is all **healthy** morality, is dominated by an instinct of life....**Anti-natural** morality, that is virtually every morality that has hitherto been taught, revered and preached, turns on the contrary precisely **against** the instincts of life...

Nietzsche

Twilight of the Idols

PREFACE

John Dewey was recognized by many as the most influential American philosopher during the first half of the twentieth century, and yet today it is possible to complete a graduate education at a reputable school and not once be offered a course on Dewey. This is a testimony to how quickly and how extensively Dewey fell from philosophical favor. However, in the past few years there has been a flurry of activity of work on Dewey, and inspired by Dewey. Charting and explaining this cycle of popularity might make for interesting reading, and it is a project that Dewey, himself, would likely be good at. However, it is not the purpose of this project to engage in an analysis of this resurgence of interest in Dewey, but rather to attempt to further it.

It is Dewey's ability to cut through and provide alternatives to traditional philosophical problems which seems to hold the most appeal to philosophers engaged in the contemporary resurgence; this is an important and powerful aspect of Dewey's philosophy, and it cannot be ignored. There is another side of his philosophy, however, which is constructive. I believe that this part of his philosophy has not yet received the attention it deserves. When the constructive aspect is considered it is usually his social philosophy or philosophy of education;

these are central components of Dewey's philosophy and will be treated in this work, but it is my opinion that it is his moral philosophy which is the core of all of Dewey's work. This has received comparatively little attention. The focus of this project, therefore, will be the constructive side of Dewey's moral philosophy. It is not my intention to defend Dewey against his critics for I believe that a great deal of the literature is occupied with this; though of course I will be attempting to present a defensible picture of Dewey, and will have to anticipate some criticisms to do so. Nor will I be especially concerned with having Dewey debate contemporary moral philosophies, although I will be suggesting some avenues for such a project. Nor will I be attempting to provide an in-depth discussion of all the aspects and nuances of Dewey's moral philosophy; I believe that has been accomplished admirably by James Gouinlock in his John Dewey's Philosophy of Value.

Now that I have explained what I will not be centrally concerned with allow me to indicate what will be my concern. Dewey wrote a tremendous amount on moral issues, both theoretical and practical, spanning almost seventy years; during which time his thought developed and became more refined. The result of this has been that when dealing with Dewey's philosophy writers have taken one of two approaches: either they have focused on one issue in his system and tried to defend it against critics, or they have attempted to clarify and explicate his larger philosophical theory. Lost in between these approaches is the fact that Dewey had a very specific method for resolving moral

dilemmas. The goal of this project will be to set out in a concise and defensible manner John Dewey's moral method.

It is also my contention that once this method is set out it will appear to have a loophole which needs to be closed before it can stand as a complete method. I believe that by building on aspects of Dewey's general philosophy and taking some of his thoughts further than he himself had an opportunity to, it is possible to complete his method. This will be accomplished by developing the notion of 'transactions'. This concept has not, in my opinion, received sufficient treatment in the literature, despite being the central tool in Dewey's constructive philosophy.

Since Dewey did write such a tremendous amount on moral matters, and since his moral philosophy is so intertwined with his general philosophy it is not possible to merely state his moral method, but rather it must be pulled out of its larger philosophical context; this will provide the structure to this project. In chapter one we will discuss Dewey's conception of philosophy; for it is only by understanding Dewey's beliefs on where philosophy came from that we will be able to fully appreciate where Dewey felt he had to take it. In brief, he believes philosophy plays a reconstructive role in a society's attempts to maintain their values in the face of a changing conception of the universe. The important concept developed in this chapter is that of 'naturalism', which I will argue is the guiding spirit of Dewey's philosophy.

In the second chapter we will consider Dewey's theory

of a naturalistic metaphysics. This concept is crucial for it allows Dewey to argue for the reality, and the naturalness, of our moral experiences. With this done we will move on to chapter three's discussion of his attempts to naturalize intelligence. This view supports Dewey's belief that inquiry into problems has a transformative effect in the world. It also argues for the centrality of the experimental/scientific approach to ethics. These three chapters will set up the broad guidelines which will structure our discussion of the moral method. Before moving on to the moral method it will be necessary to give some time to the arena of moral conflict--the social environment. Chapter four will discuss the relation between individuals and society and explain how moral problems arise out of a social environment and that moral decisions feed back into that environment. In this chapter I will also introduce the very important notion of 'transaction'.

With all of this done, we will proceed to the moral method itself, in chapter five. In this chapter I will lay out, step by step, Dewey's method for making moral decisions in such a way that will be more concise, and hopefully clearer, than Dewey ever did. I will also argue that the central issue in Dewey's moral theory is that of self-reconstruction, or in more familiar terms, self-development. Considerations of Dewey's ethics have tended to highlight the social aspects, but while the social aspect is essential, it is the personal side which plays the most significant role. This is not the traditional view on Dewey's ethics, but I hope to be able to defend my position.

In this chapter we will also note the loophole in the method and suggest a way to fix it.

In the final chapter we will try to develop the notion of a 'transactional ethics' which I believe avoids the loophole noted in chapter five, and which I believe best characterizes Dewey's completed method. To do this we will have to consider Dewey's philosophy of education, and of democracy. And finally, I will compare and contrast Dewey with the theories of emotivism and utilitarianism; two theories he is most frequently grouped with, but which he differs from in very significant ways. It will not be the intention of this discussion to make a comprehensive analysis, but rather just enough to distinguish Dewey from these theories, and to emphasize two further aspects of his theory (i.e. desire and consequences).

This project may not have satisfactory breadth, in some sense, and may not always have the depth that even I would like, but I believe that despite whatever the costs of these lackings, this work will make a useful contribution to Deweyan studies. It will add a new look at Dewey's moral philosophy; it will present that philosophy in a concise way so that it might take its place among the methods of applied ethics; and it will hopefully augment Dewey's moral philosophy by arguing for the role of personal integrity in his theory and by developing the notion of 'transaction', and showing its relevance to moral philosophy. If it succeeds in stimulating discussion of Dewey's moral philosophy in any of these ways, I will consider it a success.

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CHAPTER ONE
EVOLUTION AND MORALITY

"There are periods in history when a whole community or group in a community finds itself in the presence of new issues which its old customs do not adequately meet. The habits and beliefs which were formed in the past do not fit into the opportunities and requirements of contemporary life ... the present is pre-eminently a period of this sort." (E:L7,p.165)¹

Dewey wrote this statement in response to the tremendous changes that were transforming the world following the advent of the Industrial Age. At this time World War One had just ended, bringing on the scene a radical reshaping of the face of Europe along with a major restructuring of the balance of power. Also the Great Depression was in full swing. The political, economic, and cultural patterns familiar to the world were irrevocably changing. Dewey saw this change as a great challenge to moral philosophy. Moral theorizing, he asserts, is not needed in periods of stability, during which there is little or no questioning of the validity of established beliefs. Rather, it is called for in times of conflict; periods in which the old notions of 'right' and 'good' no longer satisfy the conditions of the times; periods in which new conditions promise new goods which conflict with established values. (E:L7, p.164)

At that time, Dewey believed himself to be living in such a

period. This is relevant for it is not too controversial to claim that we too find ourselves living in such a period of monumental change. World War Two and the ensuing Cold War and arms race; the ostensible end of the Cold War and arms race; the advent of the Computer Age; the shrinking of the globe as a result of advances in communication and transportation; the restructuring of daily life due to technological achievements; the threats to daily life due to technological achievements, have all contributed to the de-stabilizing of political, economic, and cultural patterns to a degree at least as great as that experienced by Dewey and his contemporaries. We see for ourselves the great moral conflicts these changes have wrought. Moral philosophy is once again being challenged to make some sense of it all. Actually, it may be more correct to say that we are still being challenged, for it is my opinion that we have not adequately met this challenge since it was first articulated by John Dewey, almost sixty years ago.

It is important to understand the theoretical beliefs which support the view stated by Dewey in the opening quotation. He says that the periods in mention are marked by the "presence of new issues that old customs do not meet" and that established beliefs do not "fit" the conditions of the day. We see here evidence of Dewey's belief in the connection between moral values and the actual conditions of life, as it is presently being lived, along with an implicit rejection of, what we shall here label, 'foundational moralities'. A foundational morality is a moral theory which accepts any one of the following notions:

a set of moral values which are held as unquestionable; a rule or set of rules for determining moral judgments based on a priori reasoning; a set goal or value which is determined antecedently to a morally problematic situation and which is used to arbitrate such situations.

Given this definition, Dewey's rejection of this class of theories is a radical one, for he believes that despite the great diversities of the various schools of moral philosophy they all share in common one element: they "have agreed in the assumption that there is a single, fixed and final good." (RP:M12,p.172) In effect, Dewey sees all moral theories as foundational, and therefore implicitly rejects all moral theories, as theory. It is important to keep in mind that Dewey is not anarchistically throwing out the accumulated wisdom of two thousand years. On the contrary, Dewey is deeply indebted to, and respectful of that tradition. What Dewey is rejecting in a wholesale manner is the method of generating moral theories, present, he claims, in all moral theories thus far. It is therefore the purpose of this project to focus on Dewey's moral philosophy as it relates to the development of a method for resolving moral problems. The alternative method that Dewey is going to propose will, not surprisingly, be a non-foundational one. As we may already surmise, it will be a method which responds to the existent needs and problems created by a historical situation, be it on a personal or social level. In this chapter we will set out the line of thinking on which Dewey bases his rejection of foundational moralities and set up the

framework of ideas which lead him to develop his own particular views on how to solve moral problems. It will be the task of the following chapters to fill in the details of his position and to assess its strengths and weaknesses.

In the very act of placing morality in the context of concrete, existential situations Dewey is beginning to set himself apart from the tradition of foundational morality. As a historical claim it would not be likely to bother too many people. We readily accept that the mores of primitive peoples developed as means for dealing with the problems and needs that confronted them. Problems begin to arise, however, when the claim is made that a situational context is necessary in order to understand and investigate present moral beliefs, and even philosophical moral theories. A situational/contextual, and hence contingent, assessment of morality goes directly to the heart of foundationalism and its emphasis on fixed moral conceptions.²

How might a foundationalist respond? There seems to be two options: one, he may accept the situational approach when applied to more primitive cultures but deny its applicability to modern man, or two, he may reject this approach, altogether. Dewey considers both options to be invalid, and it is important to understand his reasoning on this point. If we assume that this approach shows that a certain moral belief/practice responds appropriately to a given need, we may judge that belief to be rational. For in such a case we can determine an appropriate relation between means and ends (by appropriate relation is

meant that the means are causally responsive to the ends). Therefore, if we allow that the situational approach is appropriate to the moralities of primitive cultures but deny it to our own, we are, in effect, granting rationality to them and denying it of ourselves. To avoid this conclusion we must either reject the approach, *in toto*, or accept it, *in toto*. If we reject the situational/contextual approach as having no value in understanding morality we are then in the position of asserting that knowledge of the context and situation in which moral problems develop can give us no aid in developing moral solutions.

(EMAM:M2,p.24)³ Such a position, Dewey believes, is untenable, and it can only be saved by denying that it is the business of morality to solve moral problems--which seems even less tenable. Before proceeding, it may be prudent to anticipate an objection to this argument, although addressing it will be postponed to a later chapter. The objection centers around the notions of 'reason' and 'rationality'. It may be argued that the purpose of philosophical speculation on morality is to enable us to rise above the contingencies of situations and attain a firm basis from which to address moral issues (hence the label *foundational*). It may be true that pre-philosophical societies developed their moral practices in response to such contingent factors, but in our complex world, with our more sophisticated understanding of morality, such an approach would open the door to a sort of moral relativism that would lead, in effect, to moral anarchy. I believe this to be a valid point, deserving of a response, but it is too early in our discussion to address

it adequately. Allow me to briefly respond by admitting that there is an element of relativism in Dewey's completed moral method, but, I contend, it does not leave us vulnerable to moral anarchy or chaos.

This notion that moral beliefs and practices arise in response to concrete existential situations is not only the theoretical basis for Dewey's views on morality, it is the guiding notion in his understanding of philosophy, itself. Dewey sees philosophy, not as an attempt to find absolute Truth or to discover ultimate Reality, but rather as a cultural phenomenon. And as with other cultural phenomena, such as art and religion, it arises out of specifiable historical conditions, and with a particular task to perform. Dewey writes that there were two stages in humanity's development which lead to the rise of philosophy. In the first stage, which is the basis of any shared culture, frequent and recurrent experiences important to the life of a group are consolidated into a sacred tradition. This attains the status of a norm by which individual experiences are to be measured. At the same time there also develops a body of empirical knowledge concerning day to day activities. This 'profane' knowledge is open to revision and is separate from the sacred tradition. For the most part these two systems of beliefs coexist peaceably, and if there is any overlap the empirical is subordinated to the tradition. (RP:M12,pp.83-84)⁴

In the next stage a point is reached at which the empirical body of knowledge grows to such an extent that it becomes incompatible with major portions of the sacred traditions. This

is where philosophy comes in. Dewey writes

The work of philosophy [is] the old and ever new undertaking of adjusting that body of traditions which constitute the actual mind of man to scientific tendencies and political aspirations which are novel and incompatible with received authorities. (PC:L3,p.3)

The task of philosophy is that of 'reconstruction'. This is a very important concept in Dewey's philosophy and we must be clear on it if we are to gain an accurate understanding of what he is trying to do. Reconstruction, as the quotation indicates, is the attempt to reconcile established beliefs with novel and conflicting developments. It is not a rejection of the old in favor of the new, nor is it reinterpreting the new in older conceptions. It is a reworking of established traditions in light of new conditions. Dewey goes on to say

the life of all thought is to effect a junction at some point of the old and the new, of deep sunk customs and unconscious dispositions that are brought to the light of attention by some conflict with the newly emerging directions of activity. (PC:L3,p.6)

The actual mechanics of reconstruction will, it is hoped, become clearer as we proceed. One thing that should be clear by now, however, is that for Dewey, philosophy is not a spectator sport; it is an active involvement in the living of life. It develops out of historical conditions but it also contributes to future developments. This reconstructive function of philosophy works to transform a culture. It conserves part of the past, while infusing it with the new and thereby creates a unique path for future development. It answers to certain needs and at the same time creates the conditions for new needs. It also rejects certain aspects of the past and fails to fulfill certain needs.

In consciously choosing to accept some ends, while rejecting others, philosophy itself is value-laden and value creating. In fact, Dewey goes so far as to say that we must define philosophy from the

standpoint of value, since the changes of philosophy are all inherently bound up with the problems that arise when new emphases and new redistributions in the significance of values takes place. (P:L8,p25)

So, when we look, with Dewey, at the social upheavals confronting us, we see a task for a philosophy that is itself a value generating activity.

A fuller appreciation of this conception of philosophy must also wait until we have taken a broader look at Dewey's own philosophy. At this point it should serve to illustrate that Dewey is engaged in a kind of philosophical activity strikingly different from that carried on by those with more traditional conceptions of what philosophy is about. Richard Bernstein notes that, "Dewey's entire philosophy may be approached as an attempt to elaborate and defend a 'new' concept of philosophy."⁵ I believe that this is a fair appraisal. An appraisal of Dewey's philosophy which I do not believe to be either fair or accurate is proffered by Richard Rorty. Rorty is of the opinion that philosophy is a discipline best left behind, and, particularly concerning moral philosophy, believes that literature will serve just as well. He claims at least partial inspiration from reading Dewey's critiques of metaphysics and epistemology. Now, as critical as these may be, to read into them an attempt to do away with these fields of philosophy, or even worse, an attempt to go beyond philosophy

itself, is to misconceive the reconstructive nature of Dewey's philosophy. Dewey, as we shall presently consider, was attempting to reconstruct metaphysics and epistemology on a naturalistic basis. But reconstruction, as pointed out, is not a denial or a rejection of the past. If Dewey truly believed it better that these branches of philosophy be left behind then I find it hard to understand why he spent so much time and effort trying to construct his own versions of them. Rorty, of course, is well aware of Dewey's efforts in these areas, but sees them as flaws or inconsistencies in Dewey's thinking. He writes, for example, of Dewey's success in helping us overcome some of the biases embedded in our culture as a result of metaphysics and then concludes that Dewey should "not be blamed if he occasionally came down with the disease he was trying to cure."⁶ Besides sounding a bit patronizing, I find this comment lacking in full appreciation of the work Dewey was engaged in and I hope to be able to defend my position against Rorty in greater detail when we turn to Dewey's metaphysics.

Rorty is also clearly cognizant of Dewey's commitment to the future of philosophy, and also clearly rejects that aspect of his philosophy. He writes

Making use of Dewey as an instrument for our present purposes seems to me hindered rather than helped by preserving Dewey's idea that there is something called 'philosophy' which needs to be revised and revitalized by new ideas in the rest of culture.⁷

This seems to be saying that to make best use of Dewey we must reject his notion of philosophy as reconstruction. But as I have indicated Dewey's defense and advocacy of 'philosophy' as

reconstruction' is the very core and purpose of his entire life's work. To "make use" of Dewey without making use of his conception of philosophy is in actuality to abuse Dewey. It is all the more disheartening for this to come from someone like Rorty, who has been quite instrumental in spurring on the recent revival of interest in Dewey's work, and has in many instances produced vital philosophy in a Deweyan vein.

We shall now return to Dewey's historical account of the development of philosophy in order to get a fuller understanding of his rejection of foundationalism. According to Dewey's account philosophy did not originate as the pure intellectual activity which it is sometimes portrayed to be, but rather had a very practical beginning--it had a job to do. Man was faced with a serious dilemma; his most cherished and significant beliefs, which we shall term 'ethico-religious', were being challenged by the growing body of empirical knowledge. There were several sources of this conflict. From within the group itself there was the increase in knowledge gained through the process of actually working with the world in a hit and miss manner. From the outside came the intrusion of foreign versions of 'sacred' traditions, the result of increased interaction between previously isolated cultures. The ethico-religious beliefs of the group could no longer avoid being questioned. The combination of this historical development and the unique level of intellectual freedom and curiosity existing in ancient Greece gave rise to philosophy.

To see philosophy developing in response to a need is

to see it performing a function. If we can discern the stimulating need we may be able to gain some insight into the original nature of philosophy. Dewey sets out his answer in straightforward terms in the opening line of his important work The Quest for Certainty: "Man who lives in a world of hazards is compelled to search for security." (QC:L4,p.3) In the basic need for survival, man is forced to seek security and control in a hostile and threatening world. There existed two general ways to achieve that security. He could, for one, develop practical skills for controlling the environment; a method which lead to the practical arts, and eventually science. However, there were powers and events that confronted early man that went far beyond his ability to comprehend or control; also, action is always an uncertain business, accompanied by the chance for failure. The alternative method of control open to man was, in Dewey's words, to "propitiate the powers which environ him and control his destiny." (QC:L4,p.3) Through prayer, ritual, and sacrifice man sought to appease the awe inspiring forces that surrounded him. This method is the basis for the origin of the ethico-religious tradition. Here lies the root of the distinction which, over time, develops into the dualities of ideal and empirical, theoretical and practical, religious and scientific.

Dewey posits this quest for security, the quest for certainty as the motivating factor in man's intellectual development. Since action was so uncertain, especially in these early

days, it could not be relied upon to address the most important aspects of life; so the sacred tradition was set apart, and above, beliefs derived from activity. As humans evolved they gradually built up more effective activities and were able to gain increasing control over their environment. As already noted, this growth in empirical knowledge, along with the influx of foreign traditions and customs, began to threaten the security of the sacred tradition. "It became", then, "the work of philosophy to justify on rational grounds the spirit, though not the form, of accepted beliefs and traditional customs." (RP: M12,p.90) No longer were these most important of beliefs to be left to mere custom or arbitrary conditions. They were to be stripped of all their mythical and dramatic baggage and the underlying kernel of truth would be revealed and secured on purely rational grounds. This is the originating task and function of philosophy: not to express an objective assessment of the state of the universe, but to justify the sacred beliefs of society; to restore to them the security that empirical knowledge and cultural exchange had taken away.

The fixed, the immutable, the eternal became the intellectual idealization of the basic emotional desire for security. All change meant uncertainty, and uncertainty meant the possibility of evil; therefore, all the highest values had to be secured in a non-empirical reality. To this end the, philosophy of Plato and Aristotle provided the perfect means.⁸ This changing, contingent, uncertain world was not true Being. True Being was perfect, infinite, and hence, fixed. This was

a realm beyond our tainted and fallible senses, but one which was, nonetheless, open in some degree to our intellect. This dualistic world view set into motion all the dualisms that Dewey labored a lifetime to overcome, and which he believed to be the source of so many philosophical errors. Physical activity was involved with this imperfect and insecure empirical world, and so accordingly, was itself imperfect, unsure, and consequently, disvalued. Thought, on the other hand, was capable of grasping the unchanging idea, and therefore, any certainty, anything of true worth, must be attained through the intellect. Hence, the split between theory and practice. Furthermore, since philosophy was the discipline which was concerned with discovering true being--while science was concerned with empirical matters--there arose a breach between these two systems. And perhaps most pertinent to this project, there developed a dualism between the instrumental, which is concerned with means and involved with change, and the intrinsic, which is an end in and of itself, apart from any practical considerations.

If security and worth are to be found only in fixed, unchanging being, then the object of morality must be found in a fixed and final form. This is seen clearly in Plato's discussion of the Good as the ultimate Form, but it is also given articulation in the early section of Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethic. There we find Aristotle arguing, in a powerful deductive argument, that man's highest good is to be found in contemplation of eternal truth.⁹ Since security is best guaranteed in fixed reality, the Greeks found the greatest

security through participation in that fixed reality , and it followed that intellectual intercourse with that realm was their highest good. Aristotle, rationally and logically, justified humanity's age old search for safety in a perilous world. Dewey writes

If one looks at the foundations of the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle as an anthropologist looks at his material, that is, as cultural subject matter, it is clear that these philosophies were systematizations in rational form of the content of Greek religious and artistic beliefs. (QC:L4,p.13)

And furthermore, "without Greek religion, Greek art, Greek civic life, their philosophy would have been impossible." (QC:L4,p.90)

It is important, in order to give a fair hearing to Dewey, to note that his assessment of Plato and Aristotle is not meant to be disparaging, nor is it neglectful of the contributions these two giants made to Western culture. In speaking of their philosophy Dewey writes

Along with the elimination of myths and grosser superstitions, there were set up the ideals of science and a life of reason. Ends which could justify themselves to reason were to take the place of custom as the guide of conduct. These two ideals form a permanent contribution to Western civilization. But with all our gratitude for these enduring gifts, we cannot forget the conditions which attended them. For they brought along with them the idea of a higher realm of fixed reality.... They glorified the invariant at the expense of change.... It bequeathed the notion, which has ruled philosophy ever since the time of the Greeks, that the office of knowledge is to uncover the antecedently real... (QC:L4,pp.13-14)

To charge Plato and Aristotle with a lack of intellectual integrity because they developed their theories from biased motivations can only be done from a non-Deweyan conception of philosophy. Philosophy, as you will recall, is the attempt to

form a reconciliation between the old and the new. Plato and Aristotle inherited a tradition of important ethico-religious beliefs, encased in superstition and irrationality, which were being undermined by the powerful blossoming of man's intellectual capabilities. That they were able to secure that which mattered most in that tradition, while also contributing to the development of this new capability, i.e. reason, is a testimony to the success and greatness of their philosophies.

With that said, we must keep in mind, as Dewey points out, that our gratitude notwithstanding, they have also bequeathed to us a dualistic metaphysics, with its higher realm of value and its mundane level of facts. And even after Greece and Rome had been committed to the pages of history books, this dualistic metaphysics thrived. The Platonic and Aristotlean world views were adapted and embedded into the dogma of the Christian church; and since the Christian Church was the bed-rock of Medieval society, they came to be the world view in the West. Heaven took the place of the realm of Ideas and contemplation of God took the place of contemplation of eternal truth.¹⁰

There is an interesting pattern evident at this point; one that Dewey did not explicitly recognize, but which is in keeping with the historic treatment we have been considering. Philosophy entered the world stage at a period when the sacred tradition came into unavoidable conflict with profane knowledge, sometime around 600 B.C. Then, some two thousand years later, we have another confrontation between sacred tradition--this

time in the form of Christian dogma--and the growing empirical sciences. At this point, as was the case with the ancient conflict, philosophy is called forth to effect a reconciliation. Copernican and Galilean science dispelled the earth from the center of the universe and forced the stars from their fixed, immutable paths; the ancient concentric circles came crashing down. The Aristotlean/Medieval metaphysics could not withstand the blow dealt to it by the new physics. But as we have seen, this metaphysics provided more than a cosmology, it provided security for the most important of values and ideals. The task of philosophy, we can see clearly in hindsight, was to effect a reconciliation that would provide security to our ideals, while accommodating the inexorable growth of science. This task, claims Dewey, became the goal of epistemology. He writes

Since science had made the trouble, the cure ought to be found in an examination of the nature of knowledge, of the conditions that make science possible. If the conditions of the possibility of knowledge can be shown to be of an ideal and rational character, then so it has been thought, the loss of an idealistic cosmology in physics can be readily borne. The physical world can be surrendered to matter and mechanism, since we are assured that matter and mechanism have their foundation in immaterial mind. (QC:L4,p.33)

The questions 'what is reality?', 'what is true being?' were the basis of ancient metaphysics. Modern physics showed that their solutions could not stand--so now the questions change. Let science be the method for investigating the world; but that science is trying to **know** the world. How is such 'knowing' possible? 'How do we come to know what is real?', 'How do we come to know anything at all?' now become the pressing issues. The answers cannot come through empirical knowledge, since that

is exactly what we are trying to justify; any attempt to answer these questions must fall within the domain of the purely rational. We can see here that the perennial distinction between the uncertainty of practice and the security of theory sets the boundaries of the discussion. Science has at last become a very effective tool for dealing with the hazards of the world, but on what basis can we trust the findings of science? Again --how can we have certainty?

Following along with the historic method we have been using, the answer should come as no surprise. For knowledge to be certain it must be grounded in a fixed and antecedent reality. If the objects of knowledge were not antecedent to the act of knowing then, logically, they would be subsequent to the act of knowing. But our activity can only give us probability, not certainty; so to attain certainty, they must be antecedent. So too must they be fixed, for if the objects of knowledge were changing then what constitutes truth at one point might constitute falsity at another and again knowledge would be a matter of probability, not certainty. There must be a correspondence between our knowing and a fixed, antecedent reality in order to attain certainty. That there is such a reality is not questioned; the quest for certainty biases the project from asking that question. Whether Idealistic or Realistic, "the common essence of all these theories in short, is that what is known is antecedent to the mental act of observation and inquiry, and is totally unaffected by these acts." (QC:L4,p.19) Even the skeptic affirms this by his conviction

that true knowledge is impossible, since it is not possible to go beyond our subjective limitations. Go beyond to what? --to the antecedently real.

We can see that, once again, philosophy succeeded in its task of reconstruction. The security of the True and the Good was maintained by placing them in an antecedent reality, safe from the uncertainty and fallibility of human endeavor; and at the same time the physical sciences were freed from the constraints of a metaphysics of fixed perfection. The cost of this achievement, unfortunately, was the continuation of the breach between knowing and doing, the intrinsic and the instrumental, philosophy and science. These dualisms have endured through the permutations of our intellectual history and have had, claims Dewey, damaging consequences for both science and morality. Because of their divorce from ideal moral notions, we have come to conceive 'merely' instrumental values as crass and brutish. This view has dehumanized science and de-spiritualized daily activity. The tasks of routine living, being instrumental, are seen to be of secondary, inferior worth, devoid of higher value. Socially, this has stigmatized the mass of humanity, who must occupy themselves with instrumental concerns, as living less worthy lives. While on the other hand, intrinsic values are enshrined in a region separate from our practical activity. This separation has had an ironic result. In separating these values from practical activity in order to more firmly secure them, philosophy excluded them from scientific study, which has proved to be mankind's most successful means of gaining

security. Dewey writes that

In consequence, the existence of values that are by common consent of a secondary and technical sort are under a fair degree of control, while those denominated supreme and imperative are subject to all the winds of impulse, custom and arbitrary authority. (QC:L4,p.215)

Remedying these dire consequences becomes, for Dewey, the goal of "any philosophy not isolated from life." (QC:L4,p.204) Since this condition is the result of dualistic thinking, the undoing of this situation lies in overcoming the dualisms. If theory and practice are united then moralists will embrace science, rather than scorn it; practical activity would then be seen as the only non-accidental means by which anything of value may be secured. (QC:L4,p.26) This is the course of action which Dewey advocates: if we do away with the dualism between intrinsic and instrumental, then we do away with the dualism between science and morality--to the benefit of both. Science will become humanized and morality will lose its vagueness and pedantic tone, and gain in efficacy. (RP:M12,pp.178-179)

In Dewey's opinion, the distinction between philosophy and science is an arbitrary one. More accurately,

What actually exists is a certain division of labor, in which the more speculative and hypothetical phase of intellectual activity is distinguished as philosophical and the more detailed and specifically verified part as scientific. The distinction that is made, ex post facto, is of temporal aspects of development rather than of something intrinsic. (P:L8,p.34)

Philosophy and science, rather than being concerned with different spheres of being, or different levels of knowledge, are both engaged in enabling people to understand better, and therefore give greater meaning to, their existence. Both disciplines, Dewey insists, are necessary. He writes that "as long

as we worship science and fear philosophy we shall have no great science," (PC:L3,p.10) but just as assuredly he also meant, as long as we worship philosophy and fear science we shall have no great philosophy. The task is set--we must overcome the dualisms that separate these two great cultural institutions. However, proposing the task is easier than accomplishing it. Advocating the overthrow of centuries-old distinctions is one thing, overcoming deep-seated intellectual habits, quite another. Since the dualisms stem from our metaphysical and epistemological heritage, we must reconstruct--not do away with--these two branches of philosophy. In the following two chapters we will discuss just how Dewey proceeds with this reconstruction. This will clear away some of the conceptual problems associated with the attempt to connect science and morality.

Before turning to those discussions it will be instructive to follow Dewey's historical discussion further in order to gain some insight into the direction his philosophy will travel. As we have seen, Dewey conceives of philosophy as fulfilling a need for reconciliation between conflicting intellectual systems, but just how does his own contribution fit under this definition? If we return to the opening lines of this chapter we can see that he is being true to his own definition. He wrote

There are periods in history when a whole community or group in a community finds itself in the presence of new issues which its old customs do not adequately meet. The habits and beliefs which were formed in the past do not fit into the opportunities and requirements of contemporary life... the present is pre-eminently a period of this sort.

This, as we should now recognize, is a call for a new philosophy to reconcile tradition with recent, incompatible developments.

I believe it is accurate to state that Dewey conceived of his philosophy as being engaged in answering such a call. But, what exactly are the incompatible ideas that need to be reconciled? I propose that Dewey found himself, in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth century, living in the midst of a third major occurrence of intellectual conflict. The first, as you will recall, occurred when the sacred tradition of the group was challenged by the growing influence of profane knowledge. The second major occurrence precipitated the Modern Age, as the ancient metaphysical tradition (which was the resolution of the first conflict) embedded in Medieval Christianity came into conflict with the new science of modern physics. Each occurrence is marked by the conflict between the justification of values and ideals and an advance in a scientific understanding of the world. This holds true of the third major occurrence, which, despite its uniqueness, continues to follow the pattern. Prior to this occurrence much had been surrendered to science, still our ideals of the True and the Good remained secured in an antecedent reality, safe from human hands. Science had changed our conception of the physical world, but that which makes us human, that which gives us special worth, our minds, our rational faculties, survived the onslaught. Science ruled the inanimate world, but in the world of the living, fixity still held and man stood atop of that animate kingdom. Certainty and security in what mattered most, our values and ideals, still remained strong. We can summarize this intellectual position as being comprised of the following: a duality between the material world,

which was capable of being explained by science, and which in later times included man's body, and another sphere, described alternatively as mental, ideal, spiritual, etc., which was 'higher' than the material world and in which belonged all the ultimately valuable aspects of existence, e.g., intelligence, virtue, intrinsic value, etc. The central tenet of this belief system, at least for our purposes, is the position that humans, whatever their status as part of the material world, transcended in some degree that material world and, alone among the creatures of the world, could participate in that higher, more worthy realm.

In a recent work James Rachel has identified a position very similar to this as the "doctrine of human dignity."¹¹ While this captures this position nicely, for the sake of continuity with Dewey's later terminology (though not only for this reason) we shall refer to this position as 'metaphysical humanism'. This requires some explanation before we continue. I chose the term 'humanism' because this position shares with both the earlier Renaissance form of humanism, and the later twentieth century version, a human-oriented and human-affirming value system. I qualify 'humanism' with 'metaphysical' to highlight its dualistic foundation (hence I am using 'metaphysical' in an un-reconstructed sense) and to note that its human-affirming perspective finds its justification by reference to a transcendent plane; this clearly differentiates it from the two other versions of humanism.

Getting back to our historical discussion we should be

able to recognize metaphysical humanism as the latest manifestation of the sacred tradition. As was the case with the earlier tradition this too comes into violent confrontation with the latest development of profane knowledge--Darwinian Evolution.

Dewey writes

Prior to Darwin the impact of the new scientific method upon life, mind, and politics had been arrested because between these ideals, or moral interests and the inorganic world intervened the kingdom of plants and animals. The gates of the garden of life were barred to the new ideas ...the influence of Darwin upon philosophy resides in his having conquered the phenomena of life for the principle of transition, and thereby freed the new logic for application to mind and morals and life. (IDP:pp.8-9)

The last remnant of the ancient/medieval world view, the fixity of species, was gone. Now, the new science put all of creation, animate and inanimate alike, under the domain of the natural sciences. I shall identify this position as 'naturalism'.

So, we can label the third great intellectual conflict the struggle of naturalism and metaphysical humanism. Despite the ever increasing sphere of influence of science, man had been able to find security for his highest aspirations by classifying himself, at least in part, outside the natural world; whether by fact of an immortal soul or an immaterial mind, man had access to a level of existence that stood beyond the merely contingent. Evolutionary theory disputed this in a way that was hard to ignore. Life evolves randomly through a process of natural selection. Fortuitous variation gives a creature a survival advantage in the struggle for life, which allows it to pass on its genes--no grand design, no natural order un-

folding over the centuries. All of life, including human life, could now be explained on the basis of purely natural processes. This is the challenge facing Dewey and his contemporaries (and I would add, in agreement with Rachels, still facing us): how to secure the values cherished by metaphysical humanism in a thoroughly naturalistic universe?¹² This is the third great intellectual conflict which calls for a new philosophy, and it is my contention that providing such a philosophy was the primary goal of Dewey's mature work.

In the previously cited work, Rachels notes Dewey's enthusiastic reception of Darwinism, but concludes that after this first hurrah, Dewey fails to build on this new theory, and in effect merely had paid lip service to Darwin. He writes

we might expect Dewey to tell us how Darwinism would transform morals, politics, and religion. But after having heaped such lavish praise on the new 'mode of thinking', Dewey had little to say about its precise implications.¹³

Although I can understand why Rachels comes to this conclusion, I do not believe it to be totally accurate. Dewey did not, to my knowledge, write any major articles or essays on Darwinism after his 1909 piece. And even though one might wish that he had done so, I do not believe this fact indicates a betrayal of his commitment to Darwinism. Darwinism did not so much open up a new way of thinking for Dewey, but rather gave him a new tool to deal with the ideas that had occupied his thought for much of his mature life. He wrote that he had an "intense emotional craving...that only an intellectualized subject matter could satisfy"; a craving, in effect, to overcome the dualisms

and separations he encountered not just in philosophy but in his surroundings, which produced, he states, "a painful oppression." (FAE:L5,p.153) He turned to Hegel and to Christianity in order to find the means for satisfying this craving, but he found the answer in Darwin. The lesson that Dewey took from Darwin, which was to form a permanent deposit in his thought, was the notion of naturalism. This becomes the paradigm with which Dewey is going to interpret the world; this is the tool which he is going to use to finally do away with those destructive and inhibiting dualisms that he finds clogging the path of humanity's intellectual and moral progress. So, actually, Darwin is co-author with Dewey of Dewey's naturalism, and in so far as Dewey's particular approach to morals, politics, and religion is based on his naturalism, Darwin's influence is ever present in Dewey's philosophy. Perhaps, as Rachels states, this is too imprecise, but it certainly argues against any implication that Dewey only pays lip service to Darwin. He did not say, "here is what Darwinism teaches us about this particular issue", but rather, "here is what Darwinism teaches us about the nature of the world--given this, what can we make of these issues." It is, of course, debatable whether Dewey, or we, would be better off with a more 'precise' use of Darwin; but what seems clear is that Dewey did make use of Darwinism, and very powerful use, even if it was indirect.

Support for the contention that Dewey's goal was the development of a new philosophy, and that that philosophy was Darwin-influenced, may be found in an early essay entitled, "Evolution

and Ethics" (EE:E5). This article pre-dates the more well known essay "The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy" by nearly ten years, and although all references to Dewey and Darwin refer to the later article, I believe the earlier article is more significant for gaining an insight into Dewey's relation to Darwinism and into the genesis of his naturalism. He sets out in this article to respond to an essay of the same title, by Thomas Huxley. In that essay, Huxley, the famous expounder of evolution, "Darwin's Bulldog", gives what seems to be an about face and proclaims that "the ethical progress of society depends not on imitating the cosmic process, still less in running away from it, but in combating it." (EE:E5,p.36) Huxley states that evolution is struggle and strife, with the goal of survival of the fittest, but ethics is a process of sympathy and cooperation, with an end of developing the ethically best. The ethical process is not only incompatible with evolution, but it condemns that process as immoral, and must engage in battle with it. Dewey reasonably surmises that Huxley is responding to Spencer's theory of evolution and morality, and in opposing this theory and its goal of an "insipid millennium" Huxley has Dewey's approval. But in Huxley's further point that the natural is at odds with the ethical, "we must part company with him." (EE:E5,p.49) Dewey disagrees with the notion that the ethical and the evolutionary are incompatible.

The first point Dewey makes is that the notion of "man's struggle against nature" is flawed. The primary lesson of evolution is that man is part of nature. In this light, man's

so called struggle against nature is actually the process through which one part of nature adapts another part of nature for its own use. (EE:E5,p.38) The 'struggle against' concept is based on a dualistic view of man and nature (man versus nature), but this is the very dualism that evolutionary theory overthrows. If we keep this in mind then our understanding of the supposed ethical problem involved in the process of 'survival of the fittest' might be quite different. We typically take the term 'fittest' to identify those organisms best suited to their environment; and by 'environment' we usually mean a physical environment, e.g., geography, climate, food sources, etc. But, this is a limited interpretation of 'environment', since a prominent, often the most prominent, aspect of man's environment is other people. This means that man's environment is social, as well as physical, and so in determining the 'fittest' we must take into account social fitness as a vital component. Fitness must include social adaptation, and, since we live in an ever changing social environment, this adaptability must be flexible. As the conditions of life change so too must the form that the struggle for life takes. The social fit for primitive man would be inappropriate in a civilized society; and so there is no justification for equating the struggle for life with brute force and blind cruelty. (EE:E5,pp.39-42) There are no grounds for judging the struggle for existence as necessarily immoral, or, as Dewey will argue, even amoral. He writes

I do not see that the struggle for existence is anything more than living existence itself. Life tends to extend itself because it is life. The particular acts which are put forth are the outcome of the life that is there

they are its expression, its manifestation.

Unless life itself is immoral it is fair to make the assumption that whatever is relevant to life is relevant to morality (though of course this relevance does not automatically confer positive moral worth). All of this demonstrates to Dewey that there is no necessary incompatibility between evolution and ethics; still Dewey wants to go further. He argues that not only are the two processes compatible, but that evolution, as it becomes manifested in man's struggles for existence as a conscious endeavor, is itself an ethical process (again, this does not mean that man's conscious struggle for existence is in itself morally good or right, but that it is a process which is morally assessable).

Dewey's entire argument for this point centers on the following proposition: the struggle for life as it manifests itself in man is not a struggle for mere life, but rather is a struggle for a particular type of life, specifically, a good life. Initially, this may seem a strange contention, but it is one that I believe can be defended reasonably well. The argument is as follows: we, as do all living things, struggle for existence. We differ, however, in that as conscious beings we can reflect on a situation, weigh options, and choose deliberately, rather than follow a dumb instinct or the path of least resistance (though it must be admitted that we sometimes do act in these ways). When we choose one course over another, we in effect choose the better alternative (or at least the one that seems to be, or which we fool ourselves into believing

to be, the better one). The point Dewey makes is an echo of Aristotle's maxim that all action aims at some good. Therefore, continuing with the argument, once the evolutionary process comes to consciousness in man, it is no longer a struggle for 'mere' life, but in virtue of being determined by conscious choices for the 'better', it may be characterized as a struggle for the good life. Dewey writes that we must expand our understanding of the notion of the 'struggle for existence' so it includes

not only the struggle for mere continuance of physical existence, but also whatever makes that life what it is. The distinction between the struggle for existence and the struggle for happiness breaks down...no agent can draw this distinction between desire and desire for a happy life for himself; and no more can the spectator intelligently draw it for him. (EE:E5, pp.44-45)

This argument brings to mind an example that might lend it some support. In this industrialized society of ours, the closest thing we have to an example of a struggle for pure existence, on a human level, is with the homeless population. Here, in our civilized midst, is an archaic example of a human struggle for the necessities of life waged on a day to day basis. Yet, here too we see that the struggle is not for mere existence but for existence of a particular sort. I am thinking of the frequent instances when a homeless person is forcibly taken from the streets on a freezing night and placed in a shelter. There they are safe from the elements and are provided with food. The struggle for existence may be waged successfully here, and in comparison to the streets, easily. Still, time and time again, we hear stories of adamant refusals and defiant protests.

The argument from these people is that they would rather risk their lives on the streets than have it secured in what they consider to be degrading conditions. They see the shelters, despite the promise of survival, to be an undesirable type of existence (of course in some instances the shelters are rejected because they can be more dangerous than the streets, but this is not always the reasoning). They choose not mere existence but existence of a particular kind. Although it may seem insensitive to use the adjectives 'happy' or 'good' in this situation, given the context of their restricted possibilities, they choose the good life.

This is all well and good the critic may respond, but the mechanism for evolution is natural selection, that is, blind variation fortuitously giving a creature a survival advantage. Where is the moral aspect of this? It is true that the actual process through which certain genes are passed on and others are passed up operates blindly, that is non-deliberatively, and as such is not morally assessable. However, there is a larger context in which this biological process occurs which is a necessary component of natural selection, i.e., the environing conditions. In fact, it is these environmental conditions which make possible the transfer of genes from one generation to another. These conditions might be open to moral evaluation. Dewey points out that we typically understand natural selection to work by the process of "ordeal by death", in which a creature with a certain genetic advantage reproduces and passes on its genes, while those without the advantage perish before

procreating. But this is not the only way for the process to work, there is also "trial by the success and failure of certain acts." (EE:E5,p.50) Certain modes of behavior may also provide a creature with a survival advantage. For example, take the case of any new born mammal, for instance, a lion cub. Assume all the genetic advantages you will, yet this alone is not sufficient to guarantee survival. Much of the behavior that prepares the cub for life is learned behavior which comes from interactions with its mother. If the cub is denied that interaction, due to the death of its mother for example, then it has lost a crucial survival advantage. This cub will not be as likely to reach the age of reproduction as would a properly socialized cub.

If we turn our attention to the human world we can see that there are certain social conditions--education, economics, public opinion--that work to encourage certain modes of action and to discourage others. If we are going to be consistently naturalistic, we must accept that the conditions of society are as much a part of the environing conditions as are rocks, and soil, and water. Just as those social conditions support or reject certain modes of action, and thereby influence the path of evolution, so too do social conditions. Dewey writes

What difference in principle exists between this mediation of the acts of the individual by society and what is ordinarily called natural selection, I am unable to see. In each case there is the reaction of the conditions of life back into the agent in such a way as to modify the function of living. (EE:E5,p.50)

Natural selection is usually thought of as resulting in a change of structure and we must admit that the impact of social

and environmental conditions is not a change in structure; that only occurs through genetic variation over time. So, if someone equates evolution with 'genetic variation over time' then they are not going to be satisfied with Dewey's position; in fact they are likely to see it as anthropomorphic. Such a person would probably prefer to label Dewey's argument a discussion of 'social' or 'cultural' evolution.¹⁴ I will discuss the issue of terminology presently, but first I wish to suggest, along with Dewey, that such a view of evolution may be too restrictive. Species do not evolve by the change of structure itself. In fact most changes in structure are rejected by the evolutionary process. For a change of structure to be 'chosen' by evolution it must confer some survival advantage to the individual; it must eventuate in a mode of behavior or functioning that is more successful in dealing with the environment, and hence improve the survival chances of the organism. As Dewey puts it, "the modification of structure is certainly not an end in itself. It is simply one device for changing function." (EE:E5, p.50) An organism is 'fit' to its environment not because of a certain anatomical structure, but rather because it can function successfully within its environment. Change in structure is one way of eliciting this functioning, and in pre-human history it was the major means for doing so. But it is not necessarily the most efficient means for doing so. Change in structure provides the tool for a survival advantage; but a tool not properly used is ineffective. So, I do not believe it correct to equate change of structure and natural selection. The actual

working of natural selection operates on a genetic level, but the mechanism for setting that operation into action is the behavior of organisms.

Given all of this, it seems to follow that if a social institution, e.g. education, can effect a change in functioning, then it too may serve as a mode of variation in the service of evolution. And furthermore, if education can achieve a change in functioning in a matter of years, that would have taken generations via change of structure, then education would seem to be a more effective tool for evolution. Dewey suggests

If we personify Nature, we may say that the influences of education and social approval and disapproval in modifying the behavior of the agent, mark simply the discovery on the part of Nature of a shorter and more economical form of selection than she had previously known.... It is certainly implied in the idea of natural selection that the most effective modes of variation should themselves be finally selected. (EE:E5,p.50)

At this point if the critic wants to argue that this is 'social' or 'cultural' evolution he or she may do so. Using the labels 'social' or 'cultural' may be helpful to point out that the means for changing function in the process of evolution have become primarily social and cultural. However, the following proviso must be kept in mind: by labeling evolution 'social' or 'cultural' we do not exclude it from remaining **natural** evolution. We are not talking about distinct processes, but rather distinctively different phases of the same continuous process.

Dewey, therefore, has set both the struggle for existence and the mechanism for evolution in terms that are compatible with moral evaluation. Still, there may remain a resistance,

an intuitive distaste, for this interpretation. Why? The answer, it seems, lies in the fact that we tend to think of the struggle for existence as a brutal and cruel activity, as it once had to be. What we do not always realize is that just as the conditions of existence have changed, so too has the behavior fit to these conditions changed. So, our intuition that a brutal battle for survival in today's world would lack moral worth is correct--but it lacks worth because it is no longer 'fit'.

What lessons are we to take from all of this? Dewey accepts the scientific validity of evolution and the homogeneity of its application throughout nature. He notes, however, that man's entrance upon the scene changes things; not by the addition of something non-natural, but by being a manifestation of nature-as-conscious-of-itself. The blind and wasteful operation of pre-human evolution may now be turned into efficient and deliberate evolution. Dewey writes

the process and forces bound up with the cosmic have come to consciousness in man. That which was instinct in animal is conscious impulse in man. That which was "tendency to vary" in the animal is conscious foresight in man.... That this transfer from unconsciousness to consciousness has immense importance, need hardly be argued. It is enough to say that it means the whole distinction of the moral and the immoral. (EE:E5,p.53)

It should be clear that Dewey is not interpreting evolution in a Spencerian, teleological fashion, as moving inexorably and indifferently through the generations toward some utopia of moral perfection. Evolution is a natural process and in itself has no moral purpose. Yet, when that natural process results in a conscious being who can deliberate about its future, it develops a moral aspect (i.e. the search for the good life).

Man is wholly a part of nature. Whatever results of the interaction between one part of nature (man) and another part of nature (the environment--both physical and social) is a natural development; and morality is one such development. This is of tremendous import to this project. A major lesson which Dewey took from evolution was his naturalism; and when, with this perspective, he turns his focus to morality he realizes that it must be understood in thoroughly naturalistic terms. If, as Rachels charges, Dewey does not seem to give serious explicit consideration to Darwin after 1909, it is because by that time the lessons of Darwinism lie implicit in all of Dewey's thought.

If this theory can be successfully defended, then Dewey has developed a true philosophy; for he then would have constructed a junction for the third great intellectual conflict: that between naturalism and metaphysical humanism. He maintains all that is vital in metaphysical humanism--our moral values and ideals--and reconciles it with the latest development in science. The resulting doctrine is a 'naturalistic humanism', which at last breaks down the wall between science and morality. I have gone into this at some length in order to provide a context for the project which Dewey saw himself engaged in, and hopefully to gain some insight into the motivations for Dewey's particular approach. Also, for the sake of consistency, it is important to place Dewey himself in a historical context. He too is responding to certain specific historical conditions, which present one type of challenge rather than another, and

which therefore demands one type of approach rather than another. When we have finished with the larger study of Dewey's thought we will be in a better position to discuss how well Dewey met his challenge. For now, we must turn to his attempts to reconstruct metaphysics.

CHAPTER TWO

NATURALISTIC METAPHYSICS

In the last chapter we claimed that Dewey saw his philosophic mission to be the reconstruction of morality (previously justified by metaphysical humanism) in a manner consistent with the most recent developments of science. The major scientific development which most recently has challenged our traditional conception of humanity's place in the universe is, in Dewey's opinion, evolution. The challenge posed by evolution, and the lesson it teaches (which Dewey believes must be assimilated) is that man is wholly a natural being. Despite our rationality, despite our consciousness, despite our sense of spirituality, we possess no extra-natural, nor supernatural, traits. If we are going to maintain our commitment to morality, to spirituality, we must do so in a manner consistent with natural science (this is not to say that we must derive our notions from science but that they must be compatible, or at least consistent with a scientific understanding of the world). Dewey believes that naturalizing morality is a feasible project. He rejects, categorically, any notion that an acceptance of naturalism is a surrender to nihilism. The way to avoid nihilism, in the face of evidence supporting naturalism, is to develop a naturalistic humanism. The first step in such a project is to demonstrate how moral phenomena--notions of good and evil,

values and ends--can arise in a world of cold, neutral facts. In this chapter we will examine Dewey's efforts to take that first step by examining his attempt to develop and justify a naturalistic metaphysics.

Dewey's writing on naturalism and metaphysics are extensive and varied. James Gouinlock¹ correctly notes that, "in all Dewey's work the metaphysical basis is present and operative." However, a comprehensive treatment of the topic is beyond the scope of this project. Instead, we will focus on three issues, which should suffice for our purposes. They are: 1) what is Dewey's conception of metaphysics? A great deal of his writings are aimed at sweeping away the harm done by centuries of metaphysical speculation. Can the development of such a theory be consistent with Dewey's conception of the role of philosophy? 2) can he have a metaphysics and still be a naturalist? In the last section we pointed out the present great intellectual conflict is between naturalism and a metaphysical humanism. How, or why, would Dewey develop a naturalistic humanism and have a metaphysics? If he does need a metaphysical theory, can he consistently maintain a commitment to naturalism? 3) if Dewey is successful in defending a naturalistic metaphysics, then what does it have to say about morality? I will address each of these issues separately. I hope that if the first two questions can be successfully dealt with then answering the third can be handled with a simple exposition of Dewey's views.

These first two questions had been posed by two of Dewey's

most astute critics: Richard Rorty and George Santayana, respectively. Since this provides a convenient way of approaching these questions, I shall present their critiques and consider Dewey's response (in the case of Santayana, Dewey had a chance to respond himself; Rorty's essay came years after Dewey's death, and so a response will be crafted for him).

Why A Metaphysics?

In 1975, Richard Rorty gave a lecture at the University of Vermont, sponsored by the John Dewey Foundation, which was later published as "Dewey's Metaphysics".² In this article Rorty praises Dewey's attempts to undo centuries of metaphysical misconceptions as "great achievements".³ But Rorty also recognizes in Dewey's writings an attempt at a constructive metaphysics, which he cites as an instance of Dewey coming down "with the disease he was trying to cure", but for which he should not be blamed.⁴ The attitude Rorty seems to be advising is that we should forgive and forget (with the emphasis on 'forget') Dewey's metaphysical speculating. The brunt of Rorty's attack centers on three contentions: 1) Dewey has a misconceived notion of 'Philosophy', and only such a misconceived notion could give rise to a need for a metaphysics, 2) even if we were to be sympathetic to the notion of Dewey-metaphysician, there is no need for a discipline of such generality as that proposed by Dewey, 3) there is no special philosophic insight which can contribute to the discussion of various issues. We will consider Rorty's points one at a time.

We first need to understand what Rorty considers the correct conception of philosophy to be, in order to see why he believes Dewey's conception to be mistaken. Rorty states

Nothing save the myth that there is something special called "philosophy" that provides the paradigm of a synthetic discipline, and a figure called "the philosopher" who is the paradigm of the intellectual, suggests that the professional philosopher's work is incomplete unless he has drawn up a list of the "generic traits of all existence".⁵

(The 'generic traits of existence' is Dewey's definition of the subject matter of metaphysics; we will discuss this notion later in this section.) Here, Rorty argues the need for a metaphysics arises only with the view that there is some special discipline called 'Philosophy' which has some constructive work to do; this is the misconceived conception of philosophy which he charges Dewey of holding. The proper work for philosophers, according to Rorty, is to work with the history of philosophy and the consequences of historical philosophic ideas upon society. This is a negative function. The role of philosophers is to undo the harm done to our general ways of thinking which 'Philosophy' is responsible for.⁶ When this task is completed there will be nothing left for philosophers to do. Dewey never brought himself to accept this position, says Rorty; he was never able to see that "philosophy's mission, like that of therapy, was to make itself obsolete."⁷ In all these charges he brings against Dewey, Rorty is completely correct. Dewey did believe that there was special work to be done by philosophers; that beyond the important task of clearing away the dead wood of obsolete ideas, there was a constructive task

to be tackled; and to complete the task, there was needed a theory concerned with the "generic traits of existence". However, I contend that Rorty is incorrect in believing that this conception of philosophy was a "trivial"⁸ mistake made by Dewey. Dewey's conception of the role of philosophy, I have argued, is the key to understanding his entire philosophical work, and, as we shall see, it is a task that requires a metaphysics.

In the last chapter we saw Dewey define philosophy as a reconstructive discipline. Its task is to reconcile conflicts between various manifestations of the 'sacred tradition' and scientific knowledge. In what may be his magnum opus, Experience and Nature, Dewey gives an expanded and in depth explanation of this function. This develops over the course of the book, yet we can grasp the logic of his position by considering his discussions given in the first and last chapters. As we know, Dewey rejects the idea that philosophy arose as pure rational endeavor, and holds instead that it arose as a response to concrete, empirical conditions; it is a discipline grounded in nature; it proceeds with no extra-natural faculties and has no extra-natural purposes; it is an empirical discipline. Therefore he states that philosophy "empirically pursued will not be a study of philosophy but a study, by means of philosophy, of life-experience." (EN:p.34) This is contrary to Rorty's point that the business of philosophers is the study of philosophy; philosophers are to study life as it is experienced. It is important to note that Dewey qualifies this task with the phrase 'by means of philosophy'. This seems to indicate that Dewey

believes, again contra-Rorty, that there is a special philosophic method. If Dewey can set out a method of studying life experiences which is specific to philosophy then he has successfully answered the first part of Rorty's critique. What is the philosophic method?

Dewey states that philosophy is an empirical study of life experience, which at first glance does not seem to be anything unique to philosophy. But as we continue with Dewey's discussion the outline of an argument begins to take shape. He notes that the life experience we come to study is not pristine experience, but rather is "already overlaid and saturated with the products of the reflection of past generations and by-gone ages." (EN:p.34) Our experience has come to be as it is after centuries upon centuries of philosophical theorizing, religious and cultural interpretation, and changing scientific analyses. The experience which we now make our subject matter is the end-result of a multiplicity of interpretations. Dewey terms these interpretations 'prejudices'. This may seem a somewhat loaded term, but Dewey only means to emphasize that they are the result of a particular point of view, or bias, and yet do not make explicit those biases; it is not used in a derogatory sense. He then states a preliminary definition of philosophy:

If we may for the moment call these materials prejudices ...then philosophy is a critique of prejudices. These incorporated results of past reflection, welded into genuine materials of first-hand experience may become organs of enrichment if they are detected and reflected upon. If they are not detected, they often obfuscate and distort. Clarification and emancipation follow when they are detected and cast out; and one great object of philosophy is to

accomplish this task. (EN:pp.34-35)

(I would like to draw the reader's attention to the fact that in the above passage Dewey refers to this task as "one great object" of philosophy, not "the great object". This implies, correctly, that philosophy has more than one object and we will discuss this other objective later.) You will notice that this is also a task that Rorty allows to philosophy; to clear away the distortions in our understanding of life, caused by philosophic prejudices. Dewey believes, with Rorty, that we must make explicit the biases implicit in various philosophic theories, but not just in philosophic theories. Dewey believes it to be the job of philosophy to critique prejudices, in general, and not merely philosophic prejudices. In extending the scope of philosophical critique, Dewey parts company with Rorty, and furthermore, once we develop this notion we will see that it is the basis for a constructive task of philosophy.

This development of philosophy as criticism is set out in the final chapter of Experience and Nature, in a discussion of value and criticism. In speaking of value, Dewey is not limiting himself to a discussion of morality; in fact, he distinguishes three broad types of value. He labels the object of intellectual or scientific concern, 'belief-values'; the object of moral concern, 'moral-values'; and the object of aesthetic concern, 'aesthetic-values'. We will have more to say about the concept 'value' later in this work, for the present we may accept the generic use of the term without any further implications. Dewey points out that whenever we reflect on any

: :

of these objects of concern, or values, we do not reflect upon an immediate existence. As immediately experienced, values may be enjoyed, suffered, or appreciated, but not reflected upon. Dewey writes

Values as such, even things having value, cannot in their immediate existence be reflected upon; they either are or are not; are or are not enjoyed. To pass beyond direct occurrence, even though the passage be restricted to an attempt to define value, is to begin a process of discrimination which implies a reflective criterion. (EN:p.322)

Dewey is not claiming that we cannot reflect on values, but that when we do reflect on values we are going beyond the immediate experience of the value in question. Beyond to what?

when thought and discussion enter, when theorizing sets in, when there is anything beyond bare immediate enjoyment and suffering, it is the means-consequence relationship that is considered. Thought goes beyond immediate existence to its relationships, the conditions which mediate it and the things to which it is in turn mediatory. (EN:p.322)

To reflect on an experience of a value-object is to step out of that particular experience with the value (which we may term 'value-as-experienced') and into a different experience of the value ('value-as-reflected-upon'). Dewey says further

The moment we begin to discourse about these values, to define and generalize, to make distinctions in kind, we are passing beyond value-objects themselves; we are entering, even if only blindly, into causal antecedents and causal consequents... (EN:p.326)⁹

And this procedure, he says, is criticism. This gives us greater insight into the role of philosophy as critique of prejudices. The task of philosophy which is "inherently criticism" (EN:p.322) is to investigate the causal antecedents and causative consequents of our various belief-values, moral-values, and aesthetic-values. Its function is to detect how these values

came to be values, and to discover what are the consequences of holding these values.

Before we proceed a simple illustration may be in order to make clear Dewey's point. After coming home from work, I decide to have a drink, and find to my pleasant surprise, a bottle of my favorite wine, on ice. I open it up, pour a glass and drink. The taste of the wine, the feel of the liquid in my mouth and as it goes down my throat, is what Dewey refers to as an immediate experience; in this case we can call it a gustatory-value. Assuming that it is a good bottle of wine, as I enjoy the experience, I am not reflecting upon it. After swallowing the drink, I may sigh in satisfactory judgment, "that was good!", but at this point I have stepped back from the immediate experience and have begun to reflect on the wine in causal relations. For example, 'that was good', if it is anything more than an emotional ejaculation, is based on either, or both, the antecedents and consequents. If by 'that was good' I mean that it was a quality wine, I am making implicit reference to other wines that I have experienced antecedent to this particular bottle, which serve as some frame of reference. If by my statement I mean that it was pleasing to the palate and refreshing, I am referring to the consequences of having drunk the wine. I may further reflect and determine that this was a particularly good wine for its year. Here I make reference to the larger wine industry and the conditions for grapes in the year that this wine was made. Or I may realize that to my chagrin, this bottle was purchased by my wife, to serve at our

dinner party later that evening. Now my judgment that drinking the wine was not a good thing is based on the eventual consequences of having drunk my wife's wine. In any case, when I reflect, I am stepping back from the immediate gustatory experience. Even if my reflections take place while I am actually drinking the wine, to the degree that I am reflecting on the wine, I am not experiencing the wine (at least not fully). Hopefully, this has clarified Dewey's notion; we will certainly have more to say about these distinctions as we go along.

As it stands, this is certainly a specific and concrete task for philosophers to perform, yet it is not sufficient to answer Rorty's attack. Rorty asks

Would anyone--including Dewey--himself really believe that there is a discipline that could somehow do for "the basic types of involvement" something left undone by novelists, sociologists, biologists, poets, and historians? ¹⁰

This helps to bring out an important point. Dewey is not saying that only philosophical reflection is criticism but that any reflection is necessarily a consideration of antecedents and consequents, and hence, that all reflection is critical. So, when the biologist reflects on his subject matter he is engaging in criticism; when the social scientist reflects on his subject matter he is engaging in criticism; and when the artist reflects on his subject matter he is engaging in criticism. Any reflective consideration of experience, whether it is scientific, moral, or aesthetic is as justifiably "inherently criticism" as is philosophy. Is then philosophy, perhaps, just one of a myriad array of criticisms? If so then we must ask with Rorty, what

is left for philosophy to contribute beyond that contributed by the sciences, the arts, and moralists? If philosophy is just one form of criticism among many, with no subject matter proper to it alone, then perhaps we have reached the end of philosophy, as Rorty suggests. But Dewey does not believe this to be the case. Philosophy is not just one criticism among many, it holds, he claims, a "distinctive position among various modes of criticism," it is "a criticism of criticisms." (EN:p.322) In explaining the role of philosophy as 'criticism of criticisms' we will have Dewey's response to Rorty's first, and potentially most damaging critique.

For the sake of simplicity we may group the various modes of criticisms under the three headings we have used previously: scientific, concerned with belief; moral, concerned with conduct; and aesthetic, concerned with taste. Philosophy holds its distinctive position in relation to these other modes by virtue of its generality. (EN:p.328) The subject matter proper to philosophy is the "values, criticisms, and critical methods" of these three modes of criticism, which it then "subjects to further criticism as comprehensive and consistent as possible." (EN:p.327) Philosophy seeks the connections and relations between these various modes; between the various disciplines. In doing so philosophy shows that there does not exist the complete distinctiveness which these three modes have been thought to possess. All three, Dewey claims, are involved in the use of critical reflection to determine genuine goods, as opposed to casually occurring goods. He writes

All cases manifest the same duality and present the same problem; that of embodying intelligence in action which shall convert casual natural goods, whose causes and effects are unknown, into goods valid for thought, right for conduct, and cultivated for appreciation. (EN:p.329)

Philosophy, by being able to rise to a greater level of generality than any specific mode of criticism, is able to reflect critically on the various modes of criticism, and may draw out the various antecedent causes and causative consequences of these modes for comparison and clarification; "...philosophy is and can be nothing but this critical operation and function become aware of itself and its implications, pursued deliberately and systematically." (EN:p.326)

Why do we need such a general level of criticism? What is served by drawing out the relationships between various modes of criticism? It is the following quandary which necessitates a 'criticism of criticisms': all these various modes have, ultimately, a common subject matter, and that is the life experiences of humanity. The different ways of interpreting that subject matter are just that, different ways; it does not follow that different methods mean different material. The problem arises when these different means of interpreting experience result in "rigid non-communicating compartments." (EN:p.331)

Dewey sets out the situation:

It is natural that nature, variegatedly qualified, should exhibit various trends when it achieves experience of itself, so that there is a distribution of emphases such as are designated by the adjectives scientific, political, religious, artistic, educational, moral and so on. But however natural from the standpoint of causation may be the institutionalizing of these trends, there separation effects an isolation which is unnatural. Narrowness, superficiality, stagnation follow from lack of the nourishment which can be supplied only by generous

and wide interactions. (EN:p.331)

Philosophy, by virtue of its generality, is the tool through which "generous and wide interactions" between the various interpretations are made possible. Philosophy is the "messenger, a liaison officer, making reciprocally intelligible voices speaking provincial tongues, and thereby enlarging the meanings with which they are charged." (EN:p.332) Philosophy, by providing the means for intercommunication between the various modes of criticisms allows for the sharing, and thereby, enhancement of meaning in the various areas of concern.¹¹ And, since the various modes all ultimately have the same area of concern, i.e. human experience, philosophy's particular task is, in effect, the enhancement of life's meaningfulness. The other 'great object' of philosophy which I alluded to earlier, is just this; what Dewey calls "the larger, liberal humane value of philosophy." (EN:p.35)

It is interesting to note that Rorty recognizes the possible need for some type of synthesis to be effected after the various disciplines are done with their work, but denies that we need philosophers to carry out this task. He writes

All one might want a philosopher to do is to synthesize the novels, poems, histories and sociologies of the day into some larger unity. But such syntheses are, in fact, offered us on all sides, in every discipline. To be an intellectual, rather than simply to "do research" is precisely to reach for some such synthesis.¹²

This seems to me a highly dubious claim. If the claim is that each discipline offers a synthetic view of human experience, than it seems clearly false. Is it the role of the biologist

to tie his form of criticism with that mode of criticism practiced by the poet? Is it the work of the psychologist to synthesize his approach to the world with that of the geologist? And if the biologist or psychologist fails to offer up such a synthesis, are they then merely doing research? Does not the world view offered by each stand on its own merit? Perhaps what Rorty means is that in each discipline we are offered a comprehensive view of human experience which attempts to account for the various other modes of interpretation; as for example when the biologist attempts to explain creativity in biochemical terms. It may be argued that in each discipline some such form of comprehensiveness is striven for, but this is not a synthesis of differing critical interpretations. It is an attempt to subsume the various interpretations under one dominating interpretation. This is not stepping outside of a particular mode of criticism, it is extending the scope of that particular mode of criticism. Or perhaps Rorty is thinking of those individuals --found perhaps in each discipline, but as an exception rather than the rule--who make the effort to step beyond their specialty and attempt to form connections between the values and lessons of their field and those gained by other modes of criticism. One can bring to mind such examples as the physicist Albert Einstein; the biologist Stephen Jay Gould; the psychologist Erich Fromm; the writer Isaac Asimov; individuals who, though specializing in one mode of criticism, have attempted to present a synthesized view of life. If this is what Rorty means, then he has a valid point; but it is a point in support of Dewey

not against him. For each of these individuals achieves a synthesis not as a practitioner of a particular discipline but only to the extent that they are able to rise to a more general level of criticism; that is, only to the extent that they engage in philosophy. It does not matter that none of these individuals is a professional philosopher; Dewey would never want philosophy to be the special possession of a professionalized group. The important point in Dewey's conception of philosophy is that it is only by engaging in a generalized criticism of criticisms, i.e. by doing philosophy, that we are able to liberate and enhance, to the fullest degree possible, the value and meaning of life. One further point and we can tie up this argument. If we look back over the past century and name those intellectuals who have exerted a high degree of influence beyond their own specialty, three examples that come quickly to mind are Jean-Paul Sartre, Bertrand Russell, and, of course, John Dewey --all participants in that discipline which Rorty would see become obsolete.

It is my hope that at this point it is clear that it is Rorty's, and not Dewey's, conception of philosophy that is mistaken. There is a specific philosophic task, the criticism of criticisms, to be performed; and while it is not the exclusive task of professional philosophers it is a task of such importance, and difficulty as to warrant specialists, i.e. philosophers. In an age of intellectual specialization philosophers can fill a void by becoming specialists in generality. Since the basis of Rorty's critique against Dewey's metaphysics was

that only a misconceived philosophy could require it, and since that point has been addressed, a great deal of the work of justifying Dewey's having a metaphysics has been completed. Having a metaphysics is compatible with the view that philosophy has a particular function. We may now move on to the second point: even if we can justify Dewey's having a metaphysics, why would he need one? Rorty says that he does not see "how the results of such 'discoveries' can be anything but trivial."¹⁴ What role does metaphysics play in the work of philosophy as a criticism of criticisms?

Before we can understand the role metaphysics is to play, we must first understand Dewey's ideas on the nature of metaphysics. While his metaphysical system is worked out in Experience and Nature it is first defined in an earlier article titled, appropriately, "The Subject Matter of Metaphysical Inquiry". In this article Dewey tells us that the proper subject matter for metaphysics are the "ultimate traits" or "irreducible traits" of existence. It is not for metaphysics to attempt to provide an explanation for the origination of these traits, that is the work of science, but rather to discern and clarify these traits. (SMMI:pp.309-310) In Experience and Nature Dewey reformulates his description, though it substantively remains the same, and describes metaphysics to be "a statement of the generic traits manifested by existences of all kinds." (EN:p.334) Pointing out and clarifying these generic traits makes up the bulk of this book, but it is beyond the needs of this project to engage in a comprehensive discussion of them.¹⁵ In the third

section of this chapter we will have the opportunity to discuss those traits relevant to morality. For now we can note three particularly significant traits, they are: specifically diverse existences, or individuality; interaction, or relatedness; and change. (SMMI:p.312 and EN:p.334) With such a conception of metaphysics it should not be hard to demonstrate the importance of metaphysics to philosophy.

A simple argument should suffice to validate philosophy's need of a metaphysics. The argument goes as follows: metaphysics, as a statement of the 'generic traits of all existences' detects and elucidates those traits that will, of necessity, be met with in any attempt to deal with existence. Modes of criticism are various ways of dealing with existence. Therefore, metaphysics is concerned with those traits which are common as well to all modes of criticism. Since philosophy is a criticism of criticisms--a means of discerning the possibility of shared meaning between modes of criticism--that discipline which points out traits common to all modes of criticism (i.e. metaphysics) is an indispensable tool. In a famous formulation Dewey sums up this argument, "Any theory that detects and defines these traits is therefore but a ground-map of the province of criticism." (EN:p.334)

Philosophy's task is to identify the relatedness of the scientific, moral, and aesthetic modes of criticism. Metaphysics tells us that despite their diversity, all these modes deal with individual entities, and in order to distinguish individuals a mode of criticism must be able to discern qualities; nothing

exists in isolation, so despite their diversity all these modes deal with relations and interactions; all existences have both a stable and a precarious nature, so despite their diversity all these modes must develop methods for dealing with and controlling stability and precariousness. All modes of criticism deal with existence; metaphysics shows us that they all must deal with these various traits of existence. However, what to make of the different ways these common traits are dealt with is the task of philosophy. I say this to indicate that philosophy and metaphysics are not co-extensive in their functions. Dewey's metaphor is helpful here: metaphysics provides the ground-map which shows the path through these modes of criticism, but it is philosophy, as a generalized instrument of criticism, which must travel the path, and do the work.

Such is the role of metaphysics in Dewey's conception of the task of philosophy. We see that it is not only consistent with his view of philosophy, but that it is indispensable to a successful philosophy. As to Rorty's difficulty in seeing how the discoveries of metaphysics can be anything but trivial, I believe that this can only be maintained if the task of philosophy is judged trivial.¹⁶ What is more, these traits which Rorty judges to be trivial are those very traits which Dewey used in doing away with the old foundational metaphysics--an accomplishment Rorty called a 'great achievement'. We can now move on to the final point charged against Dewey's metaphysics: that is, that philosophy has no special insight that can contribute to these various areas of concern. Rorty claims that

we must come to the "realization that the philosopher's criticism of culture is not more 'scientific', more 'fundamental', or more 'deep' than those of labor leaders, literary critics, retired statesmen, or sculptors."¹⁷ What can we make of this? We have already seen enough arguments to establish that philosophy, by virtue of having a unique approach to existence, has a unique insight into experience. But what about these qualifications of that insight? Is a philosophical criticism more 'scientific' than that of, say, a sculptor or a retired statesman? This is, on Dewey's own conception of philosophy, an empirical question. A criticism is scientific if it is reached through use of the empirical method and verified empirically. Since all criticisms deal with existence and all existence is natural the scientific method is applicable to any mode of criticism. So to determine whether any one mode of criticism is more or less scientific than another we must go to those criticisms and determine how well they have employed the scientific method in a particular case. Inherently, however, philosophy is no more, but also no less, scientific than any other mode of criticism.

Is philosophical criticism any more 'fundamental' than that, say, of a literary critic or a labor leader? To answer this we have to make a bit of an assumption as to Rorty's use of 'fundamental'. What is the traditional conception of .. philosophy that Rorty feels must be overcome is that which holds that philosophy alone has insight into something called 'reality'. So we may be justified in restating the question

and asking "does the world view gained through philosophical criticism provide a 'more real' picture than is given by the literary critic or labor leader?" To this Dewey would unhesitatingly answer, no. Dewey's metaphysics is committed to a rejection of any notion of ontological priority. There are no degrees to reality and so no view of existence is any more or less real than any other. There are merely "different Reals of experience." (PIE:p.242) The notion of ontological parity (as opposed to priority) is important to Dewey's metaphysics and will receive greater consideration in the next section. It is enough to note that a philosophic criticism is no more, but no less, real than any other mode of criticism. After considering the first two of Rorty's qualifications we have found philosophical criticism to be no better and no worse than any other criticism. This however, is acceptable, for philosophy has its own specific criticism to present and is not competing against any other mode of criticism. As long as it completes its task well we may be satisfied with it. Still there is one more qualification.

Is a philosophical criticism any more 'deep' than other modes of criticism? Again we must try to clarify what Rorty means by 'deep'. There is a sense in which 'deep' indicates a variety of levels, and a 'deeper' criticism will be one which reaches the most basic level. In this sense it is akin to the definition we just gave to 'fundamental', and it carries with it the conception of ontological priority rejected by Dewey. What other sense might there be to the metaphor 'deep'? While it is not correct to say of a view that it is more or less real,

it is possible to say that it has more or less meaning. 'Meaning' for Dewey is an operative term which is determined by the possible consequences and connections an object or term possesses. (ME:L3) To determine the meaning of a word, object, or theory we must draw out the various connections it has with other aspects of our experience. If we understand 'deep' as 'meaningful' can we say that a philosophical criticism will be more meaningful than any other mode of criticism? To this we may answer, yes. As we have seen, criticism is a reflection upon the causes and consequences of some value. It is in effect an attempt to discern the meaning of a certain value. So all modes of criticism are involved in finding meaning. But philosophy, as the means to detecting the relations between modes of criticism, makes possible the enlargement and enhancement of meaning in a way not open to any other form of criticism. In this way philosophical criticism is 'deeper' than the criticism of the labor leader, the literary critic, the retired statesman and the sculptor--unless of course they step beyond their mode of criticism and become philosophers.

We have now completed our defense of Dewey as metaphysics against the charges leveled by Rorty. In the process we have also set out three important points for Dewey's philosophy: 1) the function of philosophy is to provide a generalized critique of various modes of interpreting experience, 2) metaphysics, as a statement of the generic traits of all existences, is an indispensable tool for philosophy in fulfilling its function, 3) the end result of this function is an enlarge-

ment of the meaning of the view of life under consideration, and of life experience, in general. Now that we have a conception of Dewey-as-metaphysician which is consistent and significant, we can move on to the issue of naturalism, and Santayana's critique.

How Can Metaphysics Be Naturalistic?

Now that we have discussed the notion of Dewey-as-metaphysician, there still remains this puzzling issue: can Dewey-as-metaphysician be held consistently with the notion of Dewey-as-naturalist? One of Dewey's eminent contemporaries thought not. In the article, "Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics", George Santayana poses the questions:

Dewey himself characterizes his system: NATURALISTIC METAPHYSICS. In what sense is this system naturalistic? In what sense is it metaphysical? How comes it that these two characters (which seem to me contradictory) can be united in this philosophy?¹⁸

This is the issue which concerns Santayana in his consideration of Dewey's Experience and Nature, and in this well known review Santayana attempts to show that these two terms ('naturalistic' and 'metaphysics') are in fact contradictory. It is my intention to use Santayana's critique as a starting point for presenting some of Dewey's more subtle, and significant metaphysical ideas. I will not be very concerned to show Dewey's direct response to this critique but instead will concentrate on showing that he can respond to the general charge.¹⁹

For our purposes, we highlight two aspects of Santayana's article: 1) he charges that in emphasizing the role of

experience, Dewey is introducing a 'foreground' which is not actually found in nature, and 2) he claims that Dewey's need for a metaphysics stems from his commitment to the maxim that "only the immediate is real". In setting out a response to these charges we will be able to gain a fuller, though still general, grasp of Dewey's metaphysics and will then be prepared for a more specific discussion.

Santayana writes that the whole "crux" of the problem with Dewey's naturalistic metaphysics can be summed up in the phrase, "dominance of the foreground".²⁰ By 'foreground' Santayana means a perspective from which to assess nature; this he sees as a foreign intrusion into nature. He argues that

In nature there is nor foreground or background, no here, no now, no moral cathedra, no centre so central as to reduce all other things to mere margins and mere perspectives. A foreground is by definition relative to some point of view, to the station assumed by some creature tethered by fortune to a particular time and place. If such a foreground becomes dominant in a philosophy naturalism is abandoned.²¹

Santayana goes on to say that the dominance of the foreground is always the source of a metaphysics. The argument is that metaphysics is of necessity a perspectival description of nature, and as such it is not truly a description of nature but rather an artificial construct foisted upon nature. It is for this reason that any metaphysical view is contradictory to naturalism, which is understood as a non-perspectival theory of nature. The character of Dewey's foreground, his perspective which distorts his naturalism, is 'experience'. Santayana explains his understanding of Dewey's use of experience in the following manner:

experience is here taken in a transcendental, or rather in a moral, sense, as something romantically absolute and practically coercive.... It is therefore identical to nature to the extent and in the aspects in which nature is disclosed to man.²²

Experience, then, is the human perspective on nature, as that perspective is motivated by moral or practical concerns. The point of the criticism seems to be that while Dewey claims that experience is the means for getting to the heart of nature, all it really is, is the human bias trying to pass itself off as objective (i.e. non-perspectival) reality. We will readily admit that Dewey does believe that experience gives us the nature of existence and therefore grant to Santayana's critique ultimate force. Furthermore, we can also admit that 'experience' for Dewey is specifically human experience. Still, with all this granted to Santayana, I contend that Dewey is not abandoning naturalism by adopting a metaphysics.

There is a two-pronged response to this criticism which I believe can successfully deal with it. The first prong deals with the 'perspectival' charge. Dewey's response to this is simply to argue that there can be no non-perspectival idea, concept, or theory. He writes

every particular case of thinking is what it is because some attitude, some bias if you will...there is selectivity (and rejection) found in every operation of thought. There is care, concern, implicated in every act of thought.... Bias for impartiality is as much a bias as is partisan prejudice, though it is a radically different quality of bias. To be "objective" in thinking is to have a certain sort of selective interest operative. (CT:L3)

It is simply not possible to have any theory, a theory of nature included, which is not biased by a perspective. So if naturalism is going to be more than just "animal faith",²³ if it is going

to be a theory, it must be a perspectival theory. This point strengthens Dewey's right to a metaphysics, but can it justify naturalism, much less a naturalistic metaphysics? As we move to the second prong of our response, I believe that we will find that it can.

The second prong of the argument claims that the fact that any theory of nature must be perspectival is not a problem for naturalism, since perspectives are part of nature. As Dewey puts it

To me human affairs, associative and personal, are projections, continuations, complications, of the nature which exists in the physical and pre-human world. There is no gulf, no two spheres of existence, no "bifurcation". For this reason, there are in nature both foregrounds and backgrounds, heres and theres, centers and perspectives, foci and margins. (HHN:p.360)

Dewey will admit that to have a metaphysics is to have a foreground. But he denies that the foreground of his metaphysics, i.e. experience, only reveals the traits of human nature. He insists that what we experience is nature itself. This is the very core of his naturalistic metaphysics, and obviously needs further clarification, but before proceeding with this clarification, I would like to stress an important aspect of Dewey's response to Santayana. As noted, Santayana argued that there is in nature no one true, over-riding perspective, "no here, no now". Dewey agrees with this, but counters that there are a plurality of perspectives, of 'heres' and of 'nows', all revelations of nature.

The basis for Dewey's position is the continuity between man and non-human nature--the lesson taught by evolution. Man

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is wholly a natural creature, with no extra-natural faculties or qualities. His reason, his consciousness, his means for experiencing the world are all eventuations of the evolution of matter/energy; they are the result of the same processes responsible for his body and external environment. Experience is, Dewey notes, borrowing James' phrase, a "double-barreled word" (EN:p.10); it can stand for both the content of experience and the act of experiencing (both of which, however, are continuous with nature). We must be careful when using it to stand for the content of experience, for we do not experience 'experience', we experience nature; and the means for experiencing nature--our perceptual organs and cognitive functions--are the end result of a completely natural process. With this view of man and nature, the burden of the proof should lie with those who would deny the 'naturalness' of human experience, not with those advocating it; but the history of philosophy being what it is, this is not the case. Nevertheless, on this basis Dewey proceeds to defend his claim that human experience presents us with the real traits of nature. The *prima facie* problem with this view is the issue of perspectives. One way out of this difficulty would be to posit one true human perspective, but Dewey explicitly and continually rejects this possibility. Dewey responds to this problem by denying that it is an actual problem, it is a pseudo-problem, which disappears as soon as we come to understand the connection between experience and reality. If we can clear our minds of the philosophical baggage that typically accompanies these terms, we may see a way to avoid

the problems typically associated with them:

Suppose however that we start with no presuppositions save that what is experienced, since it is a manifestation of nature, may, indeed must, be used as testimony of the characteristics of natural events. (EN:p.20)

With this approach, what will be our understanding of the relation between nature and experience? We will come to the conclusion that "things--anything, everything, in the ordinary or non-technical use of the term 'thing'--are what they are experienced as." (PIE:p.241), even if they are experienced "as" different, or conflicting things. To demonstrate this, Dewey asks us to consider the horse. A horse is many things to many people; to some it is a means of recreation; to some it is a beast of burden; to some it is an object of scientific classification. That is, the experience of 'horse' is different to different people. What are to learn from this?

If these accounts turn out different in some respects, as well as congruous in others, this is no reason for assuming the content of one to be exclusively "real", and that of others to be "phenomenal"; for each account of what is experienced will manifest that it is the account of the horse dealer, or of the zoologist, and hence will give the conditions requisite for understanding the differences as well as the agreements of the various accounts. And the principle varies not a whit if we bring in the psychologist's horse, the logician's horse, or the metaphysician's horse. (PIE:p.241)

What we have here are different experiences of a horse, different perspectives. Yet, each experience is an experience of a natural object, and an experience by natural means, resulting, therefore, in a natural perspective. If we reject the notion that there are any non-natural vantage points from which to determine what the horse 'really' is, then we are left with the conclusion that each of these perspectives is equally natural, equally

real--there is no God's-eye-view.²⁴ As Dewey puts it, "we have a contrast, not between a Reality and various approximations to, or phenomenal representations of Reality, but between different reals of experience." (PIE:p.242)

It may be countered that what is actually going on with the case of the horse is that different observers are emphasizing different aspects of the same experience. I want to resist this seemingly innocuous interpretation. If what is happening is merely the taking of different emphases, then it is possible to conclude that there is 'really' only one experience, and that if we could somehow sum up these different emphases we could get at the one 'real' experience; but this misses the subtlety, and indeed the point of Dewey's position. To begin with we are not emphasizing a different aspect of an experience, because, you will recall, we are not experiencing an 'experience' we are experiencing an existence, in this case, a horse. Now, it is possible to emphasize a different aspect of a horse--it is in effect to take a different perspective--but to do so is to have a different experience. Each experience is equally 'real'; regardless of any incongruity existing between different experiences (this says nothing about truth statements which might be derived from the varying experiences; we have not gotten to that aspect of the argument yet). Take the following example: In the past few years I have come to develop an appreciation of classical music and attend concerts whenever possible. But classical music is, I have found, very complex, with many levels on which it may be enjoyed; the more you come to know of the

musical language, and different styles of interpretation the more you can get out of the music (or so I am told). The other evening I attended the debut concert of a promising violinist. I enjoyed the concert immensely and thought it a very successful debut, filled with dynamic and passionate playing, flawless technique. Such was my experience of that concert. The next day, however, I was surprised to read in a newspaper review of the concert that the violinist's debut had been disappointing; that although he played with passion and was technically flawless, the performance was lacking; that the violinist had failed to delve fully the depths of the piece; that it lacked the style of previous performances. This reviewer attended the same concert, heard the same person, playing the same pieces, in exactly the same way as I, and yet we each had quite different experiences. What should I make of this? Should I conclude that I was mistaken, that the concert was not 'really' enjoyable? No, what should be concluded is that both I and the reviewer came to this concert with different perspectives; different abilities to hear the music; different expectations and different background knowledge, all of which resulted in different experiences. Reading his review I was at no time tempted to conclude that he experienced the 'real' concert, while my experience was somehow illusory; and I am certain that I could not convince the reviewer of the converse.

If we now put this lesson together with our previous discussion of criticism we should be able to get a more complete picture of what Dewey is trying to say. We can now see that

each of these various perspectives on the horse (or on the concert) are modes of criticism; each is taking the same object of experience and attempting to draw out the various connections, both antecedent and consequent, detected from each perspective. The job of philosophy as criticism of criticisms is to find the connections between the various perspectives, with a metaphysics pointing the way. If that metaphysics is a thoroughly naturalistic one, it will state as one of the generic traits of existence, ontological parity; that is, that all beings, natural events in Dewey's terminology, are equally real. A perspectival theory of nature is legitimate because a characteristic of nature is that it gives rise to perspectives. The world is really the kind of world that gives rise to different, often contradictory, experiences of itself. To tie up Dewey's defense against the first part of Santayana's critique we will turn to Dewey's rebuttal of Santayana's article. He writes of Santayana, that

Apparently he conceives of the foreground as lying between human intuition and experience and the background; to me human experience is the foreground, nature's own. He also may think that the background alone is nature; I am not sure. But I am sure that the foreground is itself a portion of nature, an integral portion, and that nature is not just that dark abysmal unknown postulated by a religious faith in animality... (HHN:p.368)

To speak metaphorically, experience is the light which illuminates the dark unknown of nature.

With this much said, it must be noted that not enough has been said. Even if we accept the notion of ontological parity, a significant problem remains. Consider the following situation: A young couple is walking in the park at night, when

they are confronted by a stranger who, claiming that the object in his pocket is a gun, demands their money. The young lady is frightened, the young man, angered. From her perspective, this situation is experienced as really threatening; from his perspective, the situation is experienced as really a bluff. Dewey holds that all experiences are equally real, but it seems in this case that either the danger is genuine, or it is not. Regardless of his perspective, if the stranger has a gun, the young man is in as much danger as the young lady. This seems obviously the case, yet how can Dewey account for it? Before we are able to understand how Dewey would deal with this case, we need to discuss one more aspect of his metaphysics, and this is highlighted by Santayana's second charge, that for Dewey only the immediate is real.

In the context of complimenting the usefulness of Dewey's philosophy, Santayana wonders why he could not have developed his system within the framework of a naturalism, and without introducing the complicating factor of a metaphysics; he concludes, "Because it is an axiom with him that nothing but the immediate is real".²⁵ Of the immediate, Santayana says

The immediate, whether a paradise or a hell, is always specious; it is peopled by specters which, if taken for existing and working things, are illusions...Thus immediate experience of things, far from being fundamental in nature, is only the dream which accompanies our action, as the other dreams accompany our sleep...the immediate is indeed recognized and prized only by mystics...²⁶

This passage should be sufficient in itself to indicate that this is not what Dewey--the empiricist, the naturalist--means by 'immediate experience'; and the phrase, 'Dewey the mystic',

almost sticks in one's throat. More to the point, however, is Santayana's charge that for Dewey only the immediate is real (Dewey admits to being shocked upon reading this criticism--HHN:p.362).

In our previous discussion we had some hint of Dewey's views on 'the immediate'. There Dewey argued that a value as immediately experienced could not be reflected upon, but could only be enjoyed or suffered. As soon as we begin to reflect we move away from the object as immediately experienced, but as immediately experienced, the object is as it is experienced to be. If in its immediacy an object is enjoyed, then it is really such an object that gives rise to enjoyment. Dewey writes

to give a just account of anything is to tell what **that** thing is experienced to be. By these words I want to indicate the absolute, final, irreducible, and inexpugnable concrete **quale** which everything experienced not so much **has** as **is**.
(PIE:p.245)

There is a simple argument running behind this argument which results in a subtle, yet important distinction. An experience may be mediatory, in the sense of leading us to another experience, yet to have an experience it is necessary that the object of experience be immediately present.²⁷ And, for an object to be experienced, it must be experienced as something. So to have an experience of anything there must be some qualities immediately present. Dewey's point is that these immediately experienced qualities are real qualities of the object being experienced. If we return to the situation of the couple in the park we should be able to exemplify this. We said that even though the young lady experienced the situation as

threatening, and the young man experienced it as a bluff, it could only be one or the other; either the stranger had a gun in which case the situation is dangerous, or he does not, and it is a bluff. We then said that posed a problem for Dewey's commitment to ontological parity--there can only be one true way the situation is. Dewey's response is to say that in its immediacy the situation is threatening and is a bluff. Let us assume that the stranger does not have a gun; this fact does not in any way take away from its threatening quality. The situation is such that it 'really' gives rise to being experienced as threatening. It is not due to the mental state of the girl, nor is she mistaken about the situation being dangerous. The fact that there is no gun and therefore the situation turns out, upon reflection, to not be dangerous (of course being accosted by a stranger in a dark park is a dangerous situation, whether he has a gun or not; but for the purpose of our example we will define dangerous/threatening as there being a gun), does not mean that the danger the young lady experienced was 'subjective', in the sense of being subject dependent--she would experience no danger if the object (the bluffing stranger) was not, as immediately experienced, qualitatively dangerous.

But it may be countered that the young man experienced the situation as a bluff, and it turned out to be a bluff, so does that not give his experience some priority over his companion's? No. It is a generic trait of existence that objects give rise to different, often conflicting, experiences, and as experiences there are no levels of status. But the young man's

experience is true, is it not? No. His experience, in its qualitative immediacy, is just what it--there are not true or false experiences, although some experiences lead to true judgments, while others do not. We must here introduce a new distinction, that between the 'real' and the 'true'. Truth is a quality only of cognitive experiences. As we reflect on an object or event, and subject it to 'scientific' criticism, then²⁸ and only then is it appropriate to speak of truth. Since objects or events as immediately experienced cannot be reflected upon, they cannot be assigned a truth value.

As we have discussed, for Dewey there is no object-as-ultimate-Reality, but instead there are "different reals" of experience. One of these 'reals' is the object as cognitively experienced. This a tremendously important type of experience, and even though in many situations it is of ultimate significance, it has no inherent superiority over any other 'real' of experience. To equate the object-as-cognitively-experienced with the object-as-Reality is to commit the fallacy of intellectualism (EN:p.20), which Dewey says is "if not the root of all philosophic evil, at least one of the main roots." (PIE:pp.242-243) So, we can conclude of the couple's situation that as immediately experienced it is really dangerous and it is really a bluff; but as cognitively experienced it is truly²⁹ a bluff. What Dewey's naturalistic metaphysics tells us about situations such as this, and about situations in general, is

That esthetic and moral experiences reveal traits of real things as truly as does intellectual experience.... The features of objects reached by scientific or reflective experiencing are important, but so are all the phenomena

of magic, myth, politics, painting, and penitentiaries....
 What is really "in" experience extends much further than
 that which at any time is **known**. (EN:p.20)

Take note that Dewey says "known"; this does not imply that there is anything in nature which is inherently unknowable. All experience can be subjected to cognitive experiencing and be experienced as 'known'. The important point is that this does not imply a reductionism of the various types of experiences to cognitive experience.

To summarize, by defending Dewey against Santayana's critique we have introduced two important aspects of Dewey's thought: one, a naturalistic understanding of experience and nature shows that nature is such as to give rise to varying experiences of itself; but what is experienced is nature, and secondly, a naturalistic metaphysics finds that objects are as they are experienced to be; and that one way of experiencing objects is cognitively. The outcome of accepting these two points is a valuable one. It should engender a healthy respect for differing viewpoints on experience (stemming from the notion of ontological parity) without having to accept a relativistic account of truth (stemming from the fact that despite equality of realness, not all experiences have equal cognitive value). Now we will apply these ideas to the issue of morality.

The Metaphysics of Morals

In the first chapter we saw that the lesson Dewey drew from evolution was that man is a part of nature, and that a product of natural man interacting with his natural environ-

ment must be considered wholly natural. And as stated morality is one such product. We are now in a better position to justify that claim. Our discussion of metaphysics is useful in bringing out two important notions for moral philosophy: one, a naturalistic metaphysics will point out those generic traits of existence which give rise to moral experience, and two, our moral experiences are real and need no extra-natural or supernatural explanation.

Philosophy is a criticism of criticisms. All modes of criticism are in fact a reflective consideration of the antecedents and consequents of value objects. The job of a moral philosophy, then, is to criticize that mode of criticism termed 'moral criticism'. It is an investigation into the factors which lead to moral valuing and the consequences of accepting various moral values. It is not the job of moral philosophy to enumerate and prescribe moral values, but rather to determine the process of securing and validating a given moral value. Dewey writes

The business of moral theory is not at all with consummations and goods as such, but with the discovery of the conditions and consequences of their appearance, a work that is factual and analytic, not dialectic, hortatory, nor prescriptive...the office of moral philosophy is criticism. (EN:p.350)

Metaphysics is a groundmap for such criticism. Specific to morality it will detect those generic traits of existence which give rise to moral experience.

Perhaps the most important trait of existence for morality is its precariousness:

Man finds himself living in an aleatory world; his existence involves, to put it badly, a gamble. The world is a scene of risk; it is uncertain, unstable, uncannily unstable.

Its dangers are irregular, inconstant, not to be counted upon as to their time and seasons. (EN:p.54)

But it is this precariousness that gives rise to reflection, and hence, the possibility of good. If our needs were met with little or no resistance, if our strivings were assured of success, there would be no fulfillment, no sense of satisfaction, things would merely be. Dewey says of the aleatory nature of existence that while it is, "the source of ignorance, error, and failure of expectation, it is the source of the delight which fulfillment brings." (EN:p.54) Dewey is not presenting a puritanical notion that suffering is good; on the contrary, suffering is evil, but it is the inherent possibility of suffering, of evil, that gives meaning to good. He states

A purely stable world permits of no illusions, but neither is it clothed with ideals. It just exists. To be good is to be better than; and there can be no better than except where there is shock and discord combined with enough assured order to make attainment of harmony possible. (EN:pp.54-55)

A precarious world in which good can give way to evil, in which desires are thwarted, in which there is unpredictability concerning the things we need is a world which constantly gives rise to indeterminate, problematic situations. It is a world which makes necessary careful reflection. The correlative to precariousness is the generic trait of stability. That this is a generic trait of existence makes it possible for us to step back and reflect on the chances for good. By critically reflecting on the causes of satisfaction and suffering we can come to a greater control of good and evil. Once we become conscious of the world as a place that may thwart our desires

we reflect on the conditions of satisfying our desires with an eye toward future satisfaction. We project our desires into the future and set our sights on an **end**--which is another morally relevant generic trait of existence.

To an empirical thinker, says Dewey, "immediate enjoyments and sufferings are the conclusive exhibition that nature has its finalities as well as its relationships." (EN:p.73) These ends arise out of existential needs seeking concrete satisfaction; when we turn to our discussion of moral decision making we will find that this empirical situation is the paradigm for moral dilemmas, and normative force is derived by these situated needs. Dewey continues,

What is precisely more pertinent to our present theme, the terminal outcome when anticipated (as it is when a moving cause of affairs is perceived) becomes an end-in-view, an aim, purpose, a prediction usable as a plan in shaping the outcome of events. (EN:p.86)

An end is just that, a closing, a terminus of some process. An end-in-view, however, is a deliberate choosing of an end after reflection has deemed it worthy. An end is an immediately experienced quality, and as we have seen, qualities in their immediacy simply are as they are experienced to be. But we know that immediacy is evanescent; if an enjoyed object is to be had again, or a noxious object is to be avoided, we must devise a strategy, a plan of action, and to do so requires an end-in-view. This is the naturalistic basis for setting up moral goals.

In establishing an end-in-view we must also take into consideration the means to that end. Part of what distinguishes ends from ends-in-view is that in devising a plan we must

identify and incorporate the means into our goal. There can be no strict separation of means and ends. This finds support, also, in Dewey's discussion of immediate quality. When we reflect on an immediate quality we are determining its antecedent and consequent connections, and in doing so we are determining its meaning. In designating an end an end-in-view we are choosing that object as being valuable. Since the causes and consequences determine the meaning of the end they too share intimately in the end's value. This is important in that it prevents the historic mistake of valuing ends while disparaging means. Once it is seen that the means share in the value and worth of the ends they can be seen to be as morally relevant as the ends.

In this discussion we can see the basis for the unification of morality and science. The office of moral philosophy is to detect the means to and consequences of valued objects; science, as our most successful means for determining empirical connections, becomes a necessary partner in this business. More of this partnership of science and morality will be found in later chapters, but the basis for the unification of science and morality is firmly established as a result of Dewey's naturalistic metaphysics.

Dewey's view on immediate quality is further tied to a metaphysics of moral. The distinction between object-as-immediately experienced and object-as-cognitively-established is the naturalistic basis for the conflict between apparent good and actual good. In so far as this is a major component of moral dilemmas, this goes a long way toward naturalizing

morality. Take the example of the recovering alcoholic who is offered a drink. He takes it and begins to drink. The immediate, unreflective, quality of this experience is that of good. It tastes good, it quenches his thirst, it satisfies his craving. The truth of the situation is that the drink is damaging; but this does not take away from the 'goodness' of the drink in its immediacy, just as the absence of the gun did not take away from the 'danger' of the young lady's experience, in our previous example. Now, no one would want to call this 'good' a moral 'good', including Dewey. It is 'good' only in an immediately qualitative sense, and this is never a moral sense. It is only upon reflection that taking the drink may be determined as morally wrong. Just as the threat from the stranger was subjected to 'scientific' criticism and judged as true or false, so must the taking of the drink be subjected to moral criticism and judged as good or bad. There is no need for reference to some extra-natural standard in order to justify rejecting an apparent (immediately qualitative) good as truly (critically judged) bad. It is bad, if it is bad, because of its empirical connections to other value-objects, and other ends-in-view. This of course needs much more explicit discussion, but that must wait until our discussion of the moral method. For our present purposes it further exemplifies the relevance of Dewey's naturalistic metaphysics to morality.

It should be quite evident by this point that Dewey is
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 a confirmed naturalist in moral issues (as he is in philosophic-

al issues, in general), but to complete a naturalistic account of morality we need to show that the cognitive work involved in making moral judgments can also be explained in naturalistic terms. That will be the topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NATURE OF INQUIRY

As we have just seen, Dewey's attempt to explain moral experience in naturalistic terms argued that we need no extra-natural explanations for that experience; they are a natural by-product of the interactions between the human organism and the environment. We also introduced an important distinction: that between object-immediately-experienced-as-good (apparent good) and object-as-cognitively-experienced-as-good (true good). In Dewey's moral philosophy these distinctions are termed the desired and the desirable.¹ Dewey's naturalistic metaphysics of immediate qualities teaches that our experiences of objects as good, beautiful, exciting, fulfilling (and unfortunately, evil, ugly, dull and empty) are real qualities of existence. It also teaches that there is more than just the immediate experience; to truly know an object, we need to experience it on a cognitive level. We need to step back from the immediate experience and critically reflect on the object, and to do so is to examine the object in its relations, both antecedent and consequent. Moral decision making requires us to examine the object-immediately-experienced-as-good and determine it as either truly good or truly not good. The object-as-immediately-experienced is indeterminate in regards to cognitive status. We must subject the immediate experience to reflective criticism

in order to determine its true value.

This brief recap should set the stage for the work of the present chapter. Dewey's naturalistic metaphysics demonstrated how moral issues arise naturally in the course of living. It also pointed the way toward resolving those issues. What remains to be done is to set out the means for that resolution; we must examine the nature of inquiry. There will be three components to this examination: first, we will consider Dewey's naturalization of intelligence, with its concomitant rejection of traditional epistemology, then we will set out the process of inquiry and examine the very important notion of a 'situation' and finally, we will discuss the continuity of inquiry across diverse subject matter (e.g., everyday experience, science, morals).

Intelligence Naturalized

As should be expected, the key into Dewey's views on this topic is his naturalism. Concerning epistemological problems, Dewey is more unrelenting in his attacks on tradition and more insistent on the need for reconstruction than in any other single area. Given Dewey's conception of the development of philosophy this makes good sense. As we have discussed, Dewey believes that philosophy originated as an attempt to reconcile the 'sacred beliefs' of a society with conflicting, yet undeniable findings of natural science. The original reconciliation resulted with the development of classical metaphysics, which eventually came into conflict with modern physics. This necessitated a second

reconciliation which was accomplished by modern epistemology. It is this epistemological tradition, along with its underlying revised metaphysics, which Dewey believed to be in conflict with the most recent theories of natural science. Therefore, it is this philosophical view which is most in need of reconstruction.

This project of reconstruction was a major part of Dewey's life-long work. It begins with Studies in Logical Theory, in 1902, and though it culminates in his 1938 Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, it continues to concern him in his final years, as is evidenced by the 1949 Knowing and the Known, (co-authored with Arthur Bentley) written at the age of ninety. A great portion of his writings on these issues involved a critique of traditional theories and in pointing out the harm done by these theories. My concern here is not so much with his critique, as it is with grasping his constructive efforts. To anyone familiar with traditional epistemology, a mere statement of Dewey's views would suffice to indicate where he diverges from tradition, since he makes such a definitive break. So, in order to maintain a focus, we will discuss his critique only in a general manner, and only in so far as it helps to explicate his constructive views.

Dewey's commitment to naturalism is predicated on the principle that the lesson of evolution is continuity between higher and lower processes.² Man's rationality is a higher (i.e. more complex) process, and while it is not reducible to lower processes, it does develop from lower processes. A rough analogy

of this continuity is the development of a tree from a seed. The tree grows from the seed but is not reducible to the seed.³ Our intellectual ability, for all its complexity and subtlety, is a natural function and its development can be explained on purely naturalistic grounds. It was a highly developed neural structure which gave man his natural defense against a hostile and uncertain world. In their search for food and shelter, the earliest hominids could not rely on overwhelming strength, or size, or any physically inherent protection against danger (such as thick fur, or sharp claws, etc.). Their survival depended on their cunning and their ability to co-ordinate action. This more complex response to the environment called for a more complex brain, for greater intelligence. The fact of human intelligence and rationality needs no *deus ex machina* for an explanation. An understanding of the workings of evolution and man's natural history suffices to explain their existence. Dewey writes, "The organs, instrumentalities, and operations of knowing are inside nature, not outside. Hence, they are changes of what previously existed" and concludes that this view, "installs man, thinking man, within nature." (QC:L4,p.168) The effect of this on traditional epistemology is radical. Dewey sees the dominating concern of epistemology, whether rationalistic or empirical, to be explaining that knowledge, in general, is possible; this is an artificial problem. For if we begin from a naturalistic premiss, we can see that the problem is not knowledge, in general, but knowledge in specific instances. The central issue becomes, not how can I know, but

how may I know better. Where traditional epistemology seeks for a foundation that makes knowledge possible, Dewey seeks an understanding of how we actually go about gaining knowledge, in order that we may improve that ability. Dewey's naturalism leads him to see 'inquiry' as the basic epistemological problem (again, not 'how is inquiry possible?', but 'how do we go about inquiring?', 'how might our inquiries be more successful?'). So now we shall turn our attention to Dewey's theory of inquiry.

Inquiry receives its fullest and most in-depth treatment in the 1938 Logic, but the activity there labeled 'inquiry' has a long history in Dewey's writings, stretching at least as far back as the 1902 work. The original term is 'reflective thought' and, while it undergoes refinement, the same basic process underlies both processes. So a consideration of some of Dewey's earlier works will be helpful to our study. We will set out the pattern of inquiry in the following section, here we are concerned to elucidate some of the general features of the process.

We start by noting that the delimiting conditions of inquiry, or reflective thought, are concrete existences; we do not begin with general doubt, but rather with a specific concrete doubt set within a 'problematic situation'. The notion of a 'situation' is crucial to Dewey's theory and we will have more to say of it later, for now it is sufficient to say that inquiry is spurred on by a concrete problem which arises in the course of an individual's interaction with its environment. It terminates when the situation has been changed, that is, when

the problem has been resolved. Dewey writes, "If inquiry begins in doubt it terminates in the institution of conditions which remove the need for doubt." (LTI:L12,p.15) Bertrand Russell points out a certain vagueness of the language of this quotation. He asks what exactly is a 'need for doubt'? He says that for those who believe there to be an 'objective' truth, someone like himself and unlike Dewey presumably, there is always a need to doubt as long as there is a chance for error. If there is not some objective truth to be found then the task of inquiry is to rid ourselves of the psychological state of doubt.⁴ This is not, as Russell points out, what Dewey means. Russell is trying to argue that Dewey must either commit himself to the notion that inquiry is a search for objective truth or accept that it is merely a means of assuaging a subjective, "psychological", doubt. He says that he is unable to understand fully the idea of a 'need' for doubt. While I believe he has a valid point concerning the ambiguity in Dewey's use of the word 'need', I think that the ambiguity is evidence of a looseness in Dewey's writing style rather than a conceptual looseness. Doubt is a quality of an existential situation that calls for inquiry; we need to inquire into the conditions which lead to the doubt and once these conditions have been remedied there is no longer any need for inquiry (because the conditions which lead to doubt have been changed so as to eliminate the doubtfulness of the situation). However I believe that Russell's deeper criticism misses the point. His strategy seems to be to maneuver Dewey into a corner and force him to choose between a mentalistic

conception of doubt and inquiry--which is a view that Dewey explicitly repudiates--and an objective conception of inquiry and doubt. But this is not a hard choice for Dewey; he chooses the objective formulation. The reason that Russell believes this will be a hard decision for Dewey is that he associates this objective formulation with a foundational theory of truth, that is, a theory of truth which posits truth as fixed antecedently to the act of inquiry. Dewey does reject this notion of truth, yet he still insists on the objectivity of the notion of inquiry. To understand this better we need to consider the next characteristic of 'inquiry'.

It is easy to show that the mentalistic conception of doubt and inquiry is untenable and Russell himself provides the example.⁵ Suppose I doubt the worth of my character after having performed some morally questionable act. If this doubt were purely mental then a large enough quantity of whiskey would effectively relieve me of this doubtful sensation. But the fact that when the whiskey wears off the doubt remains indicates that the doubt was not merely "in my head". The doubt is a component of a concrete existential situation. The only way to remove the doubt is to affect the circumstances which lead to the doubt. The only way to know if inquiry has been successful is to test the results of inquiry against experience. The test for the validity of the results of inquiry is a pragmatic one. Dewey's reliance on the pragmatic method is first displayed as early as the 1902 essays. There Dewey introduces the following notion:

The test of validity of an idea is its functional or instrumental use in effecting the transition from a relatively conflicting experience to a relatively integrated one.... This is to say that validity really refers to rightfulness or adequacy of performance... (SLT:M2,p.359)

This is clearly not a mentalistic notion, but neither does it entail accepting an antecedent truth. Inquiry is completed when the conditions that gave rise to the doubt, those which caused the problem, have been dealt with.

We are now ready to consider Dewey's definition of inquiry:

Inquiry is the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is so determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations as to convert the elements of the original situation into a unified whole. (LTI:L12,p.108) 6

Inquiry is called for in a situation that is problematic, indeterminate, a situation "which is in conflict within itself." (SLT:M2,p.328) We discussed an example of this in the previous chapter. The young couple being faced by a man claiming to have a gun is a situation definitely calling for a response. But what kind of response? The situation is so indeterminate in certain aspects that no response is immediately forthcoming. The couple must inquire into the situation and determine its true nature; how grave a threat are they facing? The need for inquiry is over once the conditions which give rise to doubt are dealt with; as soon as they determine that the man has a gun, and is serious, the nature of the situation is no longer indeterminate,⁷ inquiry is over. As stated the notion of 'situation' will be explored more fully in the next section, but allow me to point out one further aspect. I described the situation of the couple as being 'indeterminate in certain

respects', which correctly implies that it is determinate in certain other respects. No situation is completely indeterminate for if it were we would be unable to enter into inquiry. Inquiry is controlled and directed, there is some plan as to how to proceed, some idea of what might work. If a situation is completely indeterminate then there are no signposts to hook on to which can give us some direction and control. Such a situation would not meet the criteria for being a problematic situation. In such a case we could not act intelligently, but could merely lash out instinctively. As Dewey states, "there is always something unquestioned in any problematic situation." (SLT:M2, p.338) This is an example, also, of a generic trait of existence i.e. stability. Despite the frequent emphasis on precariousness and change if there were no stability it would not be possible to step back and reflect on the dynamic aspects of existence.

If we see inquiry as a refined notion of reflective thought we are able to gain insight into the specific subject matter of inquiry. You will recall that in the last chapter we saw Dewey argue that whenever we reflect we move beyond the object in its immediacy and consider its antecedents and consequents. This is for Dewey the essence of intelligent thought. He writes

To grasp the meaning of a thing, an event, or a situation is to see it in its **relations** to other things: to note how it operates or functions, what consequences follow from it, what causes it, what uses it can be put to. (HWT:L8, pp.225-226)

The relation of **means-consequence** is the centre and heart of all understanding. (HWT:L8,p.233)

This essence of reflective thought remains central as Dewey shifts his emphasis to inquiry:

causal propositions (in the sense of propositions whose content is a relation of conditions that are means to other conditions that are consequences) are involved in every competently conducted inquiry. (LTI:L12,p.455)

And in another passage he ties inquiry with rationality, the defining characteristic being a concern with means-consequence:

Through examination of the relations which exist between means (methods) employed and conclusions attained as their consequence, reasons are discovered why some methods succeed and other methods fail. It is implied in what has been said ...that rationality is an affair of **means and consequences** (LTI:L12,p.17)

Here we see not only the material for inquiry but Dewey's conception of rationality. Rationality is concerned with means and consequences, not with "fixed first principles as ultimate premises." (LTI:L12,p.17) This also indicates the basis of Dewey's rejection of Kantian moral method. In Kant's rationalistic ethics to be concerned with consequences is to fail to act according to morality. For Dewey, inquiry is going to be the mechanism for distinguishing the moral from the non-moral --a rational inquiry which will be **solely** concerned with means and consequences. Dewey categorizes Kant as a traditional epistemologist and therefore by rejecting that tradition rejects Kant's moral method.

At this point hopefully we have a working understanding of inquiry: an individual is part of a situation that is undetermined; he needs to change the conditions of the situation so to determine it. He reflects on the antecedents and the consequents relevant to the situation and determines the best course of action. He then applies that decision to the concrete situation and observes the results. If it settles the problem the

decision is validated (at least conditionally), if not he begins again, trying to determine where he went wrong and how he might correct his mistake--this is inquiry. Before we begin a more detailed discussion of this process it will be instructive to consider the background of inquiry, or what Dewey calls "the existential matrix of inquiry." (LTI:L12,p.30)

There are two aspects to this existential matrix: the biological and the cultural. The biological aspect grounds inquiry and doubt in nature; they are both natural occurrences. To understand this one must appreciate the holistic flavor of Dewey's conception of nature. For convenience sake, and to facilitate analysis, we typically discriminate between organism and environment but this is merely a matter of perspective. For humans, the word 'environment' typically denotes the geography of our lands, the climate, the non-human creatures that share our territory and the vegetation that colors our landscape and provides us with means for living, and this is accurate. But, we in turn are part of the environment when considered from the perspective, say, of the atmosphere; that is, we are part of the complex of factors which impact and limit the condition of the atmosphere. The point Dewey is making is that environment and organism interact, and they exist as they do only because of this interaction.⁸ We must inhale oxygen from the atmosphere in order to survive; so we live by fact of that atmosphere. But the chemicals we exhale (and those we release artificially) return into the atmosphere and contribute to making the atmosphere what it is. Quite literally the environment must

become part of the organism in order for the organism to survive, and the organism, by fact of its survival and all the activities which that entails, alters and helps re-create the environment.

As Dewey puts it

Whatever else organic life is or is not, it is a process of activity that involves an environment. It is a transaction extending beyond the spatial limits of the organism. An organism does not live in an environment; it lives by means of an environment.... The processes of living are enacted by the environment as truly as by the organism; for they are an integration. (LTI:L12,p.32)

As organisms develop environments are changed; as environments change organisms need to change. This is the basis of evolution. As differentiation of structure occurred in organisms there developed differentiation of interactions; and with this, Dewey notes, there also comes the need to maintain a balance among these interactions, an equilibrium, a "unified environment." (LTI:L12,p.32) It is this equilibrium between organism and environment that maintains proper life functions (e.g. too little air and we die; however if we do not exhale the waste products of respiration we also risk death). When this equilibrium is thrown off we experience need. There is a problem that has to be dealt with; our environment is no longer integrated, it has become problematic. This is the naturalistic basis of the problematic situation, and it gives rise to a naturalistic understanding of inquiry. When equilibrium is thrown off the organism is forced to regain it if it is to survive; it begins to search and explore its environment. Dewey explains that

the "higher" the organism the more serious become the disturbances and the more energetic (and often more

prolonged) are the efforts necessary for its reestablishment. The state of disturbed equilibration constitutes need. The movement toward its restoration is search and exploration. The recovery is fulfillment or satisfaction. (LTI:L12,p.34)

As organisms become more complex the problems they face, and subsequent solutions they need, become more complex. Inquiry⁹ is continuous with this basic survival technique. It is this survival technique become more conscious and intelligent. Dewey defends this by saying

The structure and course of life-behavior has a definite pattern, spatial and temporal. This pattern definitely foreshadows the general pattern of inquiry. For inquiry grows out of an earlier state of settled adjustment, which, because of disturbance, is indeterminate or problematic (corresponding to the first phase of tensional activity), and then passes into inquiry proper, (corresponding to the searching and exploring activities of an organism): when the search is successful, belief or assertion is the counterpart, upon this level, of reintegration upon the organic level. (LTI:L12,p.40)

Here we have clear evidence of the impact of the lesson of evolution upon Dewey's thinking. For it was the theory of evolution which opened Dewey up to the logic of continuity that underlies naturalism, and it is this principle of continuity that provides Dewey the key to understanding man as a conscious, intelligent being.

The second aspect of the existential matrix is cultural. A major component of man's environment is other human beings and a great portion of the disequilibrium we encounter arises through our interactions with our fellow beings. The most important means for interacting with this human portion of the environment is language. It is language which allows us to coordinate our actions with others. This coordination allows

us to develop more and more complex forms of interactions with our environment. Since it is an increase in complexity that defines the transformation from lower to higher types of organism, language is the key to the development of the most complex interaction, i.e. intelligence. Language for Dewey extends well beyond written or oral speech, "It includes the latter. But it includes also not only gestures but rites, ceremonies, monuments and the products of industrial and fine arts." (LTI:L12,p.52) The defining characteristic of language is symbolization--the ability to stand for or represent something else. To clarify this, Dewey contrasts symbol to sign. A sign is a means of natural inference from one event to another, as for example from smoke we infer fire. Smoke functions as a natural inferential relation to fire, it is a sign. A symbol, on the other hand, is an artificial sign. The word 'fire' stands for fire on the basis of a common agreement to use the word in that fashion. A cross or six-pointed star stands for a religion, is a religious symbol, because of a shared tradition of using it in such a manner. (LTI:L12,p.57-60)

The great advantage of a system of shared symbols is that we are then able to consider objects, events, without their actually being present. By having a roadmap, which stands for the area we need to traverse, we can plan out the best route without physically having to travel the various alternatives. This is what makes intelligent action possible. We are able to consider our options before acting; we can mentally rehearse the various choices before us, play out the consequences in

our head, evaluate the results and act on the best alternative. It allows us to think before acting. It makes possible all the higher developments of reason, logic and science. Dewey writes

The use of meaning-symbols for institution of purposes or ends-in-view, for deliberation, as a rehearsal through such symbols of the activities by which the ends may be brought into being, is at least a rudimentary form of reasoning in connection with the solution of problems. The habit of reasoning once instituted is capable of indefinite development on its own account. (LTI:L12,p.63)

Language, in this broad sense, is the vehicle which makes inquiry possible. It too is explained on a naturalistic basis as a response to the need to coordinate action between organisms in their struggle to maintain an equilibrated environment (i.e., in their struggle to survive).

The result of this analysis of the existential matrix of inquiry is a view of inquiry firmly grounded in nature. Since inquiry is the process of cognitively experiencing the world, by giving a naturalistic interpretation of inquiry Dewey has naturalized intelligence. We will see the consequences of this as we further investigate inquiry.

Inquiry as Transformational

It has been stated that, for Dewey, inquiry is complete when the conditions that gave rise to inquiry have been so changed as to eliminate the need for inquiry; the instigating problem has been solved. This is what is meant by 'inquiry as transformational'. In a recent work R.W. Sleeper sets this notion as the central concept in all of Dewey's philosophy. He comments that "it is this transformational conception that shapes the

development of Dewey's philosophy.... It is this conception of philosophy as transformational that accounts for Dewey's commitment to philosophy itself." I believe that this statement is consistent with the thesis put forth in the present project concerning Dewey's view of philosophy. I have stated that Dewey sees the role of philosophy as an attempt to bridge the gap between our value system (i.e. the sacred) and science (i.e. the profane) and that this is the philosophic problem. The breach between science and morality is the problem which calls forth philosophical inquiry; and problems require a transformation of the problematic conditions. I have been using the term 'reconstruction' to label this philosophic function, and I am still committed to that term for reconstruction is but one form of transformation, it is not synonymous with transformation. Dewey's aim is to transform the conditions which lead to the conflict between science and morality by reconstructing our understanding of these two endeavors. However, this is not the only way to effect a transformation. One could take the approach suggested in Huxley's Brave New World and completely subjugate the notions of morality to the dictates of a scientific oligarchy; science is made supreme by fiat and the people are conditioned to ignore possible moral implications of science. In such a scenario there is no conflict between science and morality; the conditions which created the problems that called for inquiry have been so transformed as to eliminate the problems. Inquiry is finished. On the other hand one could take the example of certain religious fundamentalists and prohibit

any science which conflicted with the sacred tradition; impose such harsh penalties that scientists are effectively persuaded to avoid any experiments which have possibly damaging implications. In this scenario, also, the conditions that gave rise to the problem and to inquiry are transformed into conditions that eliminate the problem.

These are options which are unacceptable to Dewey. The option of the fundamentalists is the failed course of action which lead to the historical origination of the problem between science and morality. It was the inability of the sacred tradition, as an over riding rule of law in primitive societies, to resist the developments of science and the influx of new ideas that lead to the original conflict. So beside the many other rational and moral reasons for rejecting this option, Dewey would have recognized it as the repeat of mistake and a failure to learn from experience. The scientific/political option would be equally repugnant to Dewey. For one, it is an example of the worship of science which Dewey wanted to eliminate. Secondly, it would base society on the cognitive interpretation of existence to the detriment of the alternative, and equally worthy, interpretations. Although Dewey is passionate and persistent in his plea for the general adoption of the scientific method, he does so because he believes that is the only way to secure the goods and values cherished by the other interpretations (e.g. those of art, and morality, and religious sentiment, etc.). He in no way wants to subordinate these to science.

The purpose of setting out these examples was to support the proposition that Sleeper's conception of Dewey's philosophy as transformational is consistent with the contention of this work that the function of Dewey's philosophy is reconstructive; it was also to bring out a subtle distinction between transformation and reconstruction.¹² Before turning to the pattern of inquiry I would like to consider one more point on Dewey's conception of philosophy as transformational. In the previously referred to article on Dewey's logic, Bertrand Russell makes the following comment on the transformational nature of inquiry:

Before examining this doctrine, it may be worthwhile to repeat, what I have pointed out elsewhere, its close similarity to that of another ex-Hegelian, Karl Marx, as stated in his *Theses on Feurbach* (1845), and afterward embodied in the theory of dialectical materialism... [quoting from that work] "...the truth, i.e., the reality and power, of thought must be demonstrated in practice. Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways, but the real task is to alter it".

Allowing for a certain difference of phraseology, this doctrine is¹³ essentially indistinguishable from instrumentalism.

While this statement might be insightful about certain similarities between Marx and Dewey, I believe the statement that instrumentalism is "essentially indistinguishable" from dialectical materialism demonstrates a lack of grasp of the subtleties of Dewey's view. It is true that both men have a Hegelian background, but the Hegelian notion of an inexorable trend working its way through history, which Marx accepts, is one of the major reasons that Dewey abandoned Hegel. Truth is related to the movement of this dialectical and Marx's interpretation of it leads him to argue, as in the passage quoted above, that truth must be demonstrated in activity. But this conception

of truth, although different, still contains the flawed idea of truth as set antecedently, needing merely to be demonstrated. Of course Dewey connects truth and activity, but in a very different way. Truth, or in his terminology, warranted assertability, is created; it is the outcome of inquiry. It is not antecedently fixed, and as we shall see, it can never be finally fixed.

In regard to the second part of the quotation from Marx, indicating that philosophers have only interpreted the world, while the task is to change it, this seems Deweyan. But there is a subtle, yet important difference. For Dewey, to interpret the world, to reflect critically on it, is to submit it to inquiry. Since inquiry is transformational, an interpretation, which is the result of inquiry, is a transformation of the world. To interpret the world is to change it. That the task of philosophy is to change the world is quite in line with a Deweyan perspective, however, to hold to the idea that the varying interpretations offered by the various schools of philosophy have not effected change in the world is misconceived, according to Dewey. The reason he spends so much time criticizing traditional philosophy is just because it has so changed the world, and changed it for the worse. To hold that interpretations do not effect change in the world is to seriously underestimate the power of ideas and to demonstrate the continuing influence of traditional epistemology. For it is the traditional epistemological view which posits that knowing is a passive activity which, to be valid, must make no difference in the world. It is telling of the

pervasiveness, and the practical effectiveness of this idea that it permeates the thinking of even the most radical of philosophers (i.e. Marx). This provides us with a good lead into the main issue of this section: the active and existentially effective nature of knowing, as demonstrated in the process of inquiry.

We defined inquiry as the controlled transformation of an indeterminate situation into a situation so determined as to constitute a unified whole. We have already begun to examine this notion of transformation but to grasp it fully we need to know more about what constitutes a situation. Dewey defines a situation negatively. He says that we never experience an object in isolation. I never experience an apple in a vacuum. When I come home from work, feeling hungry, I do not experience the apple as an isolated object; I experience an apple-on-the-table-looking-inviting-in response-to-my-hunger; that is, I experience the apple as part of a context. This context is a situation. Dewey writes

What is designated by the word "situation" is not a single object or event or set of objects or events. For we never experience nor form judgments about objects and events in isolation, but only in connection with a contextual whole. This latter is called a "situation". (LTI:L12,p.72)

It is a contextual whole which constitutes a situation. I do not experience objects in isolation; I do not experience the apple, then the table upon which it sits, then notice its inviting appearance, then notice my hunger, then perform some mentalistic feat which somehow links them together. It is only the act of cognitive analysis that isolates these objects (even

though in this case it is a very simple analysis). To analyze a situation cognitively and then identify the existential conditions with the result of this analysis is to commit what Dewey calls the 'philosophic fallacy', that is, "the conversion¹⁴ of eventual functions into antecedent existence." (EN:p.27)

The wholeness of the situation may be indicated by pointing out that if you alter one aspect of the situation you alter what the other components are experienced to be. For example, if I come home from work after having stuffed myself at dinner my experience of the same apple would likely be one of indifference, rather than invitation; or if I come home hungry, but notice a worm slithering through the apple not only will I experience the apple as repulsive, but I am likely to experience the sensation in my stomach as nausea, not hunger. And if I come home hungry and bite into the apple and find it hard and unyielding, producing a bland, gritty taste (not the taste experience typically associated with biting into an apple) the situation has become problematic. There is something indeterminate in the situation that disrupts the integrity of the experience; inquiry is called for.

If we refer to Russell's article once more we can further our understanding of a situation. Russell asks how large a situation do we need to consider; he points out, correctly, that there is a temporal aspect to Dewey's 'situation'. The situation we are discussing has reference to the past (I did not eat prior to coming home, hence my hunger), the present (I am now hungry and see an apple) and the future (I anticipate

that eating the apple will satisfy my hunger). Indeed, all situations develop out of a past, are experienced in the present, and anticipate a future. Russell focuses on this point and concludes:

I do not see how, on Dr.Dewey's principles, a "situation" can embrace less than the whole universe; this is an inevitable consequence of the insistence upon continuity. It would seem to follow that all inquiry, strictly interpreted, is an attempt to analyze the universe.¹⁵

If analyzing the entire universe were entailed in inquiry then inquiry would require omniscience, and be eminently impractical. Is it possible to delimit a situation and if so how? A situation as a distinct, unique, whole, is so by virtue of an immediate, pervasive quality. Dewey has difficulty in setting out an explicit explanation of what this 'pervasive quality' is; he says it is 'felt' and 'sensed', and then just admits that "It is not anything that can be expressed in words for it is something that must be had." (LTI:L12,pp.73-75) This difficulty does not stem from a logical flaw in the concept, but rather from an inherent limitation of speaking about an immediate quality. The wholeness that makes a situation a situation is an immediate qualitative experience; and as we have seen, when we reflect on an immediate experience we must step back from it and discuss antecedents and consequents. As an immediate experience it is just as it is experienced. So the difficulty in putting into words what it is that constitutes the wholeness of the situation is not a point against the concept.

Despite this difficulty, Dewey attempts to give some examples to try to clarify his position. He says that we can

best grasp what a 'pervasive quality' is by referring to its aesthetic usage. We say of a painting that it has a certain quality, a Rembrandt quality, to it. we do not mean by this reference to a particular line or color, or any particular component of the picture, but rather to the picture as a whole. We may subsequently analyze the painting to determine exactly how it is reminiscent of a Rembrandt, but this is distinct from¹⁶ having the experience. (LTI:L12,p.75) In our example of the apple, the situation of being-hungry-and-seeing-an-inviting-apple-on-the-kitchen-table is experienced as a whole, in its immediacy. There is no question of including the state of the universe in this unique, individual situation; there is no questioning at all. Questioning, or inquiry, only begins when the immediate wholeness of the situation is disturbed.

Having said this much let us continue with Russell's point. When I step back and reflect on the situation, when I attempt to restore its wholeness, how may I then set the boundaries of inquiry? The restoration of wholeness, or what was referred to in the last section as equilibrium, is inquiry. In our example situation the wholeness is disrupted when I bite into the apple and do not have the anticipated taste experience. There is a problem, and I must inquire into the conditions of the situation to discover what the problem is and then rectify it. This is what limits the boundaries of inquiry--the existential problem at hand. This is what makes inquiry "directed" and "controlled", that it responds to the conditions which are present. I am having an unanticipated taste experience, inquiry is controlled when

it limits its investigation to the object I am biting into and the act of biting. Inquiry would be uncontrolled and undirected if, upon having an unanticipated taste experience, I ran to my telescope and checked the alignment of the stars. My resolution of this specific problem is unaffected by the phase of the moon, the political conditions in Asia, and the state of culture in America. All of these are constituents of the universe but they are obviously unrelated to the problem at hand. So, contra-Russell, inquiry is not, "strictly interpreted" concerned with analyzing the universe; only certain relevant aspects of it.

It must be admitted that there is a sense in which the relevant context for inquiry is hard to define. When I experience the apple on the table as inviting it is due to the fact that at that moment I am hungry, rather than sated. But it depends on much more; it depends on a long train of previous experiences in which I have eaten and enjoyed apples. If I never encountered an apple before the situation would be very different; or if I hated apples, perhaps due to some childhood trauma of having bitten into an apple and found half a worm, the situation would be very different. So there is a certain difficulty in delimiting the antecedents of the situation. Also, the possible consequents may be many. I may be hungry and love apples but have a dinner date at my favorite restaurant, and I know my appetite will be ruined if I eat the apple. Or I may have to abstain from eating for a certain period due to my having a medical appointment. In these instances the apple will seem

like a temptation to be resisted. Since inquiry is going to concern itself with antecedents and consequents it may be difficult to set the limits of inquiry (particularly in a more complex situation), but this does not entail that the entire state of the universe is relevant to a particular problem; although it does pose a challenge to the inquirer. The more comprehensive a consideration of relevant conditions, the greater validity our results can have. This attempt to be more comprehensive distinguishes inquiry from impulsive action. An impulsive response to our situation would be to gorge oneself on the apple; the intelligent response is to consider the situation in all its constituent relations and then decide what to do. The fact that there may be relevant conditions not considered is the basis of the inherent fallibility of all inquiry, but it is also the basis for the possibility of greater intelligence. It is important to note that the guiding term is 'relevant'. It may be true that Dewey's commitment to continuity implies that ultimately everything is related, but it does not imply that everything is related to everything in a relevant way. Russell misses this point and this allows him to represent Dewey's inquiry as an attempt to analyze the universe.

With this work done we may now set out the pattern of inquiry. Inquiry formally has five stages. In practice these stages may coalesce into one another. They are formally distinguished by reflecting on the act of inquiry, rather than being something we are consciously aware of as we inquire. The first stage of inquiry is becoming aware of a problem. It is a non-

cognitive experience; something disturbs the wholeness of the situation and the situation's equilibrium is thrown off--the situation has become problematic. In our apple example the first stage occurs when I bite into the apple and receive an unexpected sensation. The anticipated taste is not present. Dewey writes "to see that a situation requires inquiry is the initial step in inquiry." (LTI:L12,p.111) We must emphasize that it is the existential situation that has become problematic; the problem, the doubt, is not the psychological state of the individual (though of course the psychological state of the individual is an important component of the situation). Dewey writes

A variety of names serves to characterize indeterminate situations. They are disturbed, troubled, ambiguous, confused, full of conflicting tendencies, obscure, etc. It is the situation that has these traits. We are doubtful because the situation is inherently doubtful. (LTI:L12,p.109)

Since the problem is in the existential situation, the solution must affect the existential situation. This is clearly an objective (as opposed to mentalistic) process.

In the second stage of inquiry we determine what the problem is. The first stage was just a non-cognitive disruption; now we have to determine what kind of disruption has occurred. In this case I realize that I have bit into something very unlike an apple (again in this example setting the problem is relatively easy, nevertheless it is a crucial stage). Since the problem at hand guides inquiry, determining what that problem is, is of great importance. Determining the problem is to partially determine the situation; it is to rule out certain courses of action and to point the way toward others. As Dewey says

A problem represents a partial transformation by inquiry of a problematic situation into a determinate situation. It is a familiar and significant saying that a problem well put is half-solved. (LTI:L12,pp.111-112)

By determining that the problem is in the object I bit into I focus the rest of inquiry on the object. The third stage consists of formulating a possible solution; this is the stage of reasoning. I reflect on the experience and realize that I expected a sweet and juicy taste upon biting into the apple. However the taste was gritty and flavorless; the material was unyielding instead of easily bitten into. A solution presents itself: perhaps this is not a real apple but a piece of plastic fruit. This idea is not a fixed or final entity rather it is a plan of action. Dewey writes

Ideas are anticipated consequences (forecasts) of what will happen when certain operations are executed under and with respect to observed conditions.... An idea is first of all an anticipation of something that may happen; it marks a possibility. (LTI:L12,p.113)

This leads us to the fourth stage.

In the fourth stage of inquiry reasoning continues to reflect on the implications of the idea. What can I likely expect if my idea is correct? If I am right and this object is made of plastic then by manipulating the object--taking it out of my mouth and examining it, cutting it open, etc.--I should expect to find that it is a hollow piece of material, that is flexible, that melts when exposed to a flame, that it has no flesh, no seeds, etc. In this stage we formulate a hypothesis; the fifth and final stage is the stage of verification. We then go back to the concrete conditions and perform the necessary acts to see if our hypothesis is supported by the facts. If upon

examining the object I find it satisfies the conditions for being plastic, my hypothesis is confirmed. The original situation has been transformed into a new situation (I do not regain the original situation but rather regain equilibrium, a pervasive sense of wholeness, in the resulting new situation) in which I realize the apple is plastic and therefore do not relate to it as a means for sating my hunger, and therefore have removed the grounds for the original problem. Even though the 'apple' as an isolated object has not changed materially, the 'apple' as part of a larger context has changed. The transformation has been aimed at the situation as a whole. This has been existentially changed by the act of inquiry into a different situation.¹⁷

Concerning the outcome of inquiry Dewey stresses that it is vital to keep in mind the notion of 'fallibilism'. No result of inquiry, no matter how well inquiry is carried out, is immune from revision; having a firmly grounded result creates a presumption in favor of that result but it gives no guarantee. All we can attain is a high degree of probability, or a highly warranted assertion. Dewey writes

One indispensable condition of controlled inquiry is readiness and alertness to submit even the best grounded conclusion of prior inquiry to re-examination with reference to the applicability in new problems. There is a presumption in their favor but the presumption is no guarantee. (LTI:L12,p.144)

This is not merely a suggestion but is a logical necessity. The means by which I attempt to render an indeterminate situation determinate are necessarily the results of past investigations and activities. They are successful to the degree that the

present situation is similar to the past and to the degree that the means used are flexible enough to adapt to new conditions. (LTI:L12,p.46) To the degree that the present differs from the past, and to the degree that means are not flexible, error is possible. Since all individual situations are unique, there is always the possibility of error. As Dewey puts it

The recognition of what Pierce called "fallibilism" in distinction from "infallibilism" is something more than a prudential maxim. It results from the possibility and probability of a discrepancy between means available for use and consequences that follow: between the past and the future conditions, not from mere weakness of mortal powers. Because we live in a world in process, the future, although continuous with the past, is not its bare repetition. (LTI:L12,p.46)

One of the key lessons from the notion of inquiry as transformational is that the act of knowing, and hence the perspective of the knower, is necessarily implicated in the results of inquiry, or in more traditional terms, in knowledge. This is clearly seen in Dewey's insistence that the object of inquiry is the situation as a whole. He held to this point consistently throughout his writings. In 1902 he wrote, "it is the situation as a whole, and not any one isolated part of it, or distinction within it, that calls forth and directs thinking" (SLT:M2,p.328); in 1933 he wrote, "the function of reflective thought is therefore to transform a situation" (HWT:L8,p.195); and finally in 1938 he definitively defines inquiry as the "controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation" and adds later, "the object of judgment is the total situation." (LTI:L12,p.108 and p.168) Since we are part of any situation which spurs us to inquiry our act of knowing will

be a constituent of the situation as known. We can support this conception of knowing as active by recalling Dewey's metaphysics. We noted that Dewey argues for ontological parity, that all experiences are equally real. Concomitant to this is the notion that not all experiences are true. The cognitive experience leads us to the object as known; but all experience is the result of an organism interacting with its environment, therefore all knowledge is the result of this interaction, not something possible apart from either element (i.e. organism or environment). The possibility of subjecting, say, an emotional experience to reflective criticism and thereby producing a new experience already indicated the transformational potential of thinking.

Dewey felt that this interactive model of the knowing process had empirical support from the latest developments of natural science, namely, quantum theory as expressed in Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. The relevant aspect of this theory is the principle that it is impossible to eliminate the effects of the act of observation from the results of observation. This equates with Dewey's claim that the role of the knower in the situation partially determines the situation-as-cognitively-experienced. He writes

the point is of such importance that we may gratefully acknowledge the support given the conclusion by one of the definite conclusions reached in physical science. For this one result is of a crucially decisive nature. It is known as Heisenberg's principle of indeterminacy. (QC:L4,p.163)

After giving a general description of what the principle means to physics Dewey states its impact on philosophy:

The change for the underlying philosophy and logic of science is, however, very great.... What is known is seen to be a product in which the act of observation plays a necessary role. Knowing is seen to be a participant in what is finally known. (QC:L4,p.163)

Just as Dewey found scientific backing in Darwin and the theory of evolution for his attack on traditional metaphysics, so he found scientific backing in Heisenberg and quantum theory for his attack on traditional epistemology.¹⁸

We have now completed the second section of this chapter by setting out the pattern of inquiry as it operates in a situation. What remains now is to show how this provides the means for connecting science and morality.

Science and Common Sense

The pattern of inquiry is the general pattern for all types of inquiry, from the simplest exercises of common sense to the most abstract and complex problems of science. The difference between science and common sense is not the pattern of inquiry they use, but rather the specific aspects of the situation with which they are particularly concerned. Common sense is guided by a concern with the use and enjoyment of objects; science is concerned with the indeterminateness of situations for the sake of determination, not for use or enjoyment. Hence it is particularly concerned with the relations between aspects of a situation. (LTI:L12,pp.67-71) Notice that I have emphasized 'particularly' when discussing the respective concerns of science and common sense. This is because common sense is also concerned with relations (to the extent that this

might benefit use-enjoyment) and science is concerned with qualities (since qualities are the means for determining the individuality of an object, and relations are relations of qualitative objects). (LTI:L12,p.76)

The question then arises: if the difference between science and common sense is one of practical perspective, why does Dewey spend so much effort in advocating the adoption of scientific method? There are two basic reasons. In science proper the pattern of inquiry is employed with greater care, attention and comprehensiveness, i.e., it is used more intelligently. Determining what is relevant to a problem, formulating hypotheses, are aspects of inquiry in both science and common sense, but they are carried out "more scupulously and extensively so in scientific inquiry than in those of common sense." (LTI:L12,p.456) So, in one very important way, his plea for adopting the scientific method in morals is a plea for more careful thought, for more attention to the moral situation. The second reason for Dewey's advocacy for the scientific method is as a remedy to the continued emphasis in morality on fixed and final values. He writes that "when hypotheses have been taken to be finally true hence unquestionable, they have obstructed inquiry." (LTI:L12,p.145) As we have seen it is indispensable to inquiry to be ready and willing to subject any conclusion, any value to re-examination. The defining notion of foundational morality (a category which, for Dewey, contains all moralities) is that there is some principle, or standard, which acts as an immutable basis for morality. Inquiry which

is not willing to re-evaluate, and therefore possibly reject, any value can not be true inquiry. Dewey sees the progress of modern science strictly correlated to its abandonment of fixed principles; as it abandoned these principles it became better able to engage in inquiry, it became more scientific, more intelligent. By advocating the adoption of the scientific method in morality, Dewey is advocating the surrender of fixed values and the commitment to the methods of intelligent inquiry. His naturalistic metaphysics showed that there is no positive support for the existence of fixed values, now his naturalized epistemology argues that their acceptance preclude us from the full use of our intelligence.

It becomes clear in reading Dewey that using the scientific method and acting intelligently are closely related concepts, if not identical. He says that "intelligence means operations actually performed in the modification of conditions" (QC:L4, p.160), and we have just learned that the set of operations performed to modify conditions of a situation is inquiry. What distinguishes the scientific method is just that it is a more rigorous and precise form of inquiry. This leads us, again, to ask, is Dewey merely making a plea for more intelligence in morality, rather than advocating the use of a specialized method? For if there is no method specific to science what sense does it make in urging morality to adopt the 'scientific' method? A similar point is made by Rorty and we shall take some time to consider it and to see if it can shed some light on the issue for Dewey.

Rorty holds that there are really two sides to pragmatism. One side addresses the philosophical community and advocates a holistic, anti-analytic stance; the other side addresses the public and advocates an experimental, "scientistic" attitude. The purpose of this public advocacy of science is to break through convention and to clear the path for a new way of thinking.¹⁹ I agree with Rorty on this point, and believe that Dewey would also; although I believe we both might take issue with his contention that these two sides of pragmatism are directed to different audiences. Anyway, this public oriented side holds up the scientific method as the paradigm of rationality. Rorty's position is that there really is no method. There are certain virtues embodied in scientific institutions (reliance on persuasion rather than force, respect for different opinions, curiosity, eagerness for new ideas, etc.) but still "there is no intellectual virtue called 'rationality' over and above these moral virtues."²⁰ He says that "it is easy to recommend an experimental, fallibilist attitude, but hard to isolate a 'method' that will embody this attitude"²¹ and suggests that we will be much better off ridding ourselves of this notion of method and proceeding with rationality as akin to a moral virtue²² (as for example embodied in scientific institutions). The question which presents itself upon reading Rorty is, what exactly is this method which we should rid ourselves of? He never really sets out, in these articles, what he means by method; but he makes it rather simple to piece together.

Since science is supposed to be the paradigm of rationality

the rational method will be the scientific method, and he does discuss a rational method, of sorts. He writes, "to be rational is to be methodical: that is, to have criteria for success laid down in advance."²³ In the light of this it is clear that he is arguing against a conception of rationality which is related to antecedently fixed reality. He is, in effect, taking the Deweyan position against traditional philosophical conceptions of knowledge. The question then is, is there no method without this conception of rationality? Rorty says "no"; and the continued talk of method by pragmatists is an unfortunate residue from their philosophic background. This position of Rorty's seems to support the notion we are investigating: that there is no scientific method apart from the methods of inquiry and that inquiry is intelligence in action. Therefore Dewey's plea for the employment of the scientific method in morality is just the fancy, and perhaps misleading, way of saying "let's be smart about this". But, perhaps there is another way of looking at things.

Dewey would definitely repudiate any method which was equated with laying down in advance criteria of success, as Rorty discusses (for Dewey success itself is the criterion). However, there is a sense in which 'method' means "a way of doing anything: mode: procedure: process: especially a regular, orderly, definite procedure." (Webster's New World Dictionary, 2nd ed.) In this sense inquiry as intelligence in action is the procedure, the orderly process, for acting intelligently. Dewey's theory of inquiry says much more than "be smart" or

"think". It says that in order to be smart, to think well, you must proceed in an orderly manner; your ideas must be relevant to the problem at hand; they must have definite predictable consequences; and that you must put these ideas into operation and check them against the results. It says you must be willing to reject your beliefs if inquiry proves them ineffective; it says that since intelligence is a process in an ever changing world you must be ever diligent and open to new ideas to inform the process of inquiry. It is, by definition, the method of intelligence. This is the method embraced by the scientific institutions Rorty spoke of. It includes all the moral virtues Rorty listed, but it includes one more virtue, a procedural virtue which allows those moral virtues to work in concert; it prevents intellectual chaos by setting the example of how to intelligently incorporate these virtues in the pursuit of knowledge.

So it seems that we may be justified in keeping the notion of method. But what about 'scientific method'? We have seen that Dewey himself believes the difference between inquiry in common sense and inquiry in science, as a method, is one of degrees; science is more precise and rigorous inquiry. In this sense when Dewey says we must be scientific he is in fact saying let us be precise and rigorous in solving the moral dilemmas. I believe however he is wise in calling for a scientific approach, even though his main concern is for us to be competent inquirers, and for the following reason: inquiry as we have seen is a definite process that includes an experimental approach

and a fallibilist attitude in its operations. Science, as a cultural institution, is the paradigm for this experimental/fallibilist operation. So by insisting on a 'scientific' morality Dewey easily brings this experimental/fallibilist operation in a more concrete and effective way than by merely calling for competent inquiry in morality. Therefore, 'scientific' is short hand for **competent inquiry undertaken with an experimental/fallibilist approach**; and its use is a matter of convenience²⁴ and for quick public recognition.

While the method of intelligent inquiry is the same in common sense and in science, we have noted one more distinction between the two, i.e. subject matter. Common sense is concerned with objects for use-enjoyment and science is concerned with relations for the sake of improving our competency in inquiry. This is an additional component for a scientific morality. Dewey sets it out in the following passage:

Approach to human problems in terms of moral blame and approbation, of wickedness or righteousness, is probably the greatest single obstacle now existing to the development of competent methods in the field of social subject-matter. (LTI:L12,p.489)

This is due to the fact that blame and approbation rest on pre-conceptions of ends that must or must not be attained, and as Dewey has argued, nothing inhibits inquiry more than pre-established ends (that is, ends established outside the context of a situation). The moral notion of 'good' is a consummatory notion. It marks the appreciation of a concrete end achieved through moral inquiry. Its value is situation-related. The problem occurs when the good as end-of-a-moral-inquiry is

hypostatized into an end-in-itself. (LTI:L12,pp.176-179) When an end-as-the-culmination of inquiry is set up as an end-in-itself it is cut off from the very conditions which allowed it to be attained and appreciated in the first place. It has been taken out of context, which cuts it off from its antecedents and consequents. Doing this effectively blocks inquiry and precludes morality as material for scientific inquiry. To deny the use of the scientific method is to "encourage resort, in a matter of such importance, to the use of non-scientific and even anti-scientific procedures." (LTI:L12,p.503)

Approbation and blame are notions related to qualities in their use-enjoyment function. This is the concern of common sense inquiry. As scientific inquiry is concerned with relations between qualities and objects, so will a scientific morality be concerned with the relations between various components of a morally problematic situation. What are the needs of the situation; how did they arise; how might they be met; what are the possible consequences of various solutions; are there conflicting goods, or conflicting claims. These will be the concerns of a scientific morality, not questions of blame or praise. In the last chapter we said that the role of moral philosophy is evaluating the means for establishing values and the consequences of holding certain values, rather than with enumerating or establishing a list of values; a role quite consistent with the scientific method. The lessons of both a reconstructed metaphysics and a reconstructed epistemology point in the same direction: away from foundational conceptions of

morality and toward a unification of scientific and moral inquiries. This is the goal Dewey set for philosophy and his reconstructive work in these fields of philosophy effectively clears the path for its achievement. Although the work is not yet complete, Dewey has, in the words of Ernest Nagel,

succeeded in showing beyond reasonable doubt that the traditional and fatal antithesis between science and ordinary experience is gratuitous, and he has thereby helped to remove some of the intellectual obstacles to the expansion of science and to the consequent enhancement of human life.²⁵

So now the issues are set. Morality is a natural existential condition in the world, constituted by the interaction of conscious beings in their environment. As such it is suitable material for inquiry. Inquiry, as the active, intelligent involvement of an individual within a problematic situation, striving to regain equilibrium with its environment, is a constitutive element of that morality. Understood thus, there is no question of morality being antecedently fixed to the requirements of the situation; nor should there be any thought of morality being a relativistic, "do as you please", notion. Moral good and evil are products of man's interaction with the world, and when approached intelligently are determined by the objective conditions of the situation, and are capable of being subjected to experimental verification. It may be justifiably countered that while, perhaps, Dewey has presented good arguments against traditional morality, he has not substantially blocked the possibility that once the foundations are gone, nothing can stand; and that maybe after all morality is a "do as you please" relativism. Dewey believes he can avoid this view of

morality, and it will be the task of chapters five and six to lay out and assess his effort. However, since moral inquiry is concerned with desires, and desires are responses to the environment, it will be prudent to first examine Dewey's views on how we interact with the environment; particularly that most ubiquitous aspect of the environment, other people. So now we shall turn our attention to Dewey's social psychology.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF MORALITY

In our discussion of the naturalistic basis of problematic situations we learned that inquiry is called forth to address a need, and that a need, or a want, is the result of a break in the harmony between an organism and its environment. A sustained harmony, or equilibrium, is required for functioning. In this chapter we will find that a morally problematic situation can be explained in the same way. In fact a morally problematic situation is just a special instance of a problematic situation, as discussed in chapter three. This indicates the way to proceed: to understand the morally problematic situation we need to understand the delicate relationship between an organism and its environment. Since the most prominent component of a human's environment is other human beings, it will be our special concern to examine the relationship between an individual human and his fellow humans (which we shall refer to as 'society').

The relationship between an individual and society has been a central issue in political and social philosophy for ages. Here, as we might guess, Dewey departs from the more traditional treatments of the issue. The hallmark of this more traditional approach is an absolute distinction between the individual and the social; a question that naturally leads one to ponder how and why individuals came together to form society.

Dewey says that if we take this question literally it has a "peculiar absurdity", for, as he goes on to say,

Everything that exists in as far as it is known and knowable is in interaction with other things. It is associated, as well as solitary, single. The catching up of individuals into association is thus no new and unprecedented fact; it is a manifestation of a commonplace of existence. (EN:p.145)

The sociality of the individual is a generic trait of existence. In order to be experienced an existent must be related to some other existents. The significance of this for a study of human beings is the fact that they are by nature associated with other humans; the human being is a social animal, as Aristotle proclaimed over two millenia¹ ago. Not only is man necessarily associated with other human beings, his existence is also inextricably tied up with an environment. In the last chapter we began to discuss that the designations of 'organism' and 'environment' are not absolute but depend on the perspective of inquiry. This holds true of the designations 'individual' and 'social' and has vital implications for Dewey's consideration of the relationship between individuals and society. It will therefore be a central concern in our study of Dewey's moral philosophy.

The term that Dewey comes to use to explain his thinking on this is 'transaction'. This term receives in-depth treatment in Knowing and the Known, co-authored with Arthur Bentley, but it first appears in the 1930 essay, "Conduct and Experience". This is a complex term but one that signifies the conceptual approach that Dewey sought to develop over the course of his² career. It may be helpful to look at several formulations and

then try to pull together a working definition of this concept. In Knowing and Known we are first presented with 'transaction' as the name for an observational procedure which sees "together, extensionally and durationally, much that is talked about conventionally as if it were composed of irreconcilable separates." (KK:L16,p.67) ; this presents it as a way of carrying out inquiry. A few pages later we get a formal definition: "Transaction: Functional observation of full system, actively necessary to inquiry at some stages, held in reserve at other stages." (KK:L16,p.71) ; here we see that it is not just any observation, but observation of a "full system", as opposed to focusing on one or another aspect. Later in the same work we find a fuller, though somewhat awkward, description of the transaction procedure; it is one in which

systems of descriptions and naming are employed to deal with aspects and phases of action, without final attribution to "elements" or other presumptively detachable or independent "entities", "essences", or "realities"... (KK:L16,pp.101-102)

So, a transactional approach will look at an organism (or, individual) and its environment (or, society) as aspects of a complete system, in which distinctions are made for the sake of analysis; but these distinctions will not be hypostatized into independently existing entities. This is in no way meant to deny the genuineness of independent entities, but rather asserts the need to see the individual as an aspect of a larger system from which it emerges, and into which it eventually resolves. It is possible to see the transactional approach as a continuation of the logic of inquiry, presented in chapter

three. The object of inquiry is a situation, or objects-as-situated, not an isolated object or aspect of the situation. For the sake of analysis we may focus on a certain aspect of a situation, but we must always keep in mind that its meaning stems from its place in the situation. The transactional goes further and says that we must see the object as a part of a larger system that stretches beyond the situation at hand. For example, we saw that the experience of an apple is tied up with its place in the larger situation. The transactional approach would point out that what the apple, as an individual entity, contributes to the situation can only be fully comprehended by seeing it in a larger system, e.g., as a piece of fruit, which has been cultivated by methods developed over hundreds of years; which plays a role in the dietary practices of a certain people; which is due to a broad range of historical and cultural reasons, etc. (also, each of these aspects of the apple's fuller system may be placed in a still larger system).

At this point we might be reminded of Russell's criticism that Dewey's conception of a situation requires a consideration of the state of the entire universe in order to solve a problem. This is not so, since the practical requirements of the problem limit the scope of relevance; but, as far as the transactional approach is concerned, Russell is not so far off the mark. An object, as a qualitatively experienced existent is what it is because of its place as a point of intersection of innumerable events, each of which has its own history. Now, the transactional approach does not require us to follow through with our inquiry

to completion, since this would be equivalent to an omni-perspectival analysis of the universe; it does insist on seeing an individual existent as an aspect of a larger whole. This is significant because such a view precludes us from accepting entities or elements as 'fixed, or 'isolated', or 'independent'.

Dewey is not trying to unduly burden inquiry; as we have been told in the above cited quotation, the transactional approach may be put on hold for some inquiries. But it is "necessary" to others. Just what these types of inquiries are will be discussed presently, but first we need to discuss the other side of the term 'transaction'--its descriptive function (as opposed to its procedural functioning). In "Conduct and Experience", Dewey uses the term transaction in the following way:

The structure of whatever is had by way of immediate qualitative presences is found in the recurrent modes of interacting taking place between what we term organism, on one side, and environment, on the other. This interaction is the primary fact and it constitutes a trans-action. Only by analysis and selective abstraction can we differentiate the actual occurrence into two factors, one called organism and the other, environment. (CE:L5,p.220)

This is a restatement of Dewey's position that the distinctions 'organism', 'environment', 'individual', 'society' are analytic distinctions, but it also brings out another aspect of transaction: it names a specific occurrence. When we view the interaction of an organism and its environment from a transactional perspective we see that the two are reciprocally causal--this constitutes a transaction. A few examples should help to clarify this. We may look at a certain phenomenon, say the growth of a plant after a rainfall, as the interaction of

environment (the atmosphere) and organism (the plant). From this interactional perspective we see that the water provided by the atmosphere enters into a bio-chemical process that stimulates the plant's growth, and for certain purposes (e.g. gardening) this is sufficient. But this does not tell the whole story. If we take a transactional perspective we note that as the rain stimulates the growth processes the plant gives off oxygen, as a by-product, into the atmosphere. This oxygen given off by the plant is the key element in the production of atmospheric water, which falls as water. From the transactional perspective we do not find isolated entities interacting, but rather a transaction between different aspects of a larger system. The plant is causally affected by its interaction with the atmosphere (in the form of rain) and the atmosphere is causally affected by its interaction with the plant (in the form of released oxygen)--we have in fact a trans-action. Or take the phenomenon of digestion. This is usually seen as an action performed by an organism upon a part of its environment (piece of food). However, observed transactionally, note that a piece of food cannot be digested unless it is digestible. When food is digested it is broken down by the effects of the chemical processes in the digestive tract, but these processes are only stimulated and effective if the bio-chemical make-up of the object is of the right sort. If it is of the right sort then the digestive processes are stimulated and begin to work; but in their working they are affected by the object they are working on. The object, for its part, only has the status of

'food' because it can be digested by the organism. There is a trans-action.⁴

In these examples we have set transaction in contrast to interaction, and this is a distinction Dewey wanted to make. An interaction, he writes, is the "presentation of particles or other objects organized as working upon one another." (KK:L16, p. 71) Dewey wants to indicate something deeper with transaction. It is not just that these two objects work upon one another, rather it is that these mutual workings enter into one another, making each other possible; there is mutual causality. Not only does the rain work upon the plant, making the plant's existence possible, but without the working of the plant, the rain would not be possible (of course the effect of one plant on the rain making ability of the atmosphere is negligible, but transactionally we are allowed to observe 'extensionally' and 'durationally' and see the phenomenon on a wider scale). Although we can speak sensibly about a plant independently of the atmosphere, and vice versa, neither the plant nor the atmosphere are existentially possible without the other;⁵ and what affects one, will affect the other.

Returning to our main topic, we can expect that the notion of transaction will be a guiding principle in Dewey's approach to the relation between an individual and society. While this term did not become prominent in Dewey's vocabulary until very late, the viewpoint it describes can be found throughout his work. As early as 1896 we can find the germination of this

perspective in his famous article, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology";⁶ then again, in 1916, in an address given before the American Psychological Association, Dewey says that psychology was set upon the wrong path in its infancy by certain schools of thought which set up a "practical antithesis of the individual and the social." (NSP:M10,p.55) We see sure signs of the transactional in Experience and Nature, in his discussion of means and ends, and as noted, in Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, we see the basis of the transactional in the discussion of the biological matrix of inquiry, and in the development of the notion of a situation. The importance of this transactional perspective, with or without its proper title, is attested to by R.W. Sleeper who writes,

The organism's involvement with its environment is described as a relation of reciprocal causation or interaction. It is this relation for which Dewey adopted the term transaction in his later years, in order to emphasize its reciprocal causality aspect and to direct attention to its transformational effect on both the organism and the environment.⁷

In connecting transaction and transformation, Sleeper places transaction in the very heart of Dewey's philosophy, and I believe he is correct in doing so.

I have been trying to demonstrate that even though the term 'transaction' in its developed form comes late in Dewey's long career, it is was a way of looking at things which was central to Dewey's work for quite some time. For a final piece of support for this position we can turn to Dewey himself. In a 1950 letter to Arthur Bentley (the co-author of the refined notion of transaction) Dewey discusses other possible applications for the transactional approach and then adds, with

a sense of poignancy,

I tend to get impatient when I realize that it is practically only within the last three or four years that I can see with reasonable clearness what I've been working at for many many years...(JD/AB:p.613)

It was the transactional perspective.⁸

It was stated that the transactional approach is rightfully held in reserve in certain types of inquiries, but that it is necessary in others. We may now consider just what type of inquiry requires the transactional approach. We get a good indication of the answer in the following:

In psychology a number of tentative efforts are being made towards an interactional presentation, with balanced components. Our position is that the traditional language currently used about knowings and knowns (and most other language about behaviors, as well) shatters the subject matter into fragments in advance of inquiry and thus destroys instead of furthering comprehensive observation for it. (KK:L16,p.67)

Transactional inquiry is called for in those areas of investigation in which traditional language sets up barriers to a more comprehensive observation. Dewey notes psychology as a field which is just beginning to reach an interactional stage of investigation (out of a pre-scientific stage) and by this indicates that it has not yet reached a transactional level. In light of several quotations already considered we can see that psychology is an area (but by no means the only area) ripe for transactional treatment. As we have seen, Dewey felt psychology was set upon the wrong path when it began with the individual and society as absolutely (as opposed to analytically) distinct entities. The resulted in "setting up two independent and even contrary sciences--individual and social psychology." (NSP:M10,

p.55) Therefore, I believe we are justified in considering Dewey's social psychology and his determination of the social context of morality from a transactional perspective.

All of this has been said as means of a somewhat lengthy introduction to this chapter. I hope that this will both set the stage for the remainder of the chapter, and facilitate the presentation of Dewey's somewhat unorthodox views on the subject. In the next section we shall see how an 'act' is a transactional product of an organism and an environment; then we will consider Dewey's transactional analysis of the individual and society; and finally, we will examine how moral issues arise from the transaction of the individual and society. With all of this accomplished we should have the requisite background for setting out Dewey's moral method.

'Conduct' as Transaction

In the heading of this section I use the word 'conduct' to name the acts performed by individuals (for the remainder of this chapter 'individual' will refer to human individuals) instead of the more common term 'behavior', and this is how Dewey would want it. He uses 'conduct' instead of behavior in his major work on social psychology, Human Nature and Conduct, but without any specifically acknowledged reason. However, in "Conduct and Experience" he makes his preference very clear. In that article he says that 'behavior' and 'conduct' are synonymous, but that he prefers the word 'conduct' because it better conveys the serial nature of behavior. He writes

Behavior is serial, not mere succession.... the word "conduct" brings out the aspect of seriality better than does "behavior" for it clearly involves the facts both of direction (or a vector property) and of conveying or conducting. It includes the fact of passing through and passing along. (CE:L5,pp.221-222)

So Dewey's investigations into human conduct are a study of behavior, although his understanding of behavior differs significantly from that school of psychology known as behaviorism. Therefore, although concerned with the same phenomena, Dewey adopts the term 'conduct' to distinguish his position.

Semantics aside, it may be asked whether or not Dewey is a behaviorist. There are certainly strong ties between the behaviorist and pragmatist movements, for instance: the insistence on a scientific approach to human nature, a demand for empirically verifiable theories, a rejection of 'mentalistic' psychologies or philosophies, and a belief in continuity between various forms of life. However, we need to be more precise in our use of the term 'behaviorism' in order to answer the question since there are significant difference among those who claim the title of 'behaviorist'. Paul Kurtz introduces a use of the term 'neo-behaviorism' which might be useful. This term is typically used to designate the brand of behavioristic psychology that began from the 1930's on, as distinct from earlier forms of that psychology. Kurtz, however, has a much broader use in mind. He uses the term to cover the behavioral approach which was adopted in various disciplines such as political science, sociology, anthropology, economics, and communication theory, to name just a few.¹⁰ The common principle shared by the neo-behaviorists, as designated by Kurtz, is the insistence that

"all statements that are considered warranted must be experimentally confirmed by reference to publicly observable changes."¹¹ Under this definition then Dewey is obviously a neo-behaviorist. But with such a broad definition it will be more instructive to consider Dewey's behaviorism in contrast to behaviorism as a psychological theory. The contrast between the two can be noticed as early as the 1896 essay, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology".

This work has been called Dewey's most important contribution to American psychology and in it we can see, not only his disagreement with behaviorism, but the seeds of his transactional approach. Interestingly, this article pre-dates¹² the emergence of classical behaviorism in America. Still, in this article there is an attack on the Stimulus-Response model¹³ of behavior (to be noted simply as S-R from here on), which is the paradigm of behavior for classical behaviorists. So Dewey's position is relevant to discussions of later behaviorist theories. The S-R model was in the air at this time as various theorists tried to move the study of human nature onto a more soundly scientific basis. Psychologists usually look to the Russian physiologists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century for the introduction of the S-R model (Ivan Pavlov being the most notable of that group). Dewey, however, was likely responding to the sensori-motor psychology introduced to American philosophy by Chauncy Wright,¹⁴ who in his monograph, "Evolution of Self-Consciousness" makes use of the S-R model to explain the development of complex animal behavior.¹⁵

Dewey uses the phrase 'reflex arc' to designate the sensori-motor theory of behavior, of which the S-R is the central component. Dewey begins by saying that he does not criticize this model in order to defend the old psychology which it seeks to displace, but rather because there is still too much of the old psychology left in it. He writes

The older dualism between sensation and idea is repeated in the current dualism of peripheral and central structures and functions; the older dualism of body and soul finds a distinct echo in the current dualism of stimulus and response. (RAC:E5,p.96)

The problem with the S-R model, as with so many other dualisms, is that it cognitively distinguishes two aspects of a phenomenon and treats them as if they were distinct and independent entities--it commits the philosophic fallacy. If we use later Deweyan terminology we can see that the S-R model is based on an interactional perspective, which is a useful phase of observation, but then by hypostatizing the analytic distinctions of 'stimulus' and 'response' it blocks further investigation--it does not move to the transactional level of observation. Dewey makes several comments which support this point. He writes, for example, that one result of this model is that "the reflex arc is not a comprehensive, or organic unity, but a patchwork of disjointed parts." (RAC:E5,p.97) He also notes that "the reflex arc idea, as commonly employed, is defective in that it assumes sensory and motor response as distinct psychical entities"(RAC:E5,p.99), when instead "what is wanted is that sensory stimulus, central connections and motor responses shall be viewed, not as separate and complete entities in themselves, but as divisions

of labor, functioning factors, within the single concrete whole." (RAC:E5,p.97) If the reflex arc concept is defective, then what does Dewey propose in its place? Instead of an S-R arc, Dewey sees behavior as a series of coordinations within a circuit; and as we shall see this 'coordination within a circuit' is the prototype of transaction.

Dewey provides an example of this in his article which might be useful in clarifying this notion. Take the situation in which a child reaches out to the bright flame of a candle, is burnt by the flame, and withdraws her hand. The S-R model describes the situation thus: the flame (S) catches the child's eye, evoking the reaching behavior (R)--this equals one unit of behavior, then the heat of the flame (S) evokes a withdrawal of the child's hand (R)--a second unit of behavior. On the interactional level this is fine, but it does not fully describe the situation. First of all, the situation is not initiated by the stimulation of the flame, it begins with the act of seeing and looking about on the part of the child. Without the pre-existing ability to see, without the act of looking about, the flame cannot be a stimulus. (RAC:E5,pp.97-98) Next, the response of reaching is not an occurrence independent of either the stimulus or the original act of seeing; reaching occurs only because of a pre-learned coordination between seeing and reaching. Instead of the original, random seeing, we have "seeing-for-reaching purposes" (RAC:E5,p.98), and the reaching is guided by the seeing-of-the-flame, so that the stimulus enters causally into the response. As the flame-as-stimulus was made possible

by the original act of seeing, now the act of seeing-for-reaching purposes is made possible by the continuing stimulation of the flame. This is a coordination in which seeing, reaching, and stimulation all contribute to a unified action--it is also a transaction.

We have not yet fully described the situation, for the flame-as-stimulus has not been fully determined. As the coordination results in the hand touching the flame, we do not have the end of one action, which is then succeeded by another; with the addition of the pain experienced due to the heat of the flame, the coordination continues in order for the withdrawal response to be accomplished. This situation is not one of distinct stimulus and then response, end of one act, stimulus then response, end of second act. Instead, the various components of the situation are reciprocally causal, coordinated together to constitute the behavior. As Dewey says

What we have is a circuit, not an arc or broken segment of a circle. The circuit is more truly termed organic than reflex, because the motor response determines the stimulus, just as truly as sensory stimulus determines movement. Indeed, the movement is only for the sake of determining the stimulus... (RAC:E5,p.102)

From a transactional perspective we can see that the stimulus and response are not independent, isolated entities, but rather are aspects of a larger system of coordination, and are mutually interdependent. An act without a stimulating object (if such a thing were possible) would be a random physical movement, not a response; and an object is a stimulus only if it coordinates with an active organism to produce a directed response. The flame in itself is not a stimulus, it only becomes

a stimulus by being part of a larger system of behavioral coordination.

This criticism attacks the very core of behaviorism, at the very inception of the behavioristic movement. Still Dewey was not unappreciative of the potential contributions of that movement. In his address to the American Psychological Association, on the twentyfifth anniversary of the founding of that association, Dewey comments that the behavioristic movement

transfers attention from vague generalities regarding social consciousness and social mind to the specific processes of interaction which takes place among human beings and to the details of group behavior. It emphasizes the importance of knowledge of the primary activities of human nature, and of the modifications and reorganizations they undergo in association with the activities of others. It radically simplifies the whole problem [of social psychology] (NSP:M10,p.57)

I have quoted this passage at length because in it we see not only Dewey's regard for the behavioristic movement, but also good indication of how close his own concerns were with the
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 newly developing school. This is not to be interpreted as a weakening of the critical stance he took in 1896; Dewey remained committed to those views and as we shall presently consider, developed them into a more comprehensive social psychology. Yet there is a kinship between Dewey and the behaviorists in their mutual demand that the study of human nature be conducted on a sound empirical basis, and Dewey had no problem with the S-R model as a tool for this project. He parts ways with the behaviorists when they insist on seeing this interactional level of investigation as final.

The ideas presented by Dewey in 1896 receive further refine-

ment in the 1930 article, "Conduct and Experience". It will be recalled that this is the article that introduces the term 'transaction'. In introducing the term, Dewey identifies it as being opposed to certain forms of behaviorism. He writes

This primary interaction [between an organism and its environment] is the primary fact, and it constitutes a transaction. Only by analysis and selective abstraction can we differentiate the actual occurrence into two factors, one called organism and the other, environment. This fact militates strongly against any form of behaviorism that defines behavior in terms of the nervous system or body alone. (CE:L5,p.220)

A transactional behaviorism will view behavior, conduct, as an aspect of the relationship between an organism and its environment as mutually causative. We must go beyond the S-R model and see behavior as an aspect of a larger system. Dewey makes this point emphatically when he says

From the standpoint of behavior itself, the traits in question take us beyond the isolated act of the subject into a content that has temporal spread. The acts in question came out of something and move into something else. Their whole scientific point is lost unless they are placed as one phase of this contextual behavior. [emphasis added] (CE:L5,p.221)

This passage emphasizes the serial nature of behavior and justifies Dewey's preference for the term 'conduct'. If we return to the example of the child reaching for the candle flame we can see the serial nature of behavior. The child tries to grasp the flame only because it has no prior experience with the flame. The reaching behavior 'comes out of' a state of the organism which, due to its past transactions with the environment, is actively investigative and which has had no previous experience with objects similar to that now in its visual field. The grasping-the-flame-and-being-burnt "moves into" the relation-

contention that even where Dewey does not explicitly use the term, transaction is implicit in his understanding of conduct. So far we have only considered conduct as a transaction between organism and environment, but conduct is often a transaction between one individual and another; between an individual and society. We now will turn to a discussion of the transactional nature of Dewey's social psychology.

The Social Individual

Before we examine the transactional nature of Dewey's psychology we need to set out the basic components of which an individual's conduct is comprised; these are 'habit' and 'impulse'. Habit, Dewey writes, "is an acquired predisposition to ways or modes of response, not to particular acts except as, under special conditions, these express a way of behaving" it is not the "bare recurrence of specific acts." (HNC:M14,p.32) We must keep this conception of habit in mind; and keep it distinct from the more colloquial usage in which habits (bad ones, usually) are actions which we engage in mindlessly, but which we would not be as likely to engage in if we were to think about them. According to Dewey, we may engage in a habit thoughtfully and intelligently, or we may engage in a habit stupidly and routinely; "we are confronted with two kinds of habits," he says, "intelligent and routine." (HNC:M14,p.51) For the sake of example, take driving a car: an experienced driver drives by habit, it is only the novice who must be

consciously aware of each maneuver. But the fact that there are good experienced drivers and bad experienced drivers attests to the fact that there are good and bad habits. The good driver is he who engages in his habits intelligently; he is habitually aware of what is going on around him, the actions of other drivers, the appearance of road signs, the condition of his car while he is driving, etc. The bad experienced driver is one whose habits have become so routinized that he pays no attention to whether or not they continue to be successful; whose habits are so thoughtlessly engaged in that he is insensitive to unexpected changes in the driving situation. We will have more to say about the role of intelligence in habit later, for now let it be noted that habits as defined by Dewey make up a large majority of our conduct.

Dewey chooses the term 'impulse' to capture all that the individual brings to the scene, prior to enculturation; the "unlearned activities which are part of man's endowment at birth." (HNC:M14,p.65) It indicates the native, biological drives and instincts. Impulse provides the energy behind our actions; they are the original material out of which habits are shaped. Furthermore, there is no habit which is not formed from a native impulse; although there are "non-functioning impulses", that is, impulses which have not been habituated. (HNC:M14,p.73) Together these two concepts provide the raw material from which both individual characters and social customs are formed; we now turn to that process.

Dewey indicates the transactional nature of the

individual/social relationship when he says that "habits are like [physiological] functions in many respects, and especially in requiring the cooperation of organism and environment." (HNC: E5,p.15) What he means by 'cooperation' is that process set out earlier in our discussion of digestion. Digestion requires the cooperation of environment--the food must be digestible--and the organism--the bio-chemical processes must be functional--in order for digestion to occur; so too is it with habits. If we return to the habit of driving we can readily see that this is an occurrence which requires the cooperation of the individual--who brings knowledge and technical skills, along with a desire to drive--and the environment--which is represented by the car and the road.¹⁷ Unless both of these contributions are brought together we do not get the habit of driving. This is a simple example but it should suffice to clarify Dewey's intention. The situation becomes more complex as we move onto his next point. He writes, "for human beings, the environing affairs directly important are those formed by the activities of other human beings." (HNC:M14,p.60) The development of habits is dependent upon the cooperation of the organism--the individual--and the environment--other humans, or society.

"This fact", says Dewey, "is accentuated and made fundamental by the fact of infancy--the fact that each individual begins life completely dependent upon others." (HNC:M14,p.60) We come into life with impulses, but in order to survive we must train those impulses into successful habits. These habits are the characteristic ways of acting of an individual, but

they cannot be developed, cannot become the individual's characteristics, except through the influence, or more technically the conditioning, of society. As Dewey puts it,

Each person is born an infant, and every infant is subject from the first breath he draws and the first cry he utters to the attention and demands of others. These others are not just persons in general with minds in general. They are beings with habits, and beings who upon the whole esteem the habits they have... (HNC:M14,p.43)

We learn our earliest, and most fundamental habits, by the social conditioning of our families; they pass on their learned habits. As the infant grows, the circle of conditioning forces also grows; the child interacts with other children who have been similarly conditioned; then the child enters school where the established habits of society are taught to them; the child becomes a member of a culture with long established ways of acting, of shared habits; and so on.

This does not do away with the individual or with individuality, for as Dewey writes, "individuality is inextinguishable because it is a manner of distinctive selectivity, selection, choice, response and utilization of conditions." (ION:L5,p.121) Instead this transactional view reconstructs the notion of individuality. Dewey writes

The net outcome [of the individual's dependence on others] accordingly is that what can be called distinctively individual in behavior and mind is not, contrary to traditional theory, an original datum.... it is important to note that it [individuality] is a quality of habit, not an element or force existing apart from adjustment of the environment... (HNC:M14,p.60)

We are obviously individual organisms, but besides the contribution of our basic genetic material, what we become, the individuality we attain, is expressed in our habits; and

our habits are dependent on our interactions with a social environment--they are transactions of the individual and society.

Our habits are socially learned, but what gives an individual his or her distinctiveness is the way habits are co-joined. As biological entities we each bring to the scene impulses of varying intensity and quality; this is the basis for the distinctiveness of socially conditioned habits. Also, despite the common trait of social conditioning, no two individuals experience the exact same conditioning. We are born into different families (even within families each child is conditioned differently, as the numerous studies on the effect of birth order attests to); we attend different schools; grow up in different cultures; we have different experiences. All of this works, with the unique genetic material of the human organism, to develop a distinctiveness to our repertoire of our habits, to develop individuality. The fact that an individual's habits depend upon society is crucial to understanding the transactional nature of human nature, but it is not the final word. "Character," says Dewey, "is the interpenetration of habits" (HNC:M14,p.29), and the factors, organic and social, which influence the interpenetration of habits is so complex that no two characters are the same; this is the basis for the inexpugnability of individuality.

So we see that an individual, as anything other than a single biological unit, i.e. as a person, is dependent for his or her existence as an individual on society. However, for the individual/social relationship to be transactional, society

must be dependent upon the individual. We can clearly see that this is the case by the mere definition of 'society' as a collection of individuals.¹⁹ But more than this, Dewey argues that the customs and institutions that constitute a particular society are what they are because of the habits of individuals. The fact of a group of socialized individuals bringing their habits to bear on a collective issue constitutes the genesis of a custom or institution. The fact that it is many individuals who bring their habits to bear indicates that the institution will be an interpenetration of these habits; and this means it will have its own distinct character. H.S. Thayer has noted the continuity between habits and institutions in Dewey's thought; he points out that "there is a genetic and causal continuity between the development and function of organic habits and social institutions. Indeed, institutions are cultural and group habits."²⁰ They are ways of behaving developed by groups of people facing similar circumstances. But more than mere continuity is present here; there is transaction. As Dewey states once again, "there is no problem in all of history so artificial as that of how 'individuals' manage to form 'society'." (HNC:M14, p.44) The origin of social customs and institutions is not to be explained by reference to psychological reasons (though surely they have their place) but rather

It is to be solved by reference to facts of action, demands for food, for houses, for a mate, for someone to talk to and listen to one talk, for control of others, demands which are all intensified by the fact already mentioned that each person begins a helpless, dependent creature...these words do not express elements or forces which are psychic in their first intention. They denote ways of behaving. These ways of behaving involve interaction...and prior groupings.

(HNC:M14,p.45)

Social habits originate from the habits of daily life of individuals; these habits, though, are themselves the result of prior social conditioning. There is a mutually causative relation between the individual and society. We may, and often must, distinguish them for certain purposes; but they cannot be fully understood apart from this transactional perspective.

If we push this transactional perspective further the distinction between the social and individual becomes blurred. Dewey states that by "taking a long enough time span, it is fruitless to try to distinguish between the native and the acquired, the original and the derived." (HN:L6,p.32) The reason for this is twofold. On the one hand what is acquired through social learning is acquired by a native ability to learn. Part of our biological makeup is the capability to be modified by the environment and to retain that modification, i.e. to learn. On the other hand that which we classify as part of our original makeup was itself acquired over millenia of evolution; an evolution in which the environment, both organic and social played
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a role. Dewey writes

That the tendency to learn and hence to modify and be modified is itself part of the native (and heredity) structure may appear too much of a truism to need statement. Nevertheless, this must be borne in mind, since it is decisive in showing how impossible it is to make any hard and fast distinction between the natural and the acquired, the native and the cultural. (HN:L6,p.32)

He quickly stresses that it is often important for inquiry to make these distinctions; the reason for this continual return to the transactional level is to drive home the point that these

distinctions are not absolute and that a full understanding of the issues which these distinctions enter into requires recognition of the transactional perspective (we shall see that morality is one such issue).

Once we accept this transactional perspective a question arises that needs to be answered: if the social is formed by the activities of individuals, who themselves have been formed by society, then how is it possible to introduce any novelty into either society or the individual? Is this not a self-perpetuating process? In a very real sense, it is. As Dewey puts it "habits once formed perpetuate themselves, by acting unremittingly upon the native stock of activities...man is a creature of habit, not of reason, nor yet of instinct" and that it is "custom which has the most inertia." (HNC:M14,p.88 and p.76) However, change does in fact occur. How does Dewey explain this? The possibility of change and novelty lies in the impulses. Impulses can lead to change under several different conditions. The most basic condition for change is the fact that each individual brings with him a distinctive impulsive or biological nature; impulses are "agencies for transfer of existing social power into personal ability; they are means of reconstructive growth." (HNC:M14,p.68) Each infant comes into the world unconditioned, a bundle of potential social change. This is an indication of the importance of education for society, and the grounds of Dewey's great interest in it. Aside from these original, unhabituated impulses there also exists a store of impulses which are "non-functioning", as Dewey puts it (HNC:M14,p.73)

(in more traditional psychological language we may say that there are impulses which have been suppressed or have been sublimated into other activities). Together these provide the raw material upon which education can set social change into action; this sets education as one of the most important tools for change. (HNC:M14,pp.89-90)

There is another significant manner in which impulse may come to be available for change, and this may be summed up by saying 'habits conflict'; they conflict with each other, and they conflict with changing social conditions. People of different societies come into contact and different habitual ways of responding to the same issue are brought into conflict. Habits may also conflict within the same individual, who for example has been conditioned all his life to 'do as you are told', but goes to school and is taught 'think for yourself'. Also, importantly, the environmental conditions to which habits were appropriate may change so as to render those habits impotent. (HNC:M14,pp.90-91) When habits are thwarted, impulse is freed from modification; and it is at this juncture that intelligence comes into play. The thwarting of a habit constitutes what has been defined as a problem; and a problem calls for inquiry--intelligent investigation of a situation. When a habit fails there is a question of what to do next. One possibility is to fall back on another habit, or one may follow the lead of someone else, but another possibility is to try something different. As we saw in the previous chapter, the development of language gave humans the ability to enter imaginatively into

various courses of action, assess their advisability, and choose the best course of action. It is the thwarting of habit which opens up the door to this intelligent consideration of how to proceed. Dewey writes

deliberation is a dramatic rehearsal (in imagination) of various competing possible lines of action. Its starts from the blocking of efficient overt action, due to conflict of prior habit and newly released impulse to which reference has been made. Then each habit, each impulse, involved in the temporary suspense of overt action takes its turn in being tried out. (HNC:M14,p.132)

The ability to deliberate on our next action, instead of having to act either habitually or impulsively, allows us to introduce intelligence into our actions; to develop new and intelligent habits.

So impulse provides the raw material for change of habits; whether unused impulse or released impulse. Then through inquiry, deliberation, reflective criticism--whichever Deweyan term we may choose--we are able to transform those impulses into new, intelligent habits. This allows us to introduce a new element into the individual/social transaction. More intelligent habits lead to more intelligent individuals, who in turn lead to more intelligent social customs and institutions. A more intelligent society, on the other hand, leads to individuals who are more intelligent--it can become a virtuous circle, and intelligence may become habitual. At this point we can see that Dewey's social psychology leads him into his melioristic social philosophy, in which intelligence is again and again appealed to as a mechanism for a better society. And since we have seen that society is transactionally tied to the individual there can be no

improvement in society without an improvement in the individuals who make up that society. Therefore, Dewey's social psychology also leads into his moral philosophy. We will now turn our attention to just how it is that moral notions fit into this transactional relation between individuals and society.

Morality and Transaction

Dewey indicates the role of the social in morals, quite clearly, when he says "conduct is always shared...it is not an ethical 'ought' that conduct **should** be social. It is social, whether bad or good." (HNC:M14,p.16) From our transactional consideration of habit we can see that this is so; our habits, how we conduct ourselves, are socially conditioned ways of responding to the environment, both organic and social. Moral conduct, being conduct, is similarly social. Our task is to try and set out what distinguishes moral conduct from conduct in general.

A difficulty in this task is the complex of meanings that are connected with the term 'moral'. There is a very significant sense in which the term 'moral' labels the traditional notions of a people concerning proper behavior. For many social scientists (anthropologists and sociologists in particular) and most people, this is the most significant meaning of 'moral'. There is, of course, a more philosophically technical meaning in which 'moral' labels the rationally arrived at results of very specific formal deliberations. Dewey recognized both of these aspects and to get a full understanding of his moral philosophy we need

to grasp both aspects.

At one point he writes

The foremost conclusion is that morals has to do with all activities into which alternative possibilities enter. For wherever they enter a difference between better and worse arises. Reflection upon action means uncertainty and consequent need of decision as to which course is better. The better is the good.... Actually then only deliberate action, conduct into which reflective choice enters, is distinctively moral...(HNC:M14,p.193)

But earlier in the same work Dewey writes

For practical purposes morals means customs, folkways, established collective habits. This is a commonplace of the anthropologists, though the moral theorist generally suffers from an illusion that his own place and day is, or ought to be, an exception. But always and everywhere customs supply the standards for personal activities. (HNC:M14,p.55)

Which is it then? Are morals the result of reflective deliberation or are they merely the established customs of a group?

The answer, in classic Deweyan style, is that they are both.

Once we move to a transactional perspective, this will become clear.

We have two notions: one, that morals are the result of deliberation, and two, that morals are the customs of a society. So now we must investigate. What are the conditions that give rise to deliberation? We have seen, in both our discussion of habit and of inquiry, that the intervention of intelligence is called for when there is a problem or a conflict in the existential situation. When a habit fails there is a break in activity which opens up some space for deliberation. There is a question of what to do next, and when there is such uncertainty there is always the fact that one course of action is better than another. As we have just read, this is a condition of a

'moral' situation--the possibility of better or worse prospective conduct. So the failure of established conduct, habit, is a necessary condition for the arising of a moral dilemma. But before a habit can fail it must, obviously, have been learned (or else it would not be a habit); and as we have seen, our habits are native impulses conditioned by the customs of the society into which we are born. Before we can come to deliberate over the better course of action (i.e. make a moral decision) there must have been customary a decision as to what constitutes the better course of action in such situations. In other words, for me to be faced with a moral dilemma, there must first have been morals. For example, take a young Catholic man and woman involved in a relationship in which they first experience the powerful urges of the sexual impulse. This impulse has been partially habituated through their participation in a Catholic community. By this I mean that the institutional habits of Catholic society have conditioned their conduct in sexual matters in such a way that they habitually refrain from sexual expression outside of a marital relationship. But this impulse has only been partially habituated since as their bodies mature, new sensations, new impulses, arise. These individuals can be seen to be in a moral dilemma: at this point in my life, they each may ask themselves, should I engage in a sexual relationship? Notice however, that this is only a dilemma because these individuals have been conditioned in a society which has customary morals about when, and how, and with whom one should engage in sexual relations. If they were brought up in a society in

which there were no standards for sexual matters, save say, consent, then when finding themselves in a relationship which is mutually moving toward sex, they would not be faced with a moral dilemma.²² This is Dewey's lesson: there cannot be a notion of morals as the end result of deliberation unless there is also a notion of morals as social customs.

This argument does not, however, point to a primacy or supremacy of customary morals over reflective morals. For what is the underlying nature of society's customs? We were given the answer to this in the last section. People find themselves facing similar situations, working with basically similar abilities, and they find similar ways of successfully working through these situations. Much of life's work requires cooperation and leads to the development of coordinated habits; these habits are developed and passed on and emerge as social customs. The basis, then, of custom is the actions and deliberations of individuals. So, customary morals cannot develop save as individuals deliberate over conduct. We must keep in mind that this does not attest to the primacy or supremacy of deliberative morals, since as we have seen, these individual deliberators were themselves socially conditioned. To ask which came first, the customary or the deliberative, is akin to asking which came first, the individual or the social (this is a more difficult question than it might at first appear, since parents constitute a social unit). It is a logically confused question, for as we have seen Dewey argue 'individual' and 'social' are analytical distinctions which only have their full meaning in the larger

system from which they are abstracted. Therefore, to consider morals as customary and to consider them as deliberative is to consider two aspects of a transactionally related system. Customary morals are the commonly arrived at results of a deliberation, carried on by socially conditioned individuals (with this said, I shall adopt the practice for the sake of distinction of referring to customary morals as 'customs' and reserve the term 'moral' for deliberative morals).

The main distinction between customs and morals is that customs are morals that have become accepted, and therefore more habitual; while morals are deliberatively chosen actions responding to a problematic situation. If we consider morals as the fruit of deliberation we can gain insight into morality by referring back to the conditions that call forth deliberation. Deliberation, you will recall, is called for in those situations in which habit fails to carry action through. This can happen when habits conflict with other habits; when habits are no longer appropriate to conditions; or when novelty releases non-functioning impulse. These are the same social conditions which call forth moral deliberation. (HNC:M14,pp.58-59) We also saw that this opportunity for deliberation may not be seized upon, and that action may be carried through by routine or external compulsion. In that case, the resulting action cannot be termed moral, it constitutes the non-moral. This is supported by Dewey's statement that "only deliberative action...is distinctively moral." (HNC:M14,p.193) This leads us to an important idea in Dewey's moral philosophy--the distinction between the moral and the

non-moral. Since the distinguishing characteristic for moral action is that it is consciously chosen via deliberation, potentially "every and any act is within the scope of morals." (HNC:M14,p.193) It will be instructive to explore some of the ramifications of this idea.

In defining moral action as action deliberately chosen upon reflection Dewey is identifying moral action with intelligent action. This concept needs a good deal of discussion and will receive it in chapters five and six but for our present discussion we need to note that an action falls within the scope of the moral if it is the result of the process of competent inquiry.²³ This is the last step in bridging the gap between science and morals. Since science is inquiry, carried out more scrupulously and extensively, and moral action is action chosen as a result of inquiry, science and morals are joined together in the process of inquiry: 'science' designates a certain type of inquiry, and 'moral' a type of action resulting from inquiry. So we may define a scientific morality as a system of practical decision making based upon the results of competent inquiry undertaken with an experimental/fallibilist approach.²⁴ This is a logical development of Dewey's ideas on metaphysics, epistemology, and social psychology as they relate to human behavior. It is the fruit of his naturalistic philosophy. Before turning to a consideration of scientific morality we must examine a few more implications of the scope of morality.

Dewey says that drawing a hard and fast distinction between the moral and the non-moral has been a fatal flaw in traditional

moral theories. (HNC:M14,p.31) It leads to a fixed and stagnating conception of morality; while on the other hand, by linking the moral with the deliberative, morality is opened up and may develop. The more conscious we become of our actions, the more reflective and intelligently involved we become with our actions, the more moral we may become. But Dewey wants to say something stronger: not only can morality grow, it must grow. (HNC:M14, p.164) Given the lessons of this chapter we should be able to understand why he says this. Deliberation is called for when action is stopped; the purpose of deliberation is to find the best course for proceeding with action, therefore the chosen action must be appropriately related to the situation at hand. Deliberation must be able to resolve the problem and allow action to recommence. Fixed moral concepts cannot work because the situations which call for moral deliberations are not fixed. We live in an ever-changing world and as Dewey states "in a changing world, old habits must perforce need modification, no matter how good they have been." (HNC:M14,p.41) Situations are often similar enough that we may develop moral principles (principle being an intellectual habit-HNC:M14,p.164) but these principles must be viewed hypothetically, their worth needs to be tested, and if the situation warrants, modified or altered. Dewey writes

social situations alter; and it is also foolish not to observe how old principles work under new conditions, and not to modify them so that they will be more effective instruments in judging new cases.... Yet the choice is not between throwing away rules previously developed and sticking obstinately by them. The intelligent alternative is to revise, adapt, expand, and alter them. The problem is one of continuous, vital readaptation. (HNC:M14,p.165)

If we are not willing to be attentive to the connections between our morals and existing conditions, then as conditions change we surrender ourselves to forces outside our control (we in effect choose not to control the forces which face us) be it an authority, or a chance, or the whim of the society in which we live. If we do not grow morally, as individuals, we abdicate our role in the individual/social transaction; and since it is the individual who introduces the dynamic quality of novelty into this transaction, the whole system becomes stagnated. Stagnation does not last long, however, for there are always events that release impulse, and released impulse demands outlets. Without a healthy, growing morality which functions intelligently to find outlets for impulses, the tension caused by these impulses leads to all the social ills we associate with times of great social change. (HNC:M14,p.117) As Dewey says, "only an acute maladjustment between individuals and the social conditions under which they live can account for such widespread pathological phenomena." (ION:L5,p.68) The very purpose of deliberation is to find the course of action which will avoid just such maladjustments. To set up certain actions to be chosen a priori, is to choose not to think about the situation, it is to abandon intelligent action.

We have been using the term 'grow' in relation to morality, and it is an important concept in Dewey's moral philosophy, so it deserves some discussion. A more detailed discussion will be undertaken in chapters five and six, for now we need merely

a working definition. When we talk of growth we are talking about change but change of a certain sort. We speak of a tree growing and this involves a process of change, but not just any kind of change; we would not speak of a tree that has been chopped down (not pruned) as having grown. When we speak of a tree growing we are referring to a change in which what was present before expands and develops in such a way that its functioning is maintained or enhanced. This is the type of growth Dewey is referring to when he says that morality must grow. We shall see later that he is speaking of growth in our character through enhanced moral sensitivity; we can tie it into our present discussion by saying that since moral action is action deliberately undertaken, the more deliberation that goes into an act, the more moral our actions may become.²⁵ This does not mean we need to spend hours agonizing over decisions; what Dewey means is that we should place our decisions in as large a context as possible. You will recall from our discussion on critical intelligence that this means we must place our decision in relation to its antecedents and consequents, to as large an extent as is feasible. There are, of course, limits both practical and logical, as to how extensively this may be carried out, but this just points to the fact that it is always possible to build on decisions so as to enhance future decisions--i.e. it is always possible to grow.

By placing a decision in a context of antecedents and consequents we are investigating the meaning of that decision. This should shed some light on Dewey's statement that "morals

mean growth of conduct in meaning." (HNC:M14,p.194) This can be shown with a simple argument, based on our previous discussions: 'moral' means action undertaken after deliberation; deliberation is the reflective consideration of alternative action; reflection is an intelligent consideration of causal relations of an object or event (in this case a proposed course of action); the causal relations of an object constitute the meaning of that object or event--so moral growth is an expanding and enhancing of our understanding of the causal connections of our actions, of the meaning of our actions. Moral growth allows us to understand more fully the significance and the consequences of our actions, and it allows our actions to be better related to the social conditions with which they must deal. The importance of this concept to Dewey is obvious in the following statement, he says, "If we wished to transmute this generalization into a categorical imperative we should say: 'So act as to increase the meaning of present experience'."²⁷ (HNC:M14,p.196) This of course is related to Dewey's famous maxim "growth itself is the only moral end." (RP:M12,p.181)

One more point needs to be touched on before proceeding to the next chapter. It might be asked, justifiably so, if moral action is merely intelligent action (that affects the character) how do we account for evil action, which often is backed by a great deal of intelligence? Must there not be some other distinction by which we may classify some intelligent acts, good, and some intelligent acts, evil? The answer is yes, it is possible to distinguish between intelligent good and

intelligent evil (although, it might as well be admitted here that Dewey's position is not going to satisfy many traditionally minded moralists). This additional component of morality stems from the transactional nature of morality. The moral decision is made by a socialized individual, but it enters into the workings of society. To the extent that an action is effective (though not necessarily successful, since many failed actions can have very far ranging effects) it alters to some degree the situation, in both its individual and its social conditions. By changing the social side of the transaction, the individual side is also changed, as per the structure of a transaction. And, conversely, as the action changes the individual side of the transaction, the social side is subsequently changed. And not just in that particular situation, for in changing the individual and the social the potential for future transactions is also altered. Dewey writes

The thing actually at stake in any serious deliberation is not a difference of quantity, but what kind of person is one to become, what sort of self is in the making, what kind of world is in the making. (HNC:M14,p.150)

It is my contention that this formulation provides the delimiting conditions for moral choice in Dewey's moral method. It will be a major aspect of the rest of this project to support and clarify this claim.

We can tie this to another statement by Dewey which will give us some indication of where we will be going with this. Dewey says that 'good' is the meaning experienced when deliberation results in action which leads to a unified situation (of this, more later) and then goes on to state that

there is a genuine difference between a false good...and a "true" good, and there is an empirical test for discovering the difference. The unification which ends thought in act may be only a superficial compromise, not a real decision but a postponement of the issue.... These seeming unifications which are not unifications of fact are revealed by the event, by subsequent occurrences. (HNC:M14,p.146)

The full meaning of a moral decision needs to consider the consequences, perhaps unforeseen, of that decision. To understand fully the consequences of an action we must take a transactional perspective on the situation. Since it is this transactional perspective which distinguished Dewey's moral method as unique, and it is the transactional which captures the true spirit of Dewey's value system, I would like to suggest the title 'transactional ethics' to designate John Dewey's moral philosophy.

Now we can turn to a consideration of Dewey's moral method in the light of his naturalism, developed in chapters one and two and his transactional inquiry (which is an outgrowth of his naturalism), as set forth in chapter three and the present chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE METHOD OF MORAL RECONSTRUCTION

We have now reached the main topic of the project--Dewey's moral method. In one sense the previous four chapters can be seen as preliminary work, setting the stage for the present discussion; but if those chapters were successful, much more has been done. It is my belief that Dewey's moral philosophy--his beliefs about living the good life and making the world a better, more humane place in which to live--is the heart and soul of his entire philosophy; that regardless of the topic at hand, his ultimate purpose was to come to a deeper understanding of the human condition in the hope that we might better that condition. In an introduction to a volume of Dewey's collected works Steven Cahn quotes Charles Frankel as saying that, at bottom, all of Dewey's philosophy was social philosophy. Cahn goes on to say that he would "extend this insight and suggest that for Dewey all social philosophy was at bottom philosophy of education implicitly or explicitly." (L13,p.xvii) If I may continue in this manner, I would suggest that for Dewey all philosophy, social or educational, was at bottom moral philosophy. In fact it is my contention that his social and educational philosophy provide the boundary conditions for moral decision making, and are therefore components of his moral philosophy. In this sense the previous chapters have done more

than preliminary work--they have in effect set out the premises of Dewey's moral theory, to which this chapter will provide the conclusion. So, it will be prudent to make a quick review of the lessons of those chapters.

In the first chapter we saw Dewey claim that the major task facing philosophy today is a reconstruction of morality. We live in a century of great social upheaval and dramatic changes in our relationship to the physical world. However, our beliefs about how to live together, our values, derive from a very different time and no longer succeed in providing us with a common base from which we might address these significant changes. Dewey traces this condition to the gap between the world of nature (addressed by science) and the world of humanity (addressed by moral philosophy). The result of this split has been a great deal of progress and increase in intelligent control of the physical world, while in the sphere of 'higher' worth we have been abandoned to custom, authority or theories based on outdated notions of the human condition. The task, therefore, is to bridge this gap so that the security and control that we have gained over the physical world might be matched in the world of human values. Morality has to be reconstructed in such a way that it will be possible to develop a scientific morality. The theory of evolution provided the theoretical support for the feasibility of this task. Dewey believed that evolution demonstrated that man is wholly part of nature, subject to the same forces and principles which shaped the physical world. There is no longer any need, indeed any basis, to import super-

or extra-natural explanations into our study of humanity. This naturalistic perspective becomes the guiding principle in Dewey's philosophical investigations.

In the next chapter we saw the application of this naturalistic perspective to the area of metaphysics. We spent a good deal of time explaining and justifying the notion of a naturalistic metaphysics, which we shall not repeat here. What is important is that such a metaphysics shows us the generic traits of existence, and among those traits we find the features of moral experience. One of the most significant of these traits is that of change, or precariousness. We live in a dynamic world, one that is constantly moving, constantly changing; there is, however, some regularity in this constant change. These traits set the conditions of our existence. The fact of regularity, or rhythm, allows us to predict and so at times to control these changes but, and this is vital, only to a limited degree. This limitation forces us to be ever vigilant in our attention to the world so that our efforts might have the greatest probability of success possible. The probabilistic nature of our efforts leaves us constantly open to failure and disappointment, to evil. But it also creates the possibility of satisfaction of our wants, of good. These satisfactions, goods, are ends-in-view; goals which we strive, by the use of means, to attain. The moral notions of good and evil, ends and means, motives and consequences, all derive from our efforts to live, and to live well, in an ever changing environment, not designed with our happiness in mind.

A second, yet important, lesson of the second chapter concerned the proper role of moral philosophy, which Dewey claimed was the criticism of criticisms. It is not the job of moral theory to set out a list of values, or establish a test for determining 'correct' moral decisions. Instead, moral philosophy should provide an analysis of moral experience and provide a method for assessing moral dilemmas in order to reach more informed, and more intelligent, decisions.

Chapter three was a consideration of Dewey's attempt to naturalize intelligence. The keystone to this attempt is the belief that 'intelligence' is to be conceived adverbially, rather than as the name for some faculty. We act intelligently when we scrupulously and extensively engage in inquiry and act upon the results of that inquiry. Such an inquiry, when carried out with an experimentalist/fallibilist approach, is scientific. This is the means for bridging the gap between science and morals and it makes possible the reconstruction of morality on naturalistic grounds. Also, we saw that inquiry is instigated by a problematic situation; there is something the matter, a disequilibrium between an individual and his environment. Inquiry starts from this existential situation and is complete when it has found a course of action which will restore equilibrium, which will solve the problem. This is also the case with a morally problematic situation.

Finally, in chapter four, we extended the lessons of the first three chapters to our consideration of the social environment. The new concept added here was that of a transactional

perspective. This perspective shows us that distinctions such as 'organism' and 'environment', 'individual' and 'social', 'ends' and 'means', are analytic distinctions, necessary for some purposes, but not ultimate. If we take a transactional perspective, an extensively and durationally expanded view, we can see that these distinctions are aspects of a larger system. Significant for our study of morality is the notion that the conduct and desires of individuals come out of a social environment and feed back into a social environment; this in effect changes both the individual and society. The impact of this was only hinted at and awaits further development.

The aim of the present chapter is threefold: first, building on what we have done so far, we will discuss just what is at stake in making a moral decision; next we will set out Dewey's method for resolving moral dilemmas; and finally, we will discuss what might be a weakness of this method and consider how this might be strengthened.

Moral Decision and Moral Image

A moral decision is the outcome of inquiry into a morally problematic situation, and as with all inquiries into problematic situations, it is the situation as a whole which is the object of inquiry. In moral deliberation, therefore, we are never considering an act or object in isolation; we are deciding on general issues but are concerned with a specific situation. Since each situation is unique the resolution sought for will also be unique. As Dewey puts it, "every moral situation is

a unique situation having its own irreplaceable good." (RP:M12, p.173) Already, we have a notion which will be troublesome to many. It is one thing, it might be said, to reject the notion of a single ultimate good, but to hold that each situation has its own unique good seems to be going too far in the opposite direction. But this is what the logic of situations demands. A situation is a distinct contextual whole because of its make-up; its constituent objects/events; its spatio-temporal locus and the relations between these elements; it is "an individual situation, indivisible and unduplicable." (LTI:L12,p.74) A situation becomes problematic when there is a disruption of the balance of these elements, a disequilibrium. The problem is resolved when equilibrium is restored and a unified situation is regained. Since the problem affects a unique situation, the solution which will restore equilibrium, which will lead to the good appropriate to that situation, must be unique.

Since a situation which has been disrupted is the object of moral inquiry, the solution to the problem will be, as just indicated, an act which will restore equilibrium, which will convert the disrupted situation into a "unified whole"¹. We need to understand this notion if we are to be clear about what it is we are doing, according to Dewey, during moral inquiry. In our discussion of the biological matrix of a situation it was noted that disequilibrium between an organism and its environment constituted a want, or a need. This stimulated a need for some object or course of action which would restore equilibrium, which would in effect satisfy the need. So in other

words a want or need disrupts the wholeness of a situation and we must inquire to find a solution which, by satisfying the need, will restore unity to the situation. As we deal with higher organisms, and more complex organism/environment relations, the nature of the need becomes more complex, but this basic structure remains the same; there is a continuity between higher (more complex) and lower (less complex) problematic situations. For example, an animal walking through the woods steps on a thorn--there is a shock; a disequilibrium. There now exists a need to find a course of action which will result in the removal of the thorn, thereby restoring equilibrium, and allowing a unified action to proceed (in this case, so the animal may resume walking through the wood on its original purpose). This is an example of a less complex situation. There is only one satisfactory solution--getting the thorn out--and only one course of action available to the animal--flailing its paw about until the thorn is shook loose. Compare it now with the following: a happily married couple are going through life together, when one suddenly dies--there is a shock; a disequilibrium for the surviving mate. The situation, which in this case is social as well as biological, was experienced as happily-married-and-growing-old-together. This was the pervasive quality for each mate, and was in harmony with their social environment (there were no social conventions or conditions specifically opposing this situation). The sudden death of one mate disrupts this equilibrium, this harmony between individual and environment, just as the stepping on the thorn disrupted the animal's

equilibrium; and just as the animal needed a course of action to restore equilibrium, so too does the surviving mate. Of course, the solution will be more difficult and more complex, and needs to respond to much more than a physical need, but this is a difference of degree, not of kind--a solution is needed to restore equilibrium. Notice that it is not possible in the more complex example to regain the original situation; none the less, the mate must find some course of action which will allow for some degree of equilibrium with his or her environment. We commonly refer to this as 'finding a way to go on with life'. And for the person who cannot go on, who cannot restore some measure of equilibrium, we suggest medicine, or therapy, to assist them.

We may define equilibrium, then, as a relation between an individual and its environment which is such as to allow the individual to maintain its functioning (what constitutes functioning is relative to the complexity of the organism and the situation at hand; it may be simple biological functioning, or it may be complex psychological functioning). But 'unified action', while related, is a more complex concept, but one that is particularly related to moral problems. So before we can understand it we need to discuss what it is that distinguishes a morally problematic situation from generic problematic situations. This is a difficult question to answer directly, and not just because Dewey is not precise about it (though he is not) but rather because there are not ultimate distinctions between the moral and the non-moral. Any act may constitute

a morally appraisable act under the right conditions, and it is in establishing these conditions that Dewey is a bit imprecise. In the previous chapter we accepted, as a working definition, that any action which was chosen after a deliberation over better or worse alternatives is within the scope of the moral. (HNC:M14,p.193) Now by this definition a problematic situation such as biting into an apple and finding out that it is plastic does not constitute a moral problem, and this seems correct. But what of the dilemma of whether to wear a brown or gray tie to school today? There certainly seems to be a better and a worse choice, dictated by fashion, but we do not want to consider this a moral situation, and neither does Dewey. In Ethics we get a further refinement: it is not just a decision of better over worse, but a deliberate action which will have consequences on the agent's character. The criterion is 'will this effect the person I am, or shall become?' In the case of the tie this will not, usually, be a moral dilemma. Dewey writes

In all cases of moral deliberation, judgment of value enters.... Moral deliberation differs from other forms not as a process of forming judgment and arriving at knowledge but in the kind of value which is thought about ...the same object will have a moral value when it is thought of as making a difference in the self, as determining what one will be, instead of merely what one will have. (E:L7,p.274)

For example, I may have to choose between teaching a course at 8:00 A.M. or teaching at 4:00 P.M. In one case I will have the afternoons free, in the other I will have the mornings free; it is not, as it stands, a moral choice. In another case I may have the choice between teaching an introductory course

which I have taught many times before, or a seminar, which I have never taught before. Teaching the seminar will be more work, but it will be challenging and, I believe, contribute to my professional development; while teaching the introductory course will not add to my development, and in fact may be detrimental because I have grown tired of teaching it. However, it is an easier assignment, perhaps at a more desirable time, etc. This is a moral choice because I am choosing what kind of professional, what kind of person I am to be--the decision will have an impact on my character.

So a morally problematic situation is one that has been disrupted in such a way as to pose a challenge to the character of the agent involved. Now we are in a position to explain the notion of 'unified action'. Consider the following example: the agent involved considers himself a good person (honest, considerate, kind, responsible, etc.) and sincerely desires to be better. He is taking a civil servant exam in order to gain a much desired promotion. He is having a tough time, but is struggling through well enough until he comes to a question which completely stumps him, but which is crucial to his success. The exam is based on the honor system and copying the answer from the person next to him should be fairly risk free (but not guaranteed). He is in a morally problematic situation. He considers himself good, and wants to be good; and he considers the act of cheating as wrong. This act will be inconsistent with his character as he desires that character to be. A unified action in this case will be to refrain from cheating. There

is a unity between self (as conceived as good) and the action (as perceived as good). Cheating would not have resulted in such a unity (self conceived as good versus act perceived as wrong), and given the stipulations of this example it would not have resolved the problem; for the problem was not simply 'what do I do next?', but 'what type of person do I choose to be?'. Cheating would have solved being stumped by the question, but that was not the moral dilemma. If the person in question has no qualms about cheating then he would not have found himself in a morally problematic situation (even if we believe he should interpret the situation so). The moral problem comes from the conflict between having a better test score, but a less worthy character (as judged from the agent's own perspective) and having a worse test score, but a more worthy character. The person in question defines himself as a moral person and firmly believes the moral action is to refrain from cheating. That is the only course of action open to him which will result in a unity of self and actions.

This is a centrally important notion for Dewey, who goes so far as to say, "the key to a correct theory of morality is recognition of the **essential unity of the self and its acts**" and that "the unity of self and action underlies all judgment that is distinctively moral in character." (E:L7,p.288) Before we can lay out a complete moral method we must develop this notion further. Although Dewey does not use this term I believe it is accurate to label this unity between self and action, 'integrity'. Bernard Williams has defined 'integrity' as a person

being

identified with his actions as flowing from projects and attitudes which in some cases he takes seriously at the deepest level, as what his life is about.²

To act in a way which is consistent with this attitude is what Dewey means by 'unity of self and action'. This is an aspect of Dewey's moral philosophy which I believe gets overlooked in all the attention paid to the social activism in his moral philosophy. While the social side of his philosophy is very important, agent-centered concerns are just as central. In fact it must be so if Dewey is to be faithful to his own transactional perspective, for from that perspective you cannot be genuinely concerned with social issues if you are not vitally concerned with individual issues, and vice-versa. This will be discussed further in the final section of this chapter, and then extensively in chapter six.

What can be said now is that this sense of integrity, of who I am as a person, must take into account the social/environmental relations in which I find myself. Since I have both 'social' aspects (all those habits which I developed as a result of and in response to my social world) and an 'individual' aspect (the unique combination of these habits, based on an underlying genetic uniqueness) it follows that an adequate sense of self must take into account both these factors. So in carrying out my moral deliberation it is not sufficient to consider my actions in isolation from the social context in which they will occur. This speaks to a consideration of not only consequences but of a broad range of consequences.

It is important that this notion of integrity is not a static one. It is not rule-like adherence to the person I have become, but instead must be prospective. We have noted that the process of inquiry transforms the components of a situation, and the self is one such component. There is a real sense in which I change as a result of inquiring into a situation, since I am changing the way I relate to the world (or at least some aspect of it). This change may be trivial, as in the case of the 'apple' problem (in which case my relation to this 'apple' has changed) or it may be significant, as in the case of the civil servant (whose entire moral image is at stake). So the unity, the integrity, is not between an act and who I am, or who I have been, but between an act and who I desire to be. The civil servant desires to be an honest person and believes that by cheating he will become a dishonest person. Cheating would be a blow to his integrity.³

All of this is summed up succinctly in Dewey's formulation:

the thing actually at stake in any serious deliberation is not a difference of quantity, but what kind of person one is to become, **what kind of self is in the making, what kind of world is in the making.** (HNC:M14,p.150)
[emphasis added]

This is the ultimate goal of morality in Dewey's eyes: self reconstruction. Reconstruction, as you will recall, is the effort to rework something so as to maintain what is of worth, while giving it a stronger basis by doing away with those elements which stem from custom, superstition, or ignorance, or that have become ineffective in a situation. Dewey's moral method is a means for such a reconstruction on a personal level.⁴

This aspect of Dewey's philosophy is also found in, and probably more well known from, the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre who wrote, "man makes himself; he makes himself by the choice of his morality."⁵ Sartre compares this process of self-creation to the production of a work of art. While Dewey would prefer the more practical (and probably more accurate) term 'reconstruction', he is in agreement with Sartre on the project being artistically creative. The aesthetic was for Dewey the example of what experience could be. An aesthetic experience is one which is fully appreciated for what it is while it is being experienced, rather than its being a necessary means to something else (although there is no inconsistency in having an aesthetic experience of something which in fact functions as a means); it includes a sense of completeness and unity, instead of confusion and dissatisfaction; it is enjoyed for its own sake, despite any instrumental role it might play. (AE:p.39) The possibility of extending the aesthetic qualities to life in general was a great concern of Dewey's; in fact, Thomas Alexander suggests that "the art of life is the goal behind Dewey's ethics,⁶ his philosophy of democracy, and his theory of education." If art is the attempt to pull the most meaning from an experience as possible, then I am in agreement with this statement. The essence of morality for Dewey was not the development of rules and standards, or the assignment of rights and obligations, but was rather the attempt to experience life as fully and richly as possible. Part of this attempt includes our duties and rights so a consideration of these is important; but in a style more

reminiscent of ancient philosophy than modern, for Dewey, moral philosophy's concern was with living well, with the good life.⁷

While this may seem to have been a bit of a digression it is connected to our present topic; for an important aspect of the artistic is the imagination, and this is significant for Dewey's moral method. We have seen hints of this in the notion of moral deliberation as a dramatic rehearsal which, besides being a metaphor from the arts, also depicts the actual workings of the imagination. We enter imaginatively into various scenarios, and then try to choose the one which seems best. When we speak of a work of art as imaginative what we mean is that it has represented something in a unique way; it has related various colors, or objects, or notes, or words, or movements in a novel, yet meaningful way. If we recall that in moral inquiry what we are in fact considering are the relations between various facts and/or actions, then the connection between art and morality should become clear. It is through the imagination alone that we are able to enter purposely into different possibilities of relations between facts and ideas. The more artistic, the more creative, that imagination is, the greater the potential for finding new connections; and since meaningfulness is a matter of connections and relations, the more artistically imaginative we are in our actions, the greater the potential for increased meaning in our life. Dewey writes, only "imaginative vision elicits the possibilities that are interwoven within the texture of the actual."⁸ (AE:p.345)

When making a moral inquiry we are trying to find that

course of action which will respond to the specific problem under consideration in such a way as to maintain integrity between "what sort of self is in the making, what sort of world is in the making" and the sort of self/world I believe to be desirable. An artistic imagination is a necessary tool for making as complete and successful inquiry as possible. It is an indispensable tool for determining what sort of self/world I believe is desirable, for it is only by imaginative variation and experimentation that I can confidently say that this type of self/world relation is most desirable. Otherwise my conception of the proper self/world relation will be based on customary notions, randomly experienced examples, and the such, rather than being the result of an intelligent choice.

At this point I would like to introduce the notion of a 'moral image' to be used as a label for this self/world concept. Hilary Putnam uses this term in a way that captures⁹ what Dewey is trying to say. He says that

A moral image...is not a declaration that this or that is a virtue, or that this or that is what one ought to do; it is rather a picture of how our virtues and ideals hang together with one another and of what they have to do with the position we are in.¹⁰

A moral image is an image of myself in relation to the world, that I have judged as desirable. It functions as a guiding principle in making moral decisions which adds a sense of purpose and cohesion to my various moral judgments; it adds a general, and yet defining quality to my character. It is in effect my moral individuality. Putnam adds that we need a "number of¹¹ complementary moral images of the world" and I believe that

this is accurate. It attests, as Putnam points out, to a proper respect for moral pluralism, but it is also a practical necessity. To have one overriding moral image would be akin to adopting a fixed conception of value, which will be inappropriate in a diverse and changing world; it would presume an omniscient perspective, which could foresee all potential problems and developments one might face.

So we can define the goal of moral deliberation by paraphrasing the definition given on the last page: In making a moral inquiry we are trying to discover that course of action which will respond to the specific problem being considered in such a way as to maintain integrity between my moral image and the anticipated consequences of that action.

Before turning to Dewey's moral method we need to address what might seem like an inconsistency in the above discussion. We began the discussion by noting that each situation is unique and therefore requires a unique solution, and yet we ended with the notion of a moral image which provides a guiding principle which can introduce a defining character to my moral decisions, which seems to be some sort of generalizing principle. Can Dewey have both? Can we respect the uniqueness of situations and still hold onto the concept of moral principles? The answer is "yes" but we have to reconsider how we 'hold onto' our principles. Dewey does not ask us to give up our principles, in fact he does not ask us to give up any of our moral notions or values; what he does demand is that we change the way we hold these principles. He states that principles "exist as hypotheses with

which to experiment" (HNC:M14,p.165) and that a "moral principle, then, is not a command to act or forbear acting in a given way; it is a tool for analyzing special situations." (E:L7,p.280)

Each situation is unique, but if it was totally novel we would have no idea of how to proceed; there must be something recognizable in a situation so I can say "such a course of action worked in a similar situation in the past" and then immediately ask, "is this situation similar enough, in relevant ways, for that principle to work in the present situation?". This in no way diminishes the uniqueness of the situation. Gouinlock says it well:

Although in some particulars a situation will resemble other such occasions, even these particulars are part of a larger context; so they occur uniquely. Hence it is that all situations are singular, unique. These facts could hardly be questioned by anyone sensitive to experience.¹²

This approach to principles is telling of Dewey's revolt against traditional moral philosophy. He does not see it as something to be done away with, but rather as something to be reconstructed. The moral principles, codes, and values which we have been handed are histories of humanity's struggle for moral truth; they are responses to moral dilemmas of the past and thus are a possible source for our present efforts. The problem occurs when we start to accept these situational responses as hard and fast rules, to be faithfully applied, rather than experimentally tested. Dewey states

A genuinely reflective morals will look upon all the codes as possible data; it will consider the conditions under which they arose; the methods which consciously or unconsciously determined their formation and acceptance; it will inquire into their applicability in present conditions. It will neither insist dogmatically upon some of them, nor

idly throw them all away as of no significance. It will treat them as a storehouse of information and possible indications of what is now right and good. (E:L7,p.179)

The entire history of morality, from both a philosophical and an anthropological perspective, serves as the raw material of a scientific morality; data to be used, hypotheses to be tested in search of solutions to specific and unique moral situations. Still the uniqueness of situations, and the rejection of fixed principles, require that we be ready to give up any principle, no matter how well it may previously have served, if the situation at hand so requires. (HNC:M14,p.41) This follows from the logic of Dewey's philosophy: the world is constantly changing, each situation is unique, therefore it is not possible to tell, a priori, if a principle will work in any given situation. Situations may be similar enough in certain respects to give a presumption of applicability in a given situation, but only a presumption (E:L7,p.212) We must always be alert to the continued success, and possible failure, of even our dearest principles.

So while we need a moral image to give some sense of cohesion, of purpose, to our moral life, we must be ever ready to modify that image. Now while that complicates our moral deliberations (things are always easier when we can rely on authority rather than thinking through a situation) it also opens up the door for improving our moral image, to make it more meaningful, more moral. We can tie up this discussion with some examples. In the case of the civil servant his moral image saw himself as an honest person and the world as a place where

people should act honestly and be given promotions based on fair and honest grounds. Cheating will be at variance with that image and will therefore be the wrong action. It is possible that the man changes his moral image to be such that dog-eats-dog, and success is the only thing that counts, but that is a drastic change and seems inappropriate to the situation at hand (of course we could manipulate the scenario to make this a more plausible alternative, but that would be to create a different situation; I think it best, for the present purposes, if we stick to the situation as I have described it). However, I can think of a different scenario in which altering a moral image seems the correct thing to do. I am thinking of the example of Jean Valjean, from Hugo's magnificent Les Miserables. We may surmise fairly that Valjean's moral image saw himself as an honest, hard working individual, in a world in which hard working people prospered and people were decent. However, during hard times he is unable to get enough work to feed himself and his sister and her child. So counting on the decency of the world he begs for some bread so that the child does not starve, and is rebuffed. He is in a morally problematic situation. He absolutely needs food and yet cannot attain it through work or through charity. Honest means will not resolve the problem, yet dishonest means will be at variance with his moral image. He chooses to change his moral image. He has discovered that it was based on false premises of human decency, and social equity. He concludes that a world which forces a person to choose between the principle of honesty and the life of a child is not a world

in which the principle of honesty is always appropriate. He steals the bread, and sees it as the correct thing to do. I believe that this was a valid Deweyan decision. To hold that it would have been better to let the child take its chances with starvation rather than abandon a moral principle would be an example of the worst kind of foundationalism.

We will have more to say on these issues as we proceed, but now we have said enough so that we may set out Dewey's moral method.

The Scientific Moral Method

Actually, we have already discussed two aspects of the moral method. We have seen that moral deliberation is called for when there is a concrete problem--something is the matter. This problem gives rise to a need, a want, a desire for some object or course of action which will resolve the problem. We can define this as the 'good'. Dewey says that the good is "that which satisfies want, craving, which fulfills or makes complete the need which stirs to action." (E:L7,p.191) We have also discussed that a problem is distinguished as moral if its outcome will have an effect on the agent's character. Moral inquiry, then, is called forth to search for a course of action which will satisfy the desire aroused by the disruption in such a way as to maintain integrity.

It is a primary condition of a morally problematic situation that there be a choice among alternatives. Dewey defines this further when he says

Moral theory cannot emerge when there is positive belief as to what is right and what is wrong, for then there is no occasion for reflection. It emerges when men are confronted with situations in which different desires promise opposed goods and in which incompatible courses of action seem to be morally justified. (E:L7,p.164)

This is the true moral dilemma for Dewey, the type that requires a moral method: a conflict, not between good and evil, but between incompatible goods, or between the good and the right.¹³

Dewey does recognize a second sort of moral struggle, that between good and evil, and admits that it has been a central concern of many moralists, but he does not believe that it requires a moral method. When a person is faced with a choice between an act which he is convinced is good and an act which he is convinced is evil, he really is not trying to decide what the good of the situation is, he has already decided. If he is wavering in his action it is because he is trying to convince himself, or more accurately, fool himself that the evil act is not really evil; there is no real doubt. (E:L7,pp.164-165)

Take our example of the civil servant being tempted to cheat on a promotion exam. Once he realizes his only alternative to missing the question is to cheat, the situation, as described, is resolved. For in our scenario the clerk, a good person, was clear in his mind as to the immorality of cheating. If out of desperation he begins to weaken, he may start to rationalize --"everybody does it", "it is really not cheating since I would have gotten the answer if I wasn't so nervous", etc. He is in a moral situation, since the choice will certainly impact on his character, but he needs no moral method, for he is in no sincere doubt about what the good act is. Dewey claims that

this is not even a deliberation, since the man is not thinking but is rather just giving in to his feelings.

We have seen that moral inquiry is searching for a good which will satisfy a desire; we can now add that it is a search¹⁴ among competing goods, among competing desires. To understand this better we need to consider the role of desire in moral deliberation. The situations which humans often find themselves in can be exceedingly complex. Our needs, our aspirations, our values form a delicate web; the satisfaction of one has consequences for others, sometimes positive, but often negative. A situation's problematic nature may arouse one desire, but that desire, because of its place in our web of values, may impact on several others. The satisfaction of that desire may mean the thwarting of another. Its satisfaction may resolve that particular problem, only to create another, possibly more severe. For example, let us manipulate the scenario of the civil servant a bit. He not only wants his promotion, he needs it for the extra money it will provide, which he will use for his daughter's medical care. Now we have a true moral dilemma. He desires to be honest, which requires not cheating, but he also desires to be able to pay for his daughter's medical needs, which he believes requires him to cheat. There may be other options but for the sake of the discussion we shall assume that there are none, or at least none he can see. He is faced with a choice between two goods (honesty and care for his daughter) this challenges his moral image. In this situation the satisfaction of one desire excludes the satisfaction of the other desire.

We cannot say that since the satisfaction of a desire equals a good that it does not matter which he chooses, for choosing one will lead to the failure to satisfy the other, and that is bad. This is where the next and decisive step of the moral method comes in: we must discriminate between the desired and the desirable. That we desire something is a fact; in and of itself it has no normative force. To say that something is desirable is to invest it with such normative force; it is to say that this ought to be desired. In a famous passage Dewey sets out the distinction:

The fact that something is desired only raises the question of its desirability; it does not settle it.... To say that something satisfies is to report something as an isolated finality. To assert that it is satisfactory is to define it in its connections and interactions.
(QC:L4, pp.207-208)

So it is not merely the satisfaction of desire which resolves a moral dilemma; Dewey is not putting forth a non-cognitivist equation of 'good' and 'what I desire'. It must be the satisfaction of an intellectually approved desire. The moral method's crucial step is the determination by intelligence of the desirable desire.

Before continuing with this concept I would like to note a disagreement in the literature concerning this issue. James Gouinlock says that he disagrees with Sidney Hook's interpretation that this distinction introduces a normative 'ought'. He says that this interpretation misleadingly represents Dewey as trying to derive 'ought' statements from 'is' statements. He concludes that

The distinctions which Dewey introduces are not for the

sake of establishing formal relations between different propositions or for determining the existential conditions which would presumably justify the sudden appearance of an "ought" in a statement.... What Dewey is trying to do is designate notably different phases of inquiry in the problematic situation and to point out the efficacy of such inquiry for directing the situation...¹⁵

Gouinlock's assessment of Dewey is correct but I believe he misses Hook's point. Hook specifically states that the relation between 'ought' statements and 'is' statements is not a theoretical relation between propositions; and if it were so then Dewey would be guilty of violating Hume's principle. The relationship is a practical one, and hence the normative force stems from the need for practical action. As Hook puts it

A disregard for the living context of the practical judgment...leaves us with a truism that from any set of matter of fact propositions, no conclusions about what should be done follow. If there is no "ought" or "should" in the premises of the "detached" argument, no "ought" or "should" is entailed in the conclusion. But within a context in which something must be done, the "ought" of a decision or of a conclusion is, so to speak, ultimately derivative from the urgencies of the problem, and supported or justified by the factual statements about the probable consequences of doing one thing or another to meet the situation.¹⁶

I believe that Hook is correct in his interpretation. Any normative force a moral statement may have is derived by the practical necessity of acting on a problem. When faced with a morally problematic situation something **must** be done. Some action will result in a satisfactory conclusion (it will resolve the problem in such a way as to best maintain integrity, as discussed above); this then is the action we 'ought' to do; this is the desire which it is 'desirable' to satisfy.

This practical 'ought' is all the normative force contained in Dewey's method. There is no categorical 'ought' to be found.

Such an 'ought' would be inconsistent with Dewey's anti-foundationalism. Although this 'ought' does not carry the theoretical weight we have come to expect of normative statements its connection to the real needs and wants of moral agents is, Dewey believes, a sufficient and more practically effective 'ought'. Admittedly this will be unsatisfactory to many, and perhaps it is lacking, but further discussion will be postponed until the next section.

We can now return to the method and ask how this discrimination between the 'desired' and the 'desirable' is achieved. We begin by looking at the hypothetical results of acting on various conflicting desires; this has been referred to as a dramatic rehearsal. I imaginatively enter into each option and try to assess the possibilities of the success of that option in solving the problem, and the cost of that option--i.e. how will it affect the integrity of my moral image. If we return to the case of the civil servant we can try and concretize this process. If he chooses to cheat, this will have several possible consequences: for one, he risks the loss of his reputation, and possibly his position; also, his action will be at variance with his moral image, and will result in the diminution of his self esteem. On the other hand, it is a relatively risk free action which, if successful, will result in his having enough money for his daughter's medical bills. Then again he may choose not to cheat, and this has its own consequences: for one, he will not, in all likelihood, get the promotion; also, the situation after the exam will be a problem

of another sort, i.e., finding an honest way to get the money. However, by not cheating, he will enhance his self esteem and maintain his moral integrity, thus enabling him to feel himself a worthy role model for his children. Once he has set out the various alternatives open to him, he must weigh his options and choose; at this point the moral method has only one thing to say, "remember, that by choosing you are creating a moral image of the type of person/world you believe to be desirable." It can offer no more help.

This may seem a bit incomplete. Is there no mechanism for making the final decision? No. Each moral decision comes down ultimately to an individual's choice. There are principles to which the clerk may turn, but they are only hypotheses. He may turn to Kant's categorical imperative and decide that a certain alternative cannot be universalized and therefore cannot be the moral thing to do; he may turn to Mill's theory and decide that the greatest happiness will be produced, at the least cost, by cheating; or he may turn to the legalities of the situation, or the implied contract of the honor system--but according to Dewey he can only turn to these as data to be considered in trying to render a decision. If he decides that no good can come from a dishonest deed, and that it is better to take his chances on his honest performance, rather than risking his job, then the desirable thing to do is to not cheat. Or, he may decide that honesty is one thing, but that a society which forces a person to choose between honor and adequate medical care is an unjust system to which he is not morally bound. He may change

his moral image and decide that the desirable thing to do is to cheat. If he can be comfortable with the consequences of his action, then he has reached a decision.

Reaching a decision, however, is not the end of the process. In the final step of the method we must observe the actual consequences of our action and compare it to our predictions. Did my decision actually result in the good I anticipated? Or, did I fail to adequately analyze the situation so that my action was unsuccessful? Despite the success of my action were there any unanticipated consequences? This assessment is important to judge the quality of my decision and to provide additional data for future decisions. Now we can set out the method concisely and spend some time considering its merits and/or flaws.

Since Dewey's moral method is a procedure for inquiry into a morally problematic situation its structure will follow the general pattern of inquiry. The identification of a situation as distinctively moral is a component of the method, and it is at this point that moral deliberation begins. The method may be set out as follows:

1) Initiating Conditions--as with inquiry in general, there is a disruption in a situation making that situation problematic and calling forth inquiry.

2) Determination of Situation as Morally Problematic--if the situation calls for a deliberate choice between conflicting goods, and furthermore, if the outcome of the decision will impact upon the agent's character, the situation is morally problematic.

3) Determination of Alternative Ends-in-View--in this step the alternative courses of action, relating to the various conflicting desires, are established.

4) Determination of the Morally Desirable End-in-View--this is the stage of deliberation. Intelligence, in its critical capacity is brought to bear upon alternative ends-in-view in order to establish the desirable course of action. This includes determination of the causal antecedents of the desires, and the potential consequences, both personal and social, of acting on the desires.

5) The Moral Decision--after completing as extensive a deliberation as is feasible, a choice is made as to which course of action will resolve the problem while maintaining the integrity of the agent's moral image. May also include revision of that moral image.

6) Assessment--after action is undertaken, an assessment of agreement between anticipated results and actual results needs to be made. Also, possible unanticipated results should be considered. This step provides corrective data for future moral deliberations.

This is John Dewey's moral method.

A criticism that might be leveled against this is that while it may, if followed diligently, result in intelligent action, it does not seem to guarantee that it will result in moral action. On the face of it, it seems to equate moral action with intelligent action, and this cannot be adequate for there are quite obviously plenty of examples of intelligent, evil

action. This is an important charge and must be dealt with. We will, however, postpone consideration of it until the third section, at which point the method will be given a stronger defense. If we can put off such criticism until the next section, then we can discuss some of the strengths of the method.

A major contribution of Dewey's moral method is that by basing moral experience in nature, he has given a firm empirical ground to morality and thus opened the door for the contributions of science. The basis upon which to make a moral decision lies in step three, which calls for the analysis of antecedents and consequences. We have seen that the inquiry into relations between objects and events is the specialty of science. Also, the problems which initiate a moral problem are concrete conditions in the world; conditions, therefore, which are open to observation and scientific analysis. As Dewey puts it, "Since desires and interests are activities which take place in the world and which have effects in the world, they are observable in themselves and in connection with their observed effects." (TV:L13,p.208) Rather than being logically distinct fields of investigation, science and morality become partners in a common effort. The findings of science provide the most reliable data that can be used in moral deliberation. Dewey writes

a moral that frames its judgments of value on the basis of consequences must depend in a most intimate manner upon the conclusions of science. For the knowledge of the relations between changes which enable us to connect things as antecedents and consequents is science. (QC:L4,pp.218-219)

And the improvement goes both ways, for when the sciences "contribute to the detection of concrete human woes and to the

development of plans for remedying them...they become moral; they become part of the apparatus of moral inquiry or science." (RP:M12,p.178) Science becomes more humanistic, and morals become more scientific; the path has been cleared for the development of a naturalistic humanism.

A typical obstacle to this union has been the notion that the concern of science is 'fact' while the concern of morality is 'value'. However, once we realize the empirical nature, and biological origin, of moral experience this distinction disappears. (TV:L13,pp.248-249) Our desires are part of the factual world. As soon as it is recognized that valuation springs from desire, and that desires are existential conditions of certain physical beings as they interact with their environment, then it must be recognized that desires are part of the facts which constitute a moral situation. The physical facts of the world do not entail, in themselves, any values; but the only way to get values is by deriving them from a set of facts about the world. Among these facts are the practical necessity of resolving problems and the desires of individuals; facts which are open to scientific investigation.

It is clear that for Dewey the most significant achievement of his moral philosophy is its success in bridging this gap between science and morals, which he refers to as the "vexatious and wasteful conflict between naturalism and humanism." (RP:M12,p.179) As we stated in the first chapter, Dewey saw the great intellectual challenge facing the twentieth century to be reconciling modern science, as represented in the theory

of evolution, and man's deepest beliefs and values. It could only be by achieving such a reconciliation that morals could once again be a moving force in the world, and that science could be focused on humane needs. Dewey believed the means for doing this required nothing less than a reconstruction of humanity's philosophic heritage on the principles of naturalism. The first four chapters of this work attempted to set out the reconstructive efforts of John Dewey which culminated in a reconstruction of morality itself. Here we have attempted to state explicitly, and explain, his reconstructed moral method. It is my belief that Dewey was quite successful in the enormous task he undertook. However, Dewey was not always the best at presenting his own views, so I believe it is necessary to provide some support for the structure Dewey has established, using material provided by Dewey, but which he never explicitly developed. This will be our next topic.

The Concept of Growth

We mentioned in the last section that it might be objected that all Dewey's method provides is a means for more intelligent action, but what we are after is more moral action. The fact that its goal is the integrity of a moral image seems to be of little help, for as we defined that, someone could quite conceivably have a picture of self in relation to the world, which is very intelligent and very evil. We can call this the problem of the 'evil genius'. Its most common exemplification is the case of a Nazi. What is there to prevent a Nazi from

applying Dewey's moral method in order to maintain integrity in a moral image based on brutal power and intolerance? The Nazis may be seen as geniuses in applying intelligence to what they perceived as problematic situations. How with Dewey's method might such a scenario be prevented? This is admittedly a severe case, but it is not too hard to imagine someone using Dewey's method faithfully and coming up with decisions that would be recognized as morally reprehensible. If Dewey's method cannot provide grounds for criticizing such cases, then is it worth having? I believe that Dewey answered this charge. Dewey did not set out an explicit answer (though given the number of times it has come up, perhaps he should have) nor did he provide a developed defense of his method as a whole. Rather, he defended various aspects of the theory at different times; he expended a great deal of effort in criticizing the tradition and defending his experimental approach; but he was so pre-occupied (understandably so) with fending off charges from these more traditional philosophies that he never took time, at least in writing, to step back and consider the method as a complete theory, so as to see where it needed some further development. As Richard Bernstein notes, "Dewey was a philosopher who painted with a broad stroke; he was a man of vision and fertile imagination", but, he goes on to say, he often left something to be desired when it came to filling in all the details. Now, while I believe this common criticism of Dewey often misses the point of Dewey's belief that the details were often related to the specifics of situations, and therefore, inappropriate

for him to provide, it is, in all fairness, often correct. It is my intention to try to fill in some more details of Dewey's moral philosophy. I believe that he said enough about morality so that we can fashion a defense against the 'evil genius'. First we need to understand what is really being said with this criticism. If the only problem is the inability to convince a Nazi that his policies were immoral I do not believe it would have been given much attention. The real criticism is that Dewey's method does not contain, it seems, any principle which can constrain a decision within moral boundaries. For example, if we consider Kant and Mill as presenting us with moral images, we can say that those images contain principles for delimiting the agent's choice within acceptable moral boundaries. The Categorical Imperative says that whatever your moral image, it must be universalizable in order to count as moral; the Greatest Happiness Principle says your moral image must maximize pleasure in order to be moral. What is the necessary component of Dewey's image? We are aware that he rejects any suggestion of fixed or final principle upon which a moral image might be based, but if there is no guide beyond "intelligently and creatively set yourself a moral image" then perhaps Kant and Mill, for all the drawbacks of their foundationalism, provide a more useful, a more effective moral method. Here is the challenge for Dewey: can he provide a limiting principle, which will set the boundaries for moral choice, without giving up his anti-foundationalist, naturalistic position? I believe that he can, and I believe the key is to be found in the concept

of 'growth'.

Dewey explicitly names 'growth' as the guiding principle of morality, yet this is often interpreted as, at best, an admonition to be ever vigilant and active in developing our morals, and at worst a rhetorical statement too vague to be of much practical use. Yet Thayer says that growth "provides the nexus and the beginning point of logical, ethical, and educational theory" in Dewey's system.²¹ I believe that we should take Dewey at his word and see 'growth' as the central moral concept. This view is indicated in the famous maxim, "growth itself is the only moral end" (RP:M12,p.181) then is re-affirmed in Ethics, where he writes, "we set up this end and that end, but the end is growth itself." (E:L7,p.306) If we take Dewey at his word then the boundaries of moral choice are to be found in the notion of 'growth'.

In the last chapter we entered into a brief discussion of growth and identified it as a specific sort of change in which that which was previously present expands and develops in such a way that its functioning is maintained or enhanced²² (recall the example of the tree). I believe that this captures what Dewey meant by growth and we shall adopt it as our working definition. So, we may state in a preliminary way that an action will be moral if as a consequence a change is made in the character which enhances the functioning of the agent in the world. Now, the functioning of a human being is a complex thing and needs to be analyzed. For example, man is a biological creature and therefore has biological functions which need to

be maintained in good working order in order to survive in the world. In fact adequate biological functioning is necessary to the maintenance of any moral image, and therefore an action which leads to the maintenance or enhancement of these functions is moral. If morality is concerned with getting the most meaning from experience as possible, and our ability to experience is biologically based, then proper maintenance of these functions seems to be a moral concern. This does not indicate that there is in any particular situation a moral imperative to 'be healthy', nor does it imply any priority of health concerns over other moral concerns, merely that concern with biological functioning is a proper concern of morality; and also, a general disregard for biological functioning, since it threatens biological growth, and hence growth in general, cannot be moral --so this provides a constraint on moral choice.

Humans are also social animals who to live and prosper must do so in a social setting. An action may enhance or inhibit the ability to function in society, and so may be judged as moral or immoral. The ability to form and maintain social relations, be it with individuals such as friends, co-workers, neighbors, or with groups, a profession, a community are eminently moral concerns. Again this does not specify any particular relationship must be established or that any primacy must be given to social functions over other moral concerns. But if a person is not able to form social bonds, of some sort, then they cut themselves off from a rich source of experience (even if the conclusion about those experiences is that they are not worth pursuing). We have to communicate and relate to

a social context. Those who are unable to do so are recognized by the psychological community to be neurotic; that is, their inability to form relations inhibits their day to day functioning. Such a life style cannot be morally approved. While Dewey's moral method cannot demand any particular type of relation to the social context it can in general advocate an attitude that is open to the variety of experiences offered by society; which includes the diversity of goods enjoyed and claims made. In trying to establish the richest moral image possible a broader range of alternatives from which to choose has to be morally preferable. Again, this is a general statement about a particular type of function. How to weigh the demands of this function against other functions has not been indicated.

Humans are also individuals with goals of their own which are central to their moral image. Actions which enhance the ability of individuals to create and fulfill a moral image must obviously be a central concern of morality. The ability to experience life intelligently, to have aesthetic experiences, to make decisions vital to their interests are all moral concerns. While a particular life style cannot be demanded, lifestyles which are narrow and closed to experience, which lead to an abdication of responsibility, cannot be morally approved.

We have listed three broad categories of human functioning: biological, social, and individual. However, since biological functioning is a pre-condition of any other function, if we consider it to be implied in functioning in general, we can focus on two main

classes of functions. So to fill out our understanding of growth we need to explore individual and social functioning. If you recall our discussion of the transactional perspective we will be able to gain some insight into these issues. From a transactional perspective the social and individual are not absolute distinctions, but rather are analytical distinctions of a larger system. They are also mutually-causal aspects in that society is composed of individuals, who attain their individuality through socialization. Action, or conduct, is likewise a transaction between an organism (individual) and its environment (society). What this means for our present topic is that individual functioning must be related to not only individual conditions, but to social conditions as well; and likewise, social functioning must relate to individual conditions as well as social. As we stated in our earlier discussion of transaction, something cannot affect one aspect of the transaction without having implications for the other aspect. 23

An action which takes into consideration just one of these aspects (social or individual) is not fully adequate to the situation at hand. This then sets the boundaries of moral choice--what will be the consequences of my decision on both an individual and a social level; will it be such as to enhance functioning; will it enable me as an individual to have quality experiences; will it affect society so that society has richer experiences to offer the individual. We have learned that a moral image is a picture of self in relation to the world, we can now expand that definition to state that a moral image is

a picture of self and world transactionally related, and constrained by the concept of growth.

The support for this comes from the logic of the transactional perspective. Take for example, a corporation, which is a kind of society. If the corporation makes decisions which enhance the growth of the corporation, but which inhibit the growth of the individuals who make up that corporation, it develops stagnant constituents (unchallenged, burnt out, just going through the motions till the weekend, etc.), which eventually leads to corporate stagnation; the action is not transactionally growth-enhancing. Likewise, if an individual member of that corporation makes decisions with an eye toward his own growth, ignoring the deleterious effects it has on the corporation, then the individual suffers as the corporation which sustains him degenerates.²⁴ The good of the individual cannot ultimately be divorced from the good of the society to which he belongs;²⁵ nor can the good of a society be divorced from the good of the individuals of which it is comprised. For an action to be truly growth-enhancing it must serve both aspects of the transaction.²⁶

This is admittedly a bit more vague than may be desired. A good deal of this stems from Dewey's commitment to the uniqueness of situations and his anti-foundationalist position. This prohibits us from offering any fixed notions or any normative statements (except the most general) which are not situationally relative. However, we should be able to flesh out these ideas to an extent which will make them workable. But before trying

to make Dewey's vision more detailed we must address a possible objection--that he has already added too many details to be consistent to his anti-foundationalism.

The objection asks how can Dewey, a committed anti-foundationalist, introduce a necessary quality into his moral method? By setting growth as not only the end, but the only end of morality he seems to be doing just that. If he wanted to argue that the more traditional ends established by moral philosophers were somehow lacking and that he had something better, that would have been acceptable, since that is basically what any novel theorist does. But, the objection continues, by criticizing these other theories for having any fixed end, he must hold himself to the same standard. We must ask, then, is growth a fixed and final end of the kind Dewey has been arguing against? I do not believe so, even though growth is a 'necessary' end.

The key to understanding this is that Dewey does not interpret 'necessary' in any metaphysical or foundationalist sense; rather, it is a practical, pragmatic term; "Necessary means needed." (SN:E4,p.29)²⁷ Growth is not something we aim at as distinct from our present activity; it is a quality of certain actions in relation to particular situations. A problem is a moral problem when it contains alternatives which may be distinguished as 'better' and 'worse', and in which the choice will impact upon the character of the agent. The better choice will obviously be the one which makes a positive difference in our character, which will improve our character. By making

our character (that which was present prior to the action) better (more capable of experiencing, better able to function in future situations) the decision which resolves a moral problem is, by definition, growth-enhancing. This is not a fixed end which is determined prior to the situation, it is the quality of the action which is determined by the contingencies of any moral situation. It is a necessary component of any moral end in the sense that an action 'needs' to be growth-enhancing (in the manner just set out) to be a successful moral choice. This is not due to any theoretical prejudices, but rather is necessitated by a world constantly in flux, in which we must make our way. To keep up with a dynamic world, our moral decisions must have a dynamic quality to them, and this, for Dewey, is contained in the notion of growth.

It is also not a final end. Growth is not something we desire in itself, but rather is of instrumental value. We aim at growth not for the sake of growing, but for the sake of a richer life. To have an enhanced functioning is to be better connected to life, to be more richly related, to be capable of more experiencing. All of which enables us to grow further. It is condition of a more meaningful life; and it gives our moral life its needed dynamic quality. Dewey writes

the process of growth, of improvement and progress, rather than the static outcome and result, becomes the significant thing.... The end is no longer a terminus or limit to be reached. It is the active process of transforming the existent situation. Not perfection as a final goal, but the ever-enduring process of perfecting, maturing, refining is the aim of living. (RP:M12,p.181)

We can see now why in the line which finishes this paragraph,

and which we are considering, "growth itself is the only moral 'end'", 'end' is in quotation marks--it is not really an end. The moral goal, in fact, is not an end, a terminus, but is a process, a-certain characteristic way of living life. Life is dynamic, so it is not the plateau which a person reaches which determines the moral quality of their life, but rather the direction in which they are moving. "In reality," says Dewey, "direction of movement, not plane of attainment and rest,²⁹ determines moral quality." (E:L7,p.307)

So, Dewey is not being untrue to his anti-foundationalism in his insistence on growth, but is rather being true to his naturalism which sees the world as an ever changing place which requires that man 'grow' in order to keep pace; more so if he wishes to prosper and find meaning. As Sidney Hook has put it, "it is obvious that for Dewey growth is an inclusive end and not a single exclusive end. It embraces all the positive intellectual, emotional, and moral ends."³⁰

Before proceeding to the next topic I think it might be prudent to say a word about the choice of 'growth' to label this process. When Dewey speaks of growth he is referring to an increase in the ability of individuals to experience life; to choose a meaningful way of living; of becoming more connected to those around them; of being able to contribute to society because they have been able to find their own vision of the good; in general, becoming more of a person. It may be asked whether 'growth' is the best label for this broad project. Psychology speaks of a similar process as "self-realization"

or "self-actualization", and there is a kindred relation between these theories and Dewey.³¹ However, there is a position implicit in these terms (and explicit in some theories which take these labels) which is incompatible with Dewey. That is, that there is a 'self' already present and complete, which needs to be brought out; made actual, rather than potential; realized, instead of inhibited. As we have seen, for Dewey, self is something we reconstruct. This does assume that there be a 'self' present to be worked upon, but it does not assume that there is a part of the 'self' somehow hidden away, awaiting actualization. The 'self' which results after reconstruction, after growth, is a different 'self', in often significant ways, from the 'self' that was prior to the growth.

This is an important distinction which has not always been grasped by writers on Dewey. This has to be attributed in part to Dewey. The idea of a pre-existing 'self' needing to be realized in the world is not incompatible with some of his ideas from his early Hegelian days. In the introduction to Ethics, in the collected works, Abraham Edel and Elizabeth Flowers note that in the original 1908 version Dewey tied the notion of moral good to the realization of the self. They point out that this seemed to stem from a conception of a linear social evolution, which Dewey abandons by the revised 1932 edition. (E:L7,pp.vii-xxxv) Edel and Flowers conclude, and Sleeper concurs,³² that self-realization is no longer a central concern in Dewey's moral philosophy. If we define 'self-realization' as the working out of some pre-formed, yet hidden self, then I

agree; in fact such a notion is of no concern to Dewey. But if this is taken to mean that Dewey gave up concern, central concern, with the development of the self (using 'development' in a sense in which there is something added on, built up, rather in any sense which might imply an inner development) then I strongly disagree. I believe that a central notion of Dewey's moral philosophy is self-development; it is what he means by growth. Sleeper, and Edel and Flowers, point out the increasing concern in Dewey's moral writings with social criticism, and this is correct. My contention, however, is that this seeming change of emphasis is actually the result of a change in Dewey's concept of self.³³ Dewey begins to see the self not as some 'inner' thing needing to work its way out, but rather as the result of an individual's relating to his environment, both physical and social. In order for individuals to have the greatest possibility of self-development they need to relate to a society which is conducive to that development; a society that is free; which respects the individual; which provides the economic and educational conditions required for self-development; and a society in which they can have a voice. All of Dewey's social and political concerns can be seen as attempts to create the most fertile grounds for individual self-development.³⁴

This contention of mine stems from a transactional understanding of the individual/social relation. The only way to encourage self-development is to provide the opportunity for rich experiences of the world; a person truly devoted to the cause of self-development (rather than being merely interested

in their own self development) will enthusiastically engage in social criticism.

With this said, it will be acceptable to use the term 'development' instead of 'growth', if that seems somehow more substantial, or less vague, than 'growth'--as long as it is defined in the same way as 'growth'.³⁵ But in that case, it seems to me, we might as well stick with Dewey's term, and just keep in mind its more exact meaning.

This then is how I propose that Dewey's method may be supported and strengthened: a moral image, based on a transactional understanding of self/world, as a guiding principle constrained by the notion of 'growth'. Still, this is more formal than substantive; to provide some content it is necessary to investigate the conditions which enhance an individual's growth, and the conditions which enhance a society's growth, and then consider how these transact. Supportive of this approach is the fact that Dewey himself spent a great deal of his philosophic energy doing just this. For, the study of the conditions of individual growth is nothing other than his philosophy of education; and the study of the conditions of a community's growth is nothing other than his philosophy of democracy. At the beginning of this chapter I claimed that Dewey's philosophy of education and his social philosophy were components of his moral philosophy; in the next chapter I hope to substantiate this claim. The connecting thread of all three is the importance of growth.

CHAPTER SIX

TRANSACTIONAL ETHICS

We have now reached the final part of our discussion. In the last chapter it was argued that Dewey's moral method is a tool for reconstructing the self. We then expanded this; the guiding principle of this process is a moral image of the self/social transaction. When we find ourselves in a morally problematic situation we must choose between alternatives, and that choice will impact on the agent's character, as well as having social consequences. From our discussion of the transformational function of inquiry it follows that the process of making a choice will change the self/social situation. So, what is at stake in any moral deliberation is 'what kind of person I am going to be/what kind of world is there going to be' as a result of this choice; i.e., what will be the nature of the self/social transaction. A moral image is a projection of the type of self/world I believe is desirable, that I can approve of as a 'good' outcome. The alternative which best matches this moral image will be what Dewey calls a unified action; we have said that it will maintain the integrity of the agent.¹ Dewey's method is a tool for making as informed a decision as possible, so that we may maintain our integrity.

We then noted that there was a possibility that this method could be used to make informed, integrity-maintaining decisions

which would conform to a moral image which many would deem immoral (for example, a Nazi). We asked if Dewey could provide any constraints on moral choice, set up any boundaries for moral deliberation, that could delimit possible moral images. We then considered the following argument: since our choice is between alternatives and the result of that choice will be a change in the self/social situation, we should choose that alternative which will result in the 'best' self/social situation. Since the 'good' appropriate to a situation is the one which will enable us to deal better with a problem than we could before the choice, the best choice is that which enhances our ability to deal with/handle/control/respond to situations. An enhancement of our ability we defined as 'growth'. We then characterized Dewey's moral method as concerned with self-development.

If we view this conclusion with traditional notions of the self, and of individuality, then this may still be unsatisfactory. It is not hard to think of an individual committed to self-development, self-improvement, who acts in a cruel, brutal, 'morally' unacceptable manner. Therefore, a moral image constrained by such a notion of self-development, of growth, would be no better than it was when we first started. But Dewey does not conceive of self and individuality in traditional terms (i.e. atomistic); he conceives of them transactionally--i.e. as the result of the transaction between human beings and their environment, both social and physical. Self-development takes place in a social environment; if our decisions make that environment less conducive to personal growth, less supportive

of the efforts of individuals to develop and improve themselves, those decisions for self-development make self-development less likely--it has a self-defeating quality to it.

By seeing Dewey's method as tool for self-development, and by interpreting self-development transactionally, we are able to strengthen that method by identifying a constraint on moral choices, and on moral images--they must be compatible with transactional growth.

We will attempt to develop the notion of transactional growth in this chapter, but if we turn to the Nazi problem we can exemplify this notion, based on our present understanding of it. How can Dewey respond to the Nazi problem? I believe that there are two ways of dealing with this. The very fact that we recognize this as a non-controversial example of moral evil indicates, to Dewey, that moral theory is not needed. We only need to deliberate when there is a question as to what is good, or right. If Dewey were asked how his method would decide an obviously immoral case, such as the Nazis, he would likely respond "if it is obviously immoral, then what do you need to deliberate about?". It may be countered that it is possible that someone is not convinced of the evil of the Nazi policy and therefore demands a reason not to exterminate 'inferior' beings--what then? Dewey might justifiably respond that if someone has such a different value system that for him exterminating innocent people would count as a possible good, then trying to find a rational, theoretical response may not be the appropriate course of action. Nevertheless, this

is an extreme case, and we can certainly think of situations which are less clear cut; so we may rightfully expect a better reply from Dewey. This is where the notion of transactional growth comes in.

We could argue with the Nazi that his policy was the worst case of intolerance, and intolerance is incompatible with transactional growth. By eliminating those with whom you disagree you are eliminating opportunities for growth, both your own and your society's. Mill's argument for the freedom of ideas⁵ is applicable here. He argues that by outlawing any idea you deprive yourself, and your society, of the opportunity to have better ideas. For the idea you suppress might be true, in which case you have deprived yourself of truth; but even if the idea is false, you are still depriving yourself of the opportunity of strengthening your truth by testing it against a challenger. In either case you lose an opportunity for development, for improvement, for growth. Furthermore, since we live in an ever changing world it is not possible to decide in advance what will be needed to meet the challenges of the future, so you are also denying yourself and your society a rich source for future growth. In addition to this, the example you set for the surviving portion of society will severely restrict the development, by them, of ideas which deviate from authorized doctrine. The only source of the material for the growth of a society comes from the novelty provided by individuals; if you cut off that source, you severely restrict, perhaps fatally, the ability of your society to meet the demands of a dynamic

world.

The Nazi might very well reply to this that nothing good can come from these people; however, that can not be empirically verified. Or he may say that he desires nothing which these people can supply; but again, since he can not verify that, it might be the case that he needs what only they can supply, whether or not he desires it. It may be that even these arguments might not dissuade the Nazi. This would just be an indication that the Nazi will not listen to reason; at this point it would be foolish to continue in a rational vein--neither Dewey's, nor any one else's, theory would be appropriate. This however is not a failure of theory. Since theories are based on reason, once reason is rejected there is no call for theory. Our expanded version of Dewey cannot provide answers to the Nazi that would force the Nazi to desist, or even to see his actions as immoral, but it can provide compelling reasons for rational people to see it thus. So Dewey's method is at least as capable as any other in dealing with the Nazi, or 'evil genius', problem; in my opinion he provides a stronger response by basing it on the empirical implications of the Nazis' actions for the Nazis' future ability to thrive as a society. Gouinlock puts it nicely when he writes

A critic might object here that this sort of criticism of values hardly guarantees that one will not act selfishly and cruelly. Of course it doesn't. What sort of guarantees of conduct are built into any system of criticism? But, again, thorough consideration of the implications of one's actions, in this social world, seems to offer far more promise of harmonious social conduct than those methods of deliberation predicated on those "verities" which presume to transcend experience.⁶

This has hopefully given a better idea of how the notion of transactional growth functions to constrain moral choices and moral images. A moral choice not compatible with the growth and development of both individuals and a society cannot be a morally acceptable decision. We need to assess this notion, but before doing so it will be useful to discuss the conditions conducive to an individual's growth and those conducive to a society's growth. We will now turn to that topic.

Education and Democracy

We live in a dynamic world. This has been a common theme in our discussion of Dewey and for good reason: it is this everchanging world which we need to find some way of dealing with. Static solutions are appropriate to static conditions. Dynamic conditions require dynamic responses; it demands flexibility in our functioning in order to keep pace with the change; it requires an enhancement of our ability to deal with existence. It requires more than being able to deal with present experiences; it requires that we develop a general capability to deal with experience and a general flexibility to adapt to novel situations. This allows us to be prepared, to some degree, in advance for the changes we will encounter, rather than trying to prepare after the fact. It requires that we develop, that we grow. On a biological level this is not startling news, it is in fact the lesson of evolution. 'Survival of the fittest' we understand to mean survival of those best adapted to the environment. Since that environment changes, those who adapt

as those changes occur stand the best chance of surviving, and of thriving. Dewey, being faithful to his naturalism, extends this lesson to humanity. We are not merely biological entities, nor do we inhabit a solely physical environment. We are intellectual beings, moral beings, creative beings and social beings. And the intellectual, moral, creative, social environments we inhabit are as dynamic as the physical world. To thrive as complete human beings we need to be able to adapt to the changes which take place on all these levels; we need to 'grow' on all these levels.

The process of reorganizing and reconstructing the elements of these diverse environments in order to develop our abilities to function in them, in order to be able to thrive as humans --in order to 'grow'--Dewey calls 'education'. (DE:p.76) Education is not, in essence, the teaching of skills, or the transmitting of information (although it does and must do these things), it is the process of individual growth; its ultimate aim is "nothing other than the creation of human beings in the fullness of their capacities." (DE:L5,p.297) Since education is the process of individual growth, and growth is required in order to thrive as humans, education is a subject of ultimate concern. This should explain why Dewey spent so much time and energy on educational issues--in practice as well as in theory. Philosophy's task is to aid us in living well and education is the process through which we enhance our ability to experience and deal with life, therefore the two are intrinsically tied. Dewey says

If we are willing to conceive education as the process of forming fundamental dispositions, intellectual and emotional, toward nature and fellow men, philosophy may even be defined as the general theory of education. (DE:p.328)

Whether the topic is reality, or knowledge, or morality, or politics, or language, the underlying concern is an increased understanding of, and hence an increased ability to deal with, life in some aspect. Philosophy's aim is to help us understand and deal with life in a more efficient, more sensitive, 'better', way than previously--it educates us. In fact, the ability of philosophy to educate us is the test of its worth, as far as Dewey is concerned: "if a theory makes no difference in educational endeavor, it must be artificial." (DE:p.328) This is a sound conclusion in the context of Dewey's view of education, for if a theory makes no difference in education, it does not make a difference in the way we experience life; and if it does not make a difference in the way we experience life,⁷ it is worthless. This is a broad, and morally significant, conception of education, and provides us with one of the threads which ties Dewey's philosophy into a coherent and meaningful project; and I believe it is because education was such a significant and central concern for Dewey that he became our greatest philosopher of education.

To understand better the importance of education for morality we need to delve into Dewey's theory a bit further. He wrote a tremendous amount on educational issues, and had much to say on pedagogy, curriculum and administration; as interesting as these may be, they will not concern us here. What is important is the educative process, in general, as that relates to

individual growth. All education is based on experience (though not necessarily direct experience), says Dewey, but not all experience is educative. (EE:L13,p.11) We learn either through direct experience with our environment, or through someone else's direct experience with the environment (in the form of teachers, books, stories, etc.) yet not every experience leads to increased ability to experience and deal with life (i.e. not every experience is growth enhancing). Experience itself is not educative; instead, it is the way we interact with an experience which makes it educative, growth-enhancing. There are different possible ways of interacting with any given experience, so a choice is required. As it is with all choices, some opportunities are opened up, others are necessarily shut out. Here is the crux of the matter: does the chosen action open us up to an increased ability to experience life (i.e. is it growth enhancing)? If so then it is educative. Dewey writes

some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience. An experience may be such as to engender callousness; it may produce lack of sensitivity and responsiveness. Then the possibilities of having richer experience in the future are restricted.... An experience may be immediately enjoyable and yet promote the formation of a slack or careless attitude.... The consequences of formation of such habits is inability to control future experience. (EE:L13,pp.11-12)

An example that springs to mind is that of drug use. Here is an experience that may be immediately enjoyable and yet which, through the continued use which it often encourages, tends to restrict future experience.⁸ The drug addict is less sensitive to non-drug experiences, less capable of controlling future experiences, less able to thrive as a complete human being

--less able to develop and grow. It is a mis-educative experience.⁹ Also, some experiences which were originally educative may become mis-educative. This example is also an unfortunately common occurrence in our society; I am thinking of the burnt out employee (in whatever field, business, health care, even education) who begins by trying to learn as much as possible about his or her position and profession. This is an educative way of interacting with experience since it makes such persons more actively involved with their experience; more sensitive to the subtleties of the job, the ins and outs; they become more interested in improving their skills so as to deal better with their future experiences; they develop and grow (in at least this one aspect of themselves). However, there all too often comes a point when this stops, either due to a complacency on the part of the person, or because the job itself offers only so much of a challenge. They begin to interact with experience in a routine, thoughtless manner. This dulls their sensitivity to any novelty that might be present in their work experiences and hence they become less capable of dealing with any novel future experiences. They have ceased to develop; their work experience has become mis-educative. Since work occupies such a great portion of a person's life, to be in such a position very often has negative implications for other aspects of that person's life experiences. It is possible that such a person makes up for the mis-educative nature of their jobs by engaging energetically in educative experiences outside of work, but often this mis-educative manner of dealing with experience

carries over. John Stuart Mill has an eloquent statement on this kind of phenomena, which though not speaking explicitly of educative experiences is very much in line with the point Dewey is making. He writes

Capacity for nobler feelings is in most natures a very tender plant, easily killed, not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance; and in the majority of young people it dies away if the occupations to which their positions in life has devoted them, and the society into which it has thrown them, are not favourable to keeping that higher capacity in exercise. Men lose their high aspirations as they lose their intellectual tastes, because they have not time or opportunity for indulging them; and they addict themselves to inferior pleasures, not because they deliberately prefer them, but because they are either the only ones to which they have access, or are the only ones which they are any longer capable of enjoying.¹⁰

Mill is talking about higher quality pleasures; Dewey is not speaking about any particular type of experience, but rather a specific, 'higher', way of interacting with experience. Aside from this difference, I believe that Mill and Dewey are making the same point. An experience is mis-educative if it tends to make the individual less able to interact with future experience in an educative manner.

We have defined a moral choice as one between alternatives which will impact on the moral image of self/world. We now have a constraint on that choice: the moral choice will be the one which will be educative, which will enhance an individual's ability to learn from experience so as to be better able to experience/control/learn from future experience. It will be the choice conducive to growth.¹¹ Recall the example of the civil servant taking an exam; now we will be able to further exemplify this concept. The clerk understands his options to be: 1) cheat

and pass the exam, thereby getting a raise that will allow him to pay for his daughter's medical care, or 2) refrain from cheating and likely fail, thereby not earning his raise. Given all the facts (but only the facts given) concerning the possible consequences of acting on either alternative, by adding the notion of individual growth the clerk might judge the situation in the following way (though he need not argue it in just this way):¹² If I cheat and get caught I will be fired from my job and be disgraced in front of my friends and family; and I still will not be able to pay my bills. I will not be trusted or respected, and therefore the quality of my future experiences will be damaged. If I do cheat and am successful I will be able to pay my bills, but I will feel a lessening of my self esteem. I will not be able to take pride in my work because I will always know that I did not honestly win my position. My pride in my work, and my belief that people should only be rewarded for honest efforts, is a major component of my moral image. Therefore, there will be a loss of integrity. My future work experiences will be effected negatively because of this; I will not be able to interact in an educative way with those experiences due to the sense of shame I will feel due to my loss of integrity. On the other hand, if I refrain from cheating, and still pass I will have a great sense of accomplishment; and even if I do fail I will have the sense of pride due to having overcome temptation, and having maintained my integrity. In such a moral dilemma, the correct choice, the moral choice, is to not cheat.

It may be asked, 'why should I choose the growth enhancing alternative?' As we have tried to demonstrate, in order to thrive in a changing world we need to be able to respond to that change, therefore choosing the growth enhancing alternative better enables us to deal with future experiences. If a person then says that they are not concerned with future experiences they are in effect saying "I choose not to be ready to meet the needs of future situations in which I might find myself". If someone can adopt such an attitude then there are no reasons which can compel them to choose the growth enhancing alternative; but it can also be fairly said that such a person is choosing not to be concerned with morality or the good life and will therefore be impervious to any moral theory. Still, what of the person who claims to be unconcerned with future experiences because it is their belief that we must get as much as possible from present experiences. Such a person is not at odds with Dewey, they merely have a restricted understanding of the educative potential of present experiences. For Dewey says that the best way to prepare ourselves for future experience is by learning to get the most out of present experience; to interact in this way with present experience and to make this our characteristic approach to life is the essence of education. He writes that "getting from the present the degree and kind of growth there is in it is education. This is a constant function, independent of age" (RP:M12,p.185) and in fact it should be an "ever present process." (EE:L13,p.30)

This is as much normative force as Dewey's theory can

support: if you want to get as much from experience as possible, if you want to prepare yourself for the unforeseen challenges which will come, then when making a moral choice, choose the growth enhancing, the educative alternative. Education, as the process of learning from experience, is intimately intertwined with morality; as Dewey says, the "educative process is all one with the moral process." (RP:M12,p.185) If this is not enough to compel a person to choose the growth enhancing alternative then (unless the argument from the social side convinces such a person) Dewey can say no more. But what moral theory can compel a person to accept their conclusions if that person is¹³ unconcerned with the premises of the theory?

We now have the first thread that ties together Dewey's moral theory; that it is not complete can be seen by asking, 'are there social needs, obligations, obstacles which may rightfully prevent me from choosing the growth-enhancing alternative?' We must consider the other side of the transaction in order to complete our discussion.

Dewey's social and political philosophy played as large a role in his career as did his educational philosophy. This is not surprising for, as we shall see, he did not believe that it was possible to make ultimate distinctions between the two. Dewey's social philosophy can be summed up by saying that he had a deep and firm commitment to democracy. We need to realize that for Dewey, democracy was never merely a political doctrine or form of government. (DE:p.87) Democracy represented to Dewey the sum of his personal and social moral beliefs; in it he placed

his hopes for humanity's future. In a sense democracy substituted for religion in the more mature Dewey. In his earlier writings we can find frequent references to God and Christianity, which is something we do not find in the middle and late works. In these works, however, we begin to see the socially active Dewey to whom we are more accustomed. This move from a more religious tone to a more social concern coincides with Dewey's move away from idealism. Robert Westbrook provides an informative discussion of this in his recent book, John Dewey and American Democracy.¹⁴ He connects Dewey's evolution not only to philosophic influences, but also to the practical effect of his marriage to Alice Chipman, a free-thinking, socially active woman.

Dewey's development into a social critic was not truly a rejection of religion, for he never truly adopted a religious faith, as such.¹⁵ Religion and the notion of God provided for Dewey the all embracing absolute he was seeking as a Hegel-influenced philosopher. They served him more as philosophical notions rather than as objects of worship. So, in claiming that democracy substituted for religion in Dewey's mature thought, I do not mean that he saw it as an object of worship, but rather that it provided him with a synthesizing concept for his most important values. That democracy might play such a role can be seen as early as 1893, when he writes that he assumes that "democracy is a spiritual fact and not a mere piece of governmental machinery." (CAD:E4.p.8)

We typically think of democracy in purely political terms: a doctrine which holds that people have a right to choose their

own government, a government which is responsible and answerable to those people; we also usually include some notion of individual rights belonging to those people. What Dewey argues is that for such a system actually to work certain other values must be respected and certain conditions met. The most basic condition is that those who vote for officials and social policies be able to understand the issues at stake; the most basic and precious value in a democracy is freedom, specifically freedom of mind. Dewey writes, "the basic freedom is that of freedom of mind and of whatever degree of freedom of action and experience is necessary to produce freedom of intelligence."

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(DEA:L11,p.220) In order to realize these conditions as fully as possible, Dewey argues for the need to generalize the scientific attitude and make social use of the fruits of science. Here is an example of one of the major themes in Dewey's philosophy finding justification in the concept of democracy. Dewey argues

While it would be absurd to believe it desirable or possible for everyone to become a scientist when science is defined from the side of subject matter, the future of democracy is allied with spread of the scientific attitude. It is the sole guarantee against wholesale misleading by propaganda. More important still it is the only assurance of the possibility of a public opinion intelligent enough to meet present social problems. (FC:L13,p.168)

This freedom of mind, furthered by the scientific attitude, is not to be restricted to purely political or public issues, but must permeate our daily lives. Whether our concerns are religious, social, moral, artistic, family-oriented, or practical they are all touched by and in turn touch on the lives of those around us, and are therefore at least potentially public issues.

Since the aspects of public life extend well beyond the technically political, to have a truly democratic society the democratic attitude must inform these aspects of life, as well.¹⁷

As Dewey put it, "the struggle for democracy has to be maintained on as many fronts as culture has aspects." (FC:L13,p.186) In its fullest manifestation democracy "is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself." (PP:L12,p.328)

It should be evident that this broad conception of democracy supports Dewey's position that there is no complete split between the individual and the social. If the individuals who make up a particular society are not informed; if they cannot think effectively for themselves; if they are not committed to democratic values in their daily lives, then you cannot have a democratic society--regardless of incessant rhetoric to the contrary. A society is more than the sum of its parts, but it is not more than the sum of the interactions of its parts. On the other hand, we have seen Dewey argue that individuals come to be who they are through the process of socialization. All human beings are born into the world as infants, crucially dependent upon support from their social environment. They are born and raised in a social unit (the family), they are educated in a social institution (school) and they live in a society (both cultural and political). So, an individual is significantly affected by the society in which he or she develops. We have now come to our discussion of the transactional relationship between individuals and a society.

In chapter four we defined the transactional perspective as one which 'sees an organism and its environment as aspects of a complete system, in which distinctions are made for the sake of analysis, but are not hypostatized into independent entities'.¹⁸ Although he never actually applies the term to individuals living in society there can be no doubt that this is how Dewey viewed the relationship between the two. This is evinced in several works: in 1927, he wrote that "both words, individual and social, are hopelessly ambiguous, and the ambiguity will never cease as long as we think in terms of an anti-thesis" (PP:L12,p.350); in 1939, he writes that the two terms do not stand for any actual existences but rather "ways of interaction" (FC:L13,p.86); and then in 1946, he states, "at the very best, individual and social stand for traits of unitary human beings; traits moreover, which are so integral that they are but two aspects of man in his actual existence", and that "'individual' is as truly but an adjective as is 'social'." (CHH:L15,pp.210-211) These passages exemplify the logic of the transactional view: that while it is often useful, and sometimes necessary, to speak of 'individual' issues and 'social' issues, these terms do not name distinct entities but instead highlight one or the other aspect of the transaction.

That humans are social animals has been a truism for many centuries. In one sense it is meant to emphasize the fact that man has a social instinct and seeks out the support of other humans. On a deeper level it states that a person is the product of social units (parents) and necessarily lives his or her life

in a social environment. Dewey accepts these facts; but they only investigate the facts on an interactional level, while the transactional level goes further. There are no individual traits which do not bear the stamp of some aspect of society. A person is an individual only in a biological, or strictly numerical sense. Being an individual in the sense of having individuality is something which is achieved; and it is achieved within and through a social medium. A child first begins to become an 'individual' through its interactions with its family, who, in turn, have all become who and what they are through their interactions with society. Then the child enters into more formal social conditions (school, a community, a political unit), which adds on to the ever present influence of informal social conditions (culture, ethnicity, political ideologies, religious beliefs, friends, etc.). On top of all of this, the skill which is most needed for a child to grow into its own person, to individuate, is language, the most social of all conditions. Developed over the course of centuries as a means of communicating more efficiently with other humans, language bears the stamp of not just an extensionally large society but a durationally large one, also. And if thinking is, as Dewey has argued, internal communication, then this most social of conditions forms the basis of our most 'individual' activity. Dewey writes that social institutions are

means of creating individuals. Only in the physical sense of physical bodies that to the sense are separate is individuality an original datum. Individuality in a social and moral sense is something to be wrought out.... These are not gifts but achievements. (RP:M12,p.191)

Furthermore, he says that the actions and passions of individuals

are what they are, their beliefs and purposes included, because of the social medium in which they live...they are influenced throughout by contemporary and transmitted culture, whether in conformity or in protest. (PP:L2,p.356)

Humans go from being non-distinctive biological units to being unique 'individuals' through the process of socialization, and only through this process.

It is important to note that Dewey is not arguing for some form of mechanical social determinism. People are not all the same, nor are they merely the sum of their social conditions. To begin with, Dewey admits that no two situations are identical. Therefore, even though we all become 'individuals' through the process of socialization, no two persons go through the process in the same way. Combine this with the fact that we all come into the world with unique genetic material and we have the basis for individuality. Dewey has a great respect for individuality, and it plays a crucial role in his social hopes. He writes that

Individuality is inexpugnable because it is a manner of distinctive sensitivity, selection, choice, response and utilization of conditions.... a distinctive way of feeling the impacts of the world and of showing a preferential bias in response to those impacts... (ION:L5,p.121)

The process of socialization is not in the least inconsistent with the development of individuality; and this is because 'social' and 'individual' are not opposites but rather are transactionally related. They are different emphases of the same reality. Individuation is not possible without socialization; isolated beings in a state of nature could never become 'individuals' (even if they could survive, which is all but impossible).

However, this is just one side of the transaction. The logic of transactions demands the converse be true--i.e. that society depends on individuality in order to be what it is. This is an easier position to argue for since a necessary component of the definition of 'society' is an association of individuals, but there is more to it than that. A society is what it is, becomes what it becomes, because of the individuality of its constituents. Dewey writes that "every new idea, every conception of things different from that authorized by current belief, must have its origin in an individual." (DE:p.296) Individuality is the source of novelty in a society, the only source. It is not the only source of novelty in the world, however. Change, as we have seen, is a generic feature of existence. The conditions by which society functions, change. If society cannot alter its functioning so as to adapt to these changes, it begins to falter and deteriorate. Society self-perpetuates, but in the face of changing conditions self-perpetuation may not be compatible with self preservation. Society must be able to deal with new conditions in order to remain viable, and it is the individuality of its members that must provide the impetus and the material for change. What Dewey is saying is that societies, too, must develop, must grow; and the vehicle of that growth is individual initiative. Since the condition for a society's continued viability is provided by individuals, a society is not possible without individuality --the transaction is complete.

The primary lesson of the transactional perspective is

that the 'good' of the individual is tied to the 'good' of society, and the 'good' of society is tied to the 'good' of the individual. At this point the two threads of Dewey's philosophy (education and democracy) are knotted together in the idea of transactional growth. We have seen that the good of both the individual and society is continued development in response to changing conditions. We have also discovered that 'social' and 'individual' are two aspects of the same reality. From these facts we can derive the notion of transactional growth. An action which impacts on the development of a society will impact on the development of individuals in that society. If a social 'good' does not lead to conditions compatible with¹⁹ the self-development of its members, then it makes those individuals less capable of developing their individuality; yet it is this individuality which makes social development possible. For example, if in the name of the good of the state a country bans certain books or ideas, or places restrictions on expressions of speech, it curtails the material through which a good deal of personal development is made possible. The individuals who develop in that society will have very little in the way of new ideas to contribute to that society. Without new ideas to meet new conditions a society begins to stagnate, or falter. What is done in the name of 'the good of the state' works against the ability of that state to continue to thrive. Also, any new thought that does arise, since it is not supported by the society, will be unlikely to have the good of that particular society in mind (though it may have the good of a

replacement society in mind). This has been amply, and dramatically demonstrated over the past few years, all across Eastern Europe.

We have also pointed out that growth is a necessary component of any individual 'good'. However, an individual's action affects those around him, i.e. it has social impact. If the actions of an individual are not compatible to the development of the society, or societies, of which he is a member, he negatively impacts on that society. Since that society provides the media and resources of individual growth, any action incompatible with that society's growth contributes to a social environment incompatible with individual growth. I believe that a certain lamentable condition in our political situation can be traced to individuals seeking their own good, without taking consideration of the larger social impact; I am thinking of the now ubiquitous special interest groups. An individual may join such a group in order to advance a particular 'good' of their liking. Because of the success of this campaign others with different or even competing 'goods' follow suit; this goes on to the point at which politicians are forced to pander to such groups rather than be responsive to the individuals they serve. As a result of an individual seeking their own good without thinking of the social consequences, we have a situation in which, to further their development in areas of political concern, individuals must conform their 'good' to the views of one or another special interest group.

On a less grandiose level, take the example of a member

of an academic department, who in order to advance his own career is fiercely critical of colleagues, obsequious with the chairperson and deans, and secretive concerning his research. Such a person creates an attitude of distrust amongst his colleagues, who respond by either ostracizing him, or returning the criticism; neither of which advances his personal development. His attitude toward his superiors could quite possibly backfire and result in their annoyance rather than their favor; and even if they do respond favorably, this just creates a situation in which such anti-collegial behavior is reinforced. In that case the level of competitiveness and intra-department criticism will rise; which, again, does not advance his personal development. Also, by being secretive about his research he denies himself an important source of peer review, which is useful to him as a professional. He also will not be privy to the work of those around him, which, if it does not harm him, will not benefit him. Now it is a sad fact that such individuals do at times succeed in some sense. But by cutting themselves off from positive peer interaction, by creating an acrimonious professional atmosphere, by limiting the informed opinions he can count on in preparing his work, such a person cuts off rich sources for future personal and professional development. Such a choice is not conducive to personal growth, even if this person is 20 able to avoid being deterred by the social harm he has caused.

Therefore, given that growth (enhancement of ability to deal with experience) is the necessary quality of any action which can satisfactorily answer a morally problematic situation,

a transactional ethics will stipulate that an action must be compatible with transactional growth in order to be judged morally acceptable. We will further assess this notion in the next section. Before moving on to that it may be useful to see how the notions of education and democracy support this conclusion.

John Dewey never developed a 'transactional ethics', yet his views on the relation between 'individual' and 'social' were clearly pointing the way to such a development. This is most evident in his writings on education and on democracy. Education, as we have seen, is his philosophy of personal development, and democracy is his ideal for social growth. In reading Dewey's many writings on these two subjects one finds that he has a very hard time talking about one without talking about the other. This is not due to any intellectual laziness, or lack of mental organization; it is, rather, evidence of the fact that he believed you could not ultimately speak of one without implicating the other. Democracy requires an educational system which develops a certain type of individual: one who is open-minded, who has an interest in the life of the community and who sees education as a life long process. Only such individuals will be capable of competently steering society toward the future. He writes

A society which makes provisions for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic. Such a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder.

(DE:p.99)

As important as this is, democracy's need for education goes even further. Democracy, as we have been told, is more than a political system--it is a way of life. As with all ways of life it must be capable of meeting the demands of an ever changing world. In a sense, it too must grow. Education, Dewey has shown us, is the process of growth; therefore, it is the life-blood of democracy. He writes

The very idea of democracy must be continually explored afresh; it has to be constantly discovered, and rediscovered, remade and reorganized....In the fact that democracy in order to live must change and move, we have, I think the challenge that democracy offers to education. (CDE:L11,p.182)

This challenge is to create the kind of individuals who will be morally and intellectually suited for continual growth.

On the other side of the transaction, Dewey claims that the justification of democracy is a belief that it is the form of life best suited to individual growth, and therefore the most fertile ground for education. In answering the question, "why should we prefer democracy?" he responds

Can we find any reason that does not ultimately come down to the belief that democratic social arrangements promote a better quality of human experience, one which is more widely accessible and enjoyed, than do non-democratic and antidemocratic forms of social life? (EE:L13,p.18)

Dewey, however, makes the relation between democratic institutions and education most clear in the following passage. After stating that the meaning and purpose of all social institutions is to further the development of individuals, he writes

Democracy has many meanings, but if it has a moral meaning, it is found in resolving that the supreme test of all political institutions and industrial arrangements shall be the contribution they make to the all around growth of

every member of society. (RP:M12,p.186)

All social institutions are to be judged on the basis of their contribution to the educative process. The heart of Dewey's philosophy of education and democracy is this: for a democratic society to realize its potential it needs to nurture the educative process for all of its constituents, and for education to succeed in developing individuals to their fullest potential it needs to be supported and encouraged by democratic institutions. As Dewey puts it, "faith in democracy is all one with faith in experience and education." (CD:L14,p229)

We have now set out the transactional basis for morality and demonstrated its reliance on education and democracy. To complete our task we will now spend some time in assessing these ideas.

Transactional Growth

With the addition of a transactional perspective it can be argued that Dewey's method can function as a tool for making moral choices, as well as intelligent ones. It might be asked, however, if this is enough. Is it possible that there be a situation such that after diligently following Dewey's method, and choosing that alternative which is compatible with transactional growth, we still come to an immoral decision? No. If a problem is intelligently analyzed and after careful deliberation over the options the alternative which is compatible with transactional growth is chosen, then, by definition, the choice is moral. 'Moral', in Dewey's system, ultimately means

'compatible with transactional growth'.

It is certainly possible that a choice be made which actually results in conditions which inhibit rather than enhance the development and functioning of self and society; but here all we can say is that a mistake was made, not that an immoral decision was made. In such a scenario an agent must assess the incongruity between the anticipated results of his or her actions and the actual results--this Dewey's method demands. We can not blame the agent for being wrong if he followed the method in good faith. Humans are fallible, and there is no way to eliminate this factor from moral decision-making. Nor can we fault the theory, for it recognizes the impossibility of giving guarantees. The method is a tool for analyzing problematic situations and coming to the 'best' decision; and as we have seen through our discussions, the 'best' decision is the intelligent decision which is compatible with self/social development, i.e. that is compatible with transactional growth. It is, instead, a virtue of the method that it recognizes human fallibility and has a built in mechanism for dealing with it-- step six, the assessment of results. It has a built in mechanism for improvement. Since to complete the method we must assess and take into account the consequences of the choice in order to make a better decision next time, the method itself is a mechanism for self-development. So making a wrong choice is not an 'immoral' act, for at the moment of choice the method is not complete. If you complete the method, discover that you have made a wrong decision, and take steps to correct it, or avoid future errors, you have in

effect grown; you have learned from the experience in such a way as to improve your ability to deal with such experiences in the future. Therefore, the only way to be guilty of moral wrong, in Dewey's system, is to not complete the method in good faith.

Dewey's method places much less emphasis on approbation and disapprobation of moral decisions (which is a backward-looking emphasis) and much more of a responsibility for learning from mistakes (a prospective attitude). Indeed, the justification for praise and blame in Dewey's view is as a means for pointing out responsibility for future decisions. He writes

A person is held accountable in order that he may learn... in such a way as to modify and--to some extent--remake his prior self. The question of whether he might when he acted have acted differently from the way in which he did is irrelevant. The question is whether he is capable of acting differently next time.... We can not undo the past; we can affect the future. (E:L7,p.304)

A little further on he says that "One is held responsible in order that he may become responsible." (E:L7,p.304) In this sense praise and blame, too, are justified to the extent that they are educative.

It may of course be objected that there are conclusions which would be morally acceptable by Dewey's method which would be morally condemned under a different system, and this is true. But it is just as true of any other moral theory; there are sound Kantian conclusions which would be rejected as morally unacceptable by utilitarians, and vice-versa. Nor is it a mark against Dewey that an action 'compatible with transactional growth' is true by definition of his moral method, for this

too is common to all moral theories. A conclusion which is proven rationally consistent is necessarily moral in Kant's system because that is the definition Kant's theory provides for what is moral. An action which produces the greatest happiness for the greatest number in a classical version of utilitarianism is therefore moral because that is the criterion they give for the morally correct action. Even if Dewey's theory does no more than these other theories, it at least does no less. I believe, however, that it does do more; and it does so by doing less.

In rejecting a foundational approach to morality it provides a theory flexible enough to meet the unexpected contingencies of moral theory, and it is flexible enough to embrace the great diversity of moral values cherished in the world. It is quite consistent to be a Deweyan moral philosopher and have as a central component of your moral image the notion of rational consistency, or general happiness. What you can not do and still be a Deweyan is to hold these values in a foundational sense. You must continually reassess these values in order to determine their success in meeting the demands of a precarious uncertain world; and be willing to abandon them if they prove inadequate to the situation at hand. If we take two moral dilemmas from the literature we can demonstrate this. A situation which is seen to really push the Kantian theory to an extreme is Kant's own situation of the "Inquiring Murderer".²¹ The dilemma, as is well known, is between allowing an innocent person to be murdered and telling a lie, which is immoral by

Kant's standards. A Deweyan would likely (but not necessarily) interpret the problem as being how to prevent an innocent murder, without getting killed in the process. The solution which leaps to mind is to lie. This, however, is at variance with my moral image. A strict Kantian would see this as a choice between allowing a great evil and acting immorally--a Deweyan would have no such problem. A Deweyan could reason that by maintaining this moral image I allow a brutal crime to take place, which cannot be compatible with the good of society, and which will in all likelihood lead to a life time of personal guilt. In this case the moral image is no longer appropriate to the concrete situation--I am morally justified in changing it. It was not a situation I ever imagined facing, therefore my moral image was not prepared to deal with.

A problem which is often seen as pushing utilitarian theory to an extreme is an example devised by Bernard Williams.²² In this situation the agent has the opportunity to save nine innocent lives by killing one innocent man. If he opts not to kill anyone, then all ten die. Williams says to argue that the moral thing to do in this situation is to kill the one innocent man, regardless of the impact it will have on the agent is to show no consideration of personal integrity; and this is consistent with a Deweyan perspective. A Deweyan, who holds the maximization of happiness as a central tenet of their moral image, may find himself in such a situation being forced to choose between maintaining his moral image and committing an act he could not live with. A person could sincerely believe that despite their

genuine commitment to increasing happiness, the act of killing an innocent person would traumatize him. This act would also be granting a perverse satisfaction to the person who created this dilemma and that could be seen to be incompatible with the improvement of society. In this case the fact that ten people died will probably not sit well with the agent. He therefore has more work to do with his moral image in order to decide what the best decision would be in similar situations in the future (the best decision will, of course, be to not get into situations like this, in the future and make plans accordingly). This does not negate the correctness of the original decision. This person never envisioned a scenario like that and so his moral image was unprepared to deal with it. A Deweyan moral theory can not justify maintaining a moral image at the price of the agent's ability to live with himself.

It is openly admitted that Dewey's method cannot tell us what to do or what to choose; it can only direct us in how to go about deciding. But this may be a virtue of the theory rather than a flaw. Dewey certainly believed so. By denying the possibility of reaching conclusive answers it spurs us on to be ever diligent in making moral decisions, and it warns us of the danger of closing our minds to alternative value systems. In effect, it forces us to take an attitude which is educative by teaching that we need to be always ready to learn from experience and from each other--it fosters a growth positive attitude. In order for this theory to work we need to be reflective, tolerant, open-minded, and sensitive to the effects

of our actions on others; it therefore enhances the development of a moral character, independent of any particular conclusions it reaches. It is, therefore, a worthwhile entry into the field of moral philosophy.²³

This obviously will not be enough for many people. But to such people Dewey can only reply: 1) look at my arguments against foundationalism, if they do not convince you of the futility of that approach, then my method is not for you, or 2) if you do accept the need of a non-foundational morality, then what motivates your rejection of my method? The first response points out that if you are going to reject a non-foundational philosophy then, naturally, you will be dissatisfied with a non-foundational moral method. But if this is the case, then the problem is not with the method but with the larger philosophical context; you should first take your battle there, before judging the merits of a moral method based on it. As for the second response, Dewey is saying to those non-foundationalists who have problems with his method, "I welcome the opportunity for theoretical growth." It is hoped that one of the results of this project will be to encourage such opportunities for growth.

Richard Rorty is a non-foundational philosopher who, though he may be sympathetic to Dewey's method, might argue that rather than not doing enough, it attempts to do too much. In Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity, Rorty recognizes that in the conflict between the goals of self-development and social solidarity there is no way to give necessary priority to one

over the other. The best that one can do when faced with an attempt at self-development which conflicts with social solidarity is to ask those engaged to "privatize their projects."²⁴ Rorty explains that

this requirement for privatization amounts to a request that they resolve an impending dilemma by subordinating sublimity to the desire to avoid cruelty and pain. In my view, there is nothing to back up such a request, nor need there be.²⁵

The Deweyan notion of transactional growth would, in some instances, provide some backing for such a request. It could argue that by inhibiting the conditions of social growth (assuming that solidarity is such a condition) the individual's attempts at self-development may be creating conditions inimical to that very project. Such an appeal would be based on reason and empirical propositions, without being circular; for it would be supported by that very principle (self-development) which motivates the individual.

I qualified this response by saying that transactionalism may provide a backing in 'some cases'. This is because it is not necessary that the immediate good of society take precedence over the individual's efforts at self-development. An individual might respond, as Nietzsche might, that even though my efforts at self-development are in conflict with the good of society, and that this does result in making individual development more difficult, this is acceptable since it is only by struggling against adversity that there can come to be individuals who can truly advance society. This moral image recognizes the impact of social conditions on individual development, and the impact

of individual efforts upon social progress. It merely sacrifices the immediate 'good' of society to the immediate 'good' of the individuals, in the belief that this is the path to transactional growth. Such a moral image is not inconsistent with a Deweyan method; and so Dewey agrees with Rorty that there is no "automatic priority"²⁶. This does not mean, however, that our only recourse is to make a "request". Still, even though he could not rule out such a moral image, Dewey would argue that if we felt it necessary to oppose such a person we could subject our competing moral images to investigation and try to find some empirical support for one or the other. If we could show the Nietzschean that his moral image was based on flawed reasoning then we would have grounds to oppose him. In such a case if the Nietzschean was truly committed to transactional growth he would have compelling, non-circular, reasons for abandoning his image. If it turns out that despite evidence to the contrary he sticks to his image then we have transactional grounds for opposing him--he is, by definition of Dewey's method, acting immorally. Of course, it is possible that upon submitting our competing images to empirical verification, neither system will find definitive support--the theory cannot promise we will always find a common ground.

An interesting comparison can be made between Dewey's method and the position taken by Williams in his Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy. While it is beyond the scope of the present work to undertake a detailed consideration I believe we can add to our project by highlighting a few points. In this

work Williams is arguing against what we have been referring to as foundational moralities; which he refers to at times as a search for an Archimedean point.²⁷ After rejecting that tradition Williams concludes that while it still is possible to speak of ethical issues in a meaningful way, the possibility, or even desirability, of an ethical theory is severely questioned. He sees theory as an attempt to provide a systematic consideration of moral experience in such a way as to produce a means of testing the correctness of moral conclusions, and such an attempt he²⁸ sees as being inherently foundational. He writes

Here the aim of theory is not simply, or even primarily, to understand conflict.... The aim of theory is rather to resolve it, in the more radical sense that it should give some compelling reason to accept one intuition rather than another. The question we have to consider is: How can any ethical theory have the authority to do that?²⁹

Dewey would be in agreement with this. As we have seen the task of moral philosophers is not to give answers, but is instead to help us understand the nature of the conflicts involved. This is acceptable to Williams, who writes

There could be a way of doing moral philosophy that started from the ways in which we experience our ethical life. Such a philosophy would reflect on what we believe, feel, take for granted; the ways in which we confront obligations and recognize responsibility; the sentiments of guilt and shame. It would involve a phenomenology of the ethical life.³⁰

He goes on to conclude that "This could be a good philosophy, but would be unlikely to yield an ethical theory."³¹ If we take 'theory' in the way Williams is using it, that is, in a foundationalist sense, then clearly Dewey agrees. But we have also seen that Dewey believes that his moral method (we can use method to distinguish Dewey's approach from the theories Williams is

protesting against) can do more than just provide a 'phenomenology' of ethical experience. He believes it can help us to assess moral problems and to find a solution (which is different from providing a solution). Does his method then fall prey to the same charges Williams directs to 'theory'? I do not believe so, although Dewey does believe there is more for the philosopher to do than does Williams.

After rejecting theory and limiting the job of the moral philosopher Williams makes a very Deweyan proposal, he says, "it is quite wrong to think that the only alternative to ethical theory is to refuse reflection."³² It is not proper to theorize about morality, but we can critically reflect upon it. As we now know well, critical reflection is within the domain of philosophers. This seems to indicate that there may be room for further agreement between the two. This becomes clearer when we turn to Williams' conception of the role of critical reflection. He writes

reflective criticism should basically go in a direction opposite that encouraged by ethical theory. Theory looks characteristically for considerations that are very general and have as little distinctive content as possible.... But critical reflection should seek for as much shared understanding as it can find on any issue...³³

Apart from the use of the word 'theory', Dewey could hardly have said it better, himself. There is a real compatibility between Dewey's view on how we should address moral issues and Williams'. So what leads Williams to say, in a very un-Deweyan way, that "we can think in ethics, and in all sorts of ways... but that philosophy can do little to determine how we should do so."³⁴ I believe it is due to his equating philosophical theory

with foundational theory. The foundational approach is based, he argues, on a linear model of decision making, which once it is rightly abandoned, leaves us with a "holistic type of model" which is incompatible with theory.³⁵ While Dewey would understand the temptation to identify philosophy with foundationalist endeavors, and so abandon both, he does not want to surrender philosophy to that particular way of doing philosophy; and we have seen his attempts to rehabilitate the discipline. He stands as an example of a non-foundational philosopher presenting a non-linear³⁶ theory for moral decision making. And as such he can provide a method for making moral decisions which avoids the pitfalls of foundationalism, yet which can make philosophy an important part of our moral thinking; and as we have seen, with the development of transactionalism, philosophy can provide a mechanism for delimiting moral choice that does not assume an Archimedean point.

The point of these discussions was to demonstrate that anti-foundationalist philosophers may be limiting unnecessarily the scope and the relevance of philosophy in their attempts to avoid being foundationalists. A result of this is they may fail to recognize a rich source of ideas and tools for morality. It can also result in a one-sided appreciation of Dewey.³⁷ That is, they readily admit their debt to his negative, critical work, but without giving a sympathetic ear to his positive, constructive work. If the account given of Dewey in this project is a viable one, then this neglect of his constructive work

has been to the detriment of morality and philosophy. It is hoped that this project can play some part in undoing that situation.³⁸

Before concluding this project it will be useful to consider Dewey's theory in the light of seemingly kindred theories, specifically emotivism and utilitarianism. But first I would like to consider one further criticism of Dewey. This is not directly related to the present issue, but I think it will allow us to bring some termination to our assessment of Dewey's method. In an article on Dewey and democracy, Richard Bernstein says that

His vision of democracy which did inspire many of his contemporaries can now strike us as flat. Even if we credit him with being sensitive to the problems that continue to plague us.... Dewey provides little guidance about how to meet and solve these problems.³⁹

To be fair Bernstein does paint a generally positive picture of Dewey's contribution to democratic theory, but there are two aspects of this passage with which I disagree. The first is that Dewey was not specific enough; that he provides a lot of analysis, but not enough in the way of concrete suggestions. This is a charge we have heard made against Dewey before, and I do not think it is a fair one. His writings were not always clear, and to gather together a concise position often requires a great deal of synthesizing work (of which this project is an example) and to criticize him for this is justified. But it is a different thing to suggest that he did not provide concrete suggestions. One of the major areas for social reconstruction, in Dewey's opinion, was education and the schools;

and he certainly gave concrete suggestions on how to proceed in that area (regardless of the worth of those suggestions). The other area was concerned with the need for an increase in the intellectual level of social discourse on political and moral issues; here too he gave very concrete suggestions on how to proceed. Granted, he did not provide blueprints, but that was because he thought it was not his place to do so. Problems have to be worked out in the concrete. The most he could do as a philosopher was to provide a method for proceeding and the tools needed for clarifying the issues--this he did throughout his entire life.

This is significant for his moral method, also. He does not provide us with a catechism of 'do this', 'don't do that' because in his view it is not the role of the moral philosopher to do so. It would be inconsistent with the logic of situations and his anti-foundational beliefs. The inability, or unwillingness, to accept this creates a major obstacle in coming to a fair appreciation of Dewey's contributions. Thayer points this out when he writes

...what to do, or what is the solution to a problem are matters that cannot be discovered prior to inquiry into the conditions in question. Disciples of Dewey have often found this the most difficult lesson to learn, and it has proved grievous for many of his hopeful converts.⁴⁰

On the other hand he does provide us with some general moral virtues necessary to carry out the method. These are supported, not with moral arguments, but with practical ones instead. Tolerance, respect for the opinions of others, thoughtfulness, are virtues required to be sure of choosing the best

alternative, and for forming the 'best' moral image. The traits needed to choose the path of growth and development are summed up for Dewey in the notion of democracy. He says, "we have advanced enough to say that democracy is a way of life. We have yet to realize that it is a way of personal life and one which provides a moral standard for personal conduct." (FC:L13,p.155) Democracy is the theory of social development, and the best ground for personal growth; this makes it the moral choice. But democracy can only be achieved through democratic means (FC:L13,p.187) and the virtues cited, along with a basic faith in the possibilities of human beings (CD:L14,p.226) are the means to democracy. Given this, I find Dewey's vision of democracy anything but "flat"; in fact, in my opinion it is the most inspiring vision I have yet come across. With that said we will turn to our next discussion.

Some Kindred Theories

Dewey sees his moral philosophy as an alternative to traditional philosophical systems, and there certainly seems to be some justification for this. There are, however, two ways of doing moral philosophy that seem to bear some relation to Dewey's; in fact Dewey himself recognizes this. These are emotivism and utilitarianism. In order to complete our discussion of Dewey's moral method we will consider the nature of this kinship. It is not my intention to make a comprehensive comparison, nor to undertake an extensive analysis. The purpose of this section is to further distinguish Dewey's theory and

to highlight the role of desires and consequences in that theory.

'Emotivism' as the title of a philosophy can have a wide variety of interpretations and cover many disparate theories. We will be considering a type of emotivist theory reflective of twentieth century views. This brand of moral philosophy developed roughly at the same time as Dewey's, and one could possibly infer that the time had come to reclaim man's affective side for morality. Dewey had the opportunity to engage in debate with the leading figures of this movement--A.J. Ayer and Charles L. Stevenson--and wrote critical responses to their major positions. There are two aspects of this debate which will concern us: the non-cognitive status of moral terms, and the prescriptive function of moral language. Assigning ethical terms a non-cognitive status is more associated with Ayer's position, but Dewey argues that Stevenson's position loses its main support if the theory of the emotive meaning of ethical terms fails. (ESML:p.684) So, while admittedly glossing over distinctions between Ayer and Stevenson on this point, we will consider Dewey's response to Ayer's position as representative of his problem with the emotivist theory in general. After that we shall look at the disagreements between Dewey and Stevenson on the prescriptive use of moral language.

Ayer's position can be adequately summed up in the following passage:

in every case in which one would commonly be said to be making an ethical judgment, the function of the relevant ethical word is purely "emotive". It is used to express feelings about certain objects, but not to make any assertion about them....It [this theory] implies...that ethical judgments have no validity ...we hold that one really never

does dispute about questions of values.⁴¹

Again, this admittedly glosses over some of the subtleties of emotivism, but I believe it is not doing too much of a disservice to that theory if we accept this as a working definition.

A point of commonality between Dewey and emotivism is the connection made between values and our affective nature. Ayer believes that a value, as an ethical term, at most expresses an emotion. Dewey for his part says that "valuation involves desiring" (TV:L13,p.204), which seems to indicate some common ground. The difference, however, is that the emotivist theory (perhaps stemming from its positivist heritage) treats the sentiment, feeling, desire, as something final and complete in itself. If values are expressions of bare emotions then they seem to be indisputable; and moral expressions are reduced to "this is the way I feel (what I like, what I desire, etc.) and that's all there is to it!" Values then, like tastes, would not be disputable. Dewey, picking up on just this point, replies that tastes "are the one thing worth disputing about" (QC:L4, p.209) and that the view is "stupid if it means that likings cannot be gone behind" (VORC:L2,p.96)--strong words from a gentle man. This leads us to ask, when we go behind likings, what do we go to? Dewey replies, to "their productive causes and consequences." (VORC:L2,p.96) Likings, desires, and hence values, do not arise in a vacuum; they come out of the biological/social environment of a person, and in turn, play a role in that environment. They are not isolated, independently existing factors. That a person has a certain desire, sees something

as valuable, may be indisputable, but how they came to have that desire; what were the existential conditions which lead to and now support that desire; what are the consequences of valuing a particular object or action, are factual issues and provide the subject matter for fruitful and important moral debate. Dewey points out that if we interpret desires as something initial and complete in itself then there is no way to discriminate one desire from another. (TV:L13,p204) But we do not merely desire, we always desire some-thing, some object. This fact, along with the fact that desiring something implies the lack of something, demonstrates that causal connections exist both before and during the act of desiring; it also anticipates future connections (when the desired object is attained). Dewey concludes

When, however, desires are seen to arise only within certain existential conditions (namely those in which some lack prevents the immediate execution of an active tendency) and when they are seen to function in reference to these contexts in such a way as to make good the existing want, the relation between desire and valuation is found to be such as both to make possible, and to require, statement in verifiable propositions. (TV:L13,p.205)

The verifiability of value statements confers on them cognitive status. Holding value statements to be non-cognitive is usually tied to their being based on non-cognitive elements (i.e. affective elements); Dewey argues that while desiring is an "indispensable " condition of valuation, it is not "sufficient". (MV:L2, p.73) Something more is needed and this is intellectual assessment into the nature and the meaning of the desire, in its concrete existential context. This implies a

reference beyond the present or immediate state, a reference

to something ulterior or eventual: to something which, being outside the immediate state and yet implied in it, may be called, in the logical sense at least, "objective". (MV:L2,p.74)

The emotivist argument for the non-cognitive status of ethical terms is based on an interpretation of emotions as complete, independent, and hence non-relational, facts. The entire position stumbles once desires/valuations are seen for what they are--aspects of existential situations. Seen thus they are valid candidates for disputation and verifiability; which are cognitive processes.

Of course Ayer admits that we do have disputes about ethical issues, but denies that they are ever disputes about value; they are disputes about facts. He writes

When someone disagrees about the moral value of a certain action or type of action, we do admittedly resort to argument in order to win him over to our way of thinking. But we do not attempt to show by our arguments that he has the "wrong" ethical feelings towards a situation whose nature he has correctly apprehended. What we attempt to show is that he is mistaken about the facts of the case.⁴²

Dewey would have no problem with this passage, but would insist that trying to convince someone that his beliefs about what is 'good' in a particular situation are mistaken, is characteristic of disputes about values. It would, indeed, make no sense to tell a person that their 'feelings' were incorrect, or false; but that is not what we do in genuinely ethical disputes. Remember in the Deweyan system to say that 'X is good', is not to say that 'I like X', or 'I approve of X', even though both statements might be true. 'X is good' means that X will function to resolve a morally problematic situation. Now, Dewey agrees

that in order for an ethical statement to have any practical effect on the conduct of the parties involved it must connect with some desire. But the emotive aspect of the dispute is contained in the problematic nature of the situation. There is something the matter that I, or that the both of us, desire to resolve. It is not part of the meaning of the ethical term.

A similar discussion concerning the meaning, or content of ethical terms will be undertaken when we turn to Stevenson. For now it might be helpful to consider what lead Ayer to identify ethical terms, in their normative role, with the expression of emotion. I believe that it is not unfair to say that this was motivated, at least in part, by the challenge of Moore's refutation of subjectivism. As Ayer presents it, Moore refutes any subjectivist theory of ethics, which equates 'X is good' with something like 'I approve of X', by arguing it is possible for me to say 'X is good', and you to say 'X is not good' and both of us be correct; and this is a contradiction. Ayer avoids this by suggesting that 'X is good' does not necessarily make an assertion about the speaker's feelings, but may be merely "evincing" feelings, which he points out is not at all the same as asserting that I have them.⁴³ Therefore, I may say that 'X is good', and you may say 'X is not good' without our being engaged in a disagreement, at all.

This certainly does the job of avoiding Moore's argument, and it certainly seems true that at times people use ethical terms in such a way as to merely express a feeling, without actually making an assertion. But what does it contribute

to our understanding of moral dilemmas and how to solve them? Dewey, or a Deweyan philosopher, would conclude, "very little". If a person uses an ethical term in such a way as to evince a feeling, while not asserting anything, then they are not entering into an ethical debate (as both Ayer and Dewey would agree), but the concern of ethical theory is ethical debate; that is, those instances when a person uses an ethical term to make an assertion. It is equally certain that people often use ethical terms to make assertions, and those are the only cases which are the proper concern of moral philosophers. It is important to bear in mind that this argument against Ayer does not leave ethical debates open to Moore's refutation; for that refutation works only when 'X is good' is equated with 'I approve of X', and as we have already discussed, Dewey rejects such an equation.⁴⁴

Before turning to Stevenson we should make clear one more point concerning values. We have seen that valuation involves an affective aspect (desiring) and a cognitive aspect (inquiry) but it also involves a motor, or functional aspect. As we have discussed, an action or object which satisfies a situated desire in the specified manner is 'good'. Dewey says that we value such an action/object for just that reason. There are no such things as values, says Dewey, only things which we value (VLT:p.615); the value conferring quality of an action or object is its serviceability in a problematic situation. A value-proposition has two components: one, it indicates an existing situation which, due to some want, is aversive as opposed to

a prospective possible situation, and two, that the object or action which is valued stands in a "specifiable and testable relation" between the present situation and the prospective situation. (TV:L13,p.202) The valued object is capable of transforming the problematic situation into a determinate, non-problematic situation; both of which are observable and empirical situations. Therefore, the suitability of the valued object--its 'true value'--may be empirically ascertained.

Dewey writes that where ever there is esteeming, liking, genuine valuing, there is more than verbal homage to the object; there is active interest and effort taken to prolong it. If I say that I value education and yet take no courses, read no educational books, engage in no intellectually stimulating activities, I will be charged with speaking falsely. Similarly, if I say that I value health and yet smoke, fail to eat the right foods and constantly find excuses for not exercising, it is unlikely that I will be believed. This is exactly the point which Dewey is making--valuation has a motor, behavioral aspect. He says

A valutive judgment is therefore not a mere statement that a thing has been liked; it is an investigation of the claims of the thing in question to be esteemed, appreciated, prized, cherished. (VORC:L2,p.96)

Valuation has an affective (desires which arise in the context of a situation) cognitive (it makes a testable claim) and behavioral (it requires effort be made to secure and prolong the valued object/action) nature; this distinguishes him from any non-cognitivist, emotivist theory of value.

Both Dewey and Stevenson admit a respect for each other's

theory and both conclude that the other is not so much incorrect as incomplete.⁴⁵ And, interestingly, they both identify the same point of contention. Stevenson feels that Dewey has done an admirable job in highlighting the empirical side of ethical statements, but errs in his relative neglect of their emotive, persuasive side;⁴⁶ while Dewey praises Stevenson for recognizing the descriptive aspect of ethical language, but feels he has not come far enough, that he stills places too much emphasis on their emotive, persuasive side. (ESML:pp.684-685) This disagreement has been dealt with adequately in the literature, and I do not believe that I have anything innovative to add to those discussions.⁴⁷ However, it may be useful to bring out a few points. The disagreement centers over Stevenson's belief that a major component of ethical language is its emotive aspect, which functions in a persuasive, quasi-imperative way. He claims that by down playing this aspect Dewey places this function purely in the predictive function of ethical language. Stevenson then argues that the predictive power of ethical terms is not sufficient to the task.⁴⁸

We have already considered how Dewey responds to the issue of the emotive use of ethical language, but it may be useful to take a further look at it in the context of his response to Stevenson. Dewey holds that not only does he recognize the descriptive, practical side of ethical terms but he holds that to be the entire meaning of any genuinely ethical term. He writes

as far as non-cognitive, extra-cognitive, factors enter into the subject-matter or content of sentences purporting to be legitimately ethical, those sentences are by just that much deprived of the properties sentences should have

in order to be genuinely ethical. (ESML:p.684)

Dewey does not deny the obvious fact that ethical language is often used in an attempt to emotionally move someone to act in some way, he just denies that in such cases the ethical terms are being used in an ethical sense. He presents an effective analogy. He says that it is not uncommon for a lawyer to use legal terms during a trial in such a way as to emotionally sway the jury; but this does not imply that those legal terms have an emotive meaning. In fact, to the extent that they are used to emotionally persuade, they are not used in a genuinely legal sense. (ESML:p.685) We find the meaning of ethical terms in their relation to their practical effects on a problematic situation.

Furthermore, when ethical terms are properly used they do imply a prediction of practical consequences and may play a persuasive role. For example, if a teacher tells a student, "it's wrong to cut class" he may mean to express his displeasure at the student's behavior and that he will be insulted if the behavior continues. In such an instance the teacher is using 'wrong' in an emotionally persuasive manner, but not, according to Dewey, in an ethical sense. He is using an ethical term but not with an ethical meaning. If on the other hand, the teacher is asserting that by cutting class the student is not satisfying the requirements of the course and will be penalized for it, and that by missing the in-class material the student is risking a bad grade, then the teacher is using 'wrong' in a genuinely ethical manner. Still, Stevenson may argue that this usage of

'wrong' is insufficient to carry out the persuasion necessary to affect the student's behavior. Dewey would counter that if the student in question desired to do well in the class, or was concerned with fulfilling the course's requirements then the descriptive content of the ethical language will suffice. This is so because the descriptive content informs the student that his behavior will not be such as to satisfy his wants or needs, on this particular situation. It is the problematic situation which contains the emotive element necessary to motivate behavior, not the ethical language.

It may be fair to ask, however, what if the student does not care about his academic responsibilities or record? How can the descriptive content persuade in this case. The answer is that it cannot. If the descriptive content of an ethical judgment is irrelevant to the situation at hand then it is impotent; but this is not an argument for emotivism, rather it is an argument against the particular ethical argument used. Remember, for ethical deliberation to be appropriate there needs to be a perceived problem. If the student sees no problem in cutting class, and if the prediction of consequences which might follow from that behavior raises no problem for him, then as far as he is concerned there is no call for moral debate. We may attempt to persuade him that there is indeed a problem, and try to convince him by increasing our list of negative consequences which make his behavior wrong, but in order to be successful we need to hit upon a situation which will be perceived by the student as problematic; one in which he has

a desire or need which may be provoked by the facts of our argument. However, at no point do we need to introduce any emotive meaning. It is true we cannot reach an 'ought' by merely adding up facts, but by adding up facts we point out various potentially problematic situations, and a component of problematic situations is the desire to resolve the situation. Dewey insists that any prescriptive, or imperative force which ethical sentences possess is practical. (ESML:pp.684-687) Of course, it may be that no list of descriptive propositions will succeed in hitting on a problematic situation and so not be able to influence behavior. This just indicates that moral agreement is not always possible, but given the complexity of the world there is no reason to expect otherwise.

I believe it a fair conclusion to say that the differences between Dewey and emotivism, particularly Stevenson's version, are not practically significant. It may be questioned whether Stevenson and Dewey would approach the actual resolution of a moral dilemma in noticeably different manners. However, the emphasis placed by Dewey on the descriptive meaning of ethical terms lead to the development of a moral method which, in my opinion, goes far beyond the emotivists' contribution to ethics. As Gouinlock notes, the important point for Dewey is how well language helps us to deal with the "problems of men", not whether there are distinctively ethical terms, and certainly not questions about the definability of ethical terms.⁴⁹ There are sufferings in the world and there is the chance of happiness in the world--this is the heart of moral philosophy. Disputes

about definability and the such are irrelevant to understanding and successfully dealing with those vital human concerns.

Concerning utilitarianism, Dewey is quite aware of its similarities to his own position, and is willing to give credit where credit is due. He says that utilitarianism has so far been the best attempt to move away from abstract conceptions of the good, and away from non-naturalistic bases of authority; "it insisted on getting away from vague generalities, and down to the specific and concrete.... it taught that institutions are made for man and not man for institutions.... it made moral good natural." (RP:M12,pp.182-183) Furthermore, he says,

To utilitarianism with all its defects belongs the distinction of enforcing in an unforgettable way the fact that moral good, like every good, consists in a satisfaction of the forces of human nature... (HNC:M14,p.147)

'Utilitarianism' covers an even more diverse collection of theories, and has received a more sophisticated treatment since Dewey's time. We cannot hope to provide an in depth discussion of all the issues relevant to this topic. What we will try to do is to understand Dewey's ultimate rejection of utilitarianism as he conceived it. Dewey wrote often on this topic, but his arguments were directed at the more classic forms of this theory. So in a sense some of his comments will be dated but it is hoped that by focusing on general points we can gain some further insight into Dewey's own theory; at the same time this should suggest how Dewey might fit into contemporary debates on utilitarianism. After discussing Dewey's views, I will suggest some ways to begin a contemporary discussion.

Dewey believes that utilitarianism was on the way towards

naturalism but became side tracked by two points: one, the need to calculate happiness (pleasure, preferences, etc.), and two, their establishing a foundationalist moral goal. Any theory which asks us to make aggregated calculations of happiness (or any other moral quality) asks more than is humanly possible. Qualities such as happiness, satisfaction, pleasure are related to particular needs and desires. These particular needs and desires are just that, particular; they arise out of specific existential situations and are meaningful only in the context of those conditions. Calculation of these qualities depends upon our ability to foresee future conditions, which will give rise to future desires--this is not possible to calculate in any precise manner. This is partly due to human fallibility, the fact that we are liable to error; but just as importantly to the fact that we cannot possibly know all the factors which come into play at any one moment, much less so in some undefined future time span and for some poorly defined population. It is also based upon the fact that our decisions and our actions affect possible future conditions. (HNC:M14,pp.141-142) Our actions bring about conditions, both personal and social, which are different than they would have been were it not for our acting--this is the transformative nature of inquiry discussed earlier. The results of our moral deliberations change, in some sense, not only the world but ourselves. It is not possible except in some very general way to determine what will constitute a satisfaction at some future time. The only way a hedonistic calculation is even conceivable is by substituting present

desires for future ones. (HNC:M14,p.143) The moral virtues which stem from Dewey's own method are very general ones: open-mindedness, tolerance, thoughtfulness, etc. They are ways of pursuing moral goals rather than being ends themselves. It would not even be correct to set up maximization of one of these qualities as a moral goal, even though Dewey would admit the world would be a better place if these qualities were more prevalent. This is because it is not possible to determine prior to a specific situation just how much tolerance or thoughtfulness will be appropriate. For example, we need to be tolerant of those with different moral values in order to make our own moral development possible (they are a source of alternative values which might be better than our own or may allow us to be more secure in the correctness of our own values) but we can certainly think of situations in which a maximization of tolerance might result in unacceptable consequences; such as being tolerant of a parents belief that the transfusion his child needs to survive an illness is immoral.

Dewey is well aware that estimating future conditions is an indispensable part of living intelligently, and in fact sees moral deliberation as an attempt to figure out which proposed course of action will bring about some future conditions. Dewey's point is that the more vague we are concerning the conditions of the situations we are making predictions about (i.e. how long a span of time; how many individuals are included; what are the nature of the needs which must be met; what new needs will be created in the process, etc.) the more imprecise,

the more unreliable, those predictions must be. We must be satisfied with **tendencies** of certain actions to lead to certain outcomes and to modify these as situational conditions demands. These tendencies serve as guiding principles, not as means for calculation. (E:L7,p.242) In this case the emphasis shifts from the calculation to the character of the moral agent. Dewey writes

It is true, on one hand, that the ultimate standard for judgment of acts is their objective consequences; the outcome constitutes the meaning of the act. But it is equally true that the warrant for correctness of judgment and for power of judgment to operate as the influence in conduct lies in the intrinsic make-up of character; it would be safer to trust a man of a kind and honest disposition without much ability in calculation than it would a man having great power of foresight of the future who was malicious.
(E:L7,p.242)

This is because a good person will tend to do good, and an evil person will tend to do evil; and since we can not count on calculations, but must rely on tendency, it is best to start out with a tendency for good.

It might be objected at this point that utilitarianism has moved away from notions of calculations and toward tendencies. To the degree that this is so, then utilitarianism has moved closer to a Deweyan position. However, can a utilitarian theory do away with notions of sum-ranking or maximization and still count as utilitarian. Dewey would not accept that the maximization of any quality was a necessary component of a moral theory; and sum-ranking meets problems similar to those of calculations. As we progress with this discussion these points should become clearer.

The second flaw of utilitarianism is that by setting the greatest happiness of the greatest number as the moral goal

it joins the ranks of foundational theories--it sets up a fixed goal. This may seem a strange charge of utilitarianism which has a more flexible approach to what may count as a good than almost any other moral theory. Dewey acknowledges this fact but argues that by stipulating, prior to specific problematic situations, that the morally acceptable option must be that which maximizes pleasure (or what ever moral quality is highlighted by a version of the theory) utilitarianism switches tracks from a naturalism to a foundationalism. That is why any version of utilitarianism which holds that for an action to be moral it must maximize 'X', or that a morally good state is one in which the sum total of 'X' is higher than in alternative states is incompatible with a Deweyan method. It is inconsistent with Dewey's logic of situations to hold that any quality must be maximized or preferred over another quality, regardless of the situational context. To do so, no matter how noble the cause, is to cut off inquiry in advance, and so limit the good we might achieve; it is incompatible with an empirically based and morally vital theory. (RP:M12,pp.172-177)

What about growth? Is there not a sense in which the maximization of growth is a goal? We have discussed part of the answer to this in the previous chapter. 'Growth' is not really an end, it is a quality of actions which successfully resolve morally problematic situations. So it really does not make sense to speak of maximizing growth; that would be equivalent to saying 'maximize the solution of problems' which if it intends anything other than "solve the problems that face

you" is without any practical meaning. What about the imperative to maximize the conditions compatible with growth? Even this would be unacceptable as a rule, even though it would be good if it came about. It might be that complying with this rule would entail violating a person's personal integrity so that the conditions for growth in general were increased but the individual's opportunities were restricted--it may be a desired state, but Dewey's system can not impose any such imperatives, nor would it presume to demand such a sacrifice.

This is an area for further research. There is in the literature a number of works criticizing utilitarianism, or other forms of consequentialism, for ignoring notions of personal integrity, and which suggest alternative theories which include concepts such as 'agent-centered restrictions' and 'agent-centered prerogatives'. The brunt of these theories is that morality must take into consideration that agent neutral prescriptions may fail to respect adequately the moral agent when determining what must be done and what is allowed to be done.⁵¹ Dewey is more commonly grouped with consequentialist theories and so would probably be assumed to share their flaws. If the description of Dewey, and his concern with the integrity and development of the moral agent presented in this project is correct then he might be part of the solution, rather than part of the problem. To my knowledge he has not been consulted for possible contributions to agent-centered systems and so this is an area of research which might prove beneficial to both Dewey studies and this trend in moral philosophy.

Before concluding I would like to mention two works from the contemporary discussion of consequentialism that may further our understanding of Dewey's position. In "The Diversity of Goods", Charles Taylor presents a critique of utilitarianism based on the fact that its foundationalism reduces our conception of moral life; "To decide a priori what the bonds of the moral are is just to obfuscate the question whether and to what degree this is so, and to make it incapable of being coherently stated."⁵² This is clearly a Dewey-like critique; what is interesting is Taylor's proposal. He claims that goods can be contrasted qualitatively, i.e. some goods are better than, higher than, other goods. The determination of these contrasts is done on an individual level, but is open to inter-personal debate.⁵³ Taylor suggests that this view captures in a more comprehensive way the complexity of our moral experiences, and the diversity of goods. He then says that not only is this a contrast to utilitarianism, but would be unacceptable to naturalism. He writes

For those who cleave to naturalism, the languages of contrast must be suspect. They correspond to nothing in reality, which we may interpret as what we need to invoke in our bottom line explanatory language of behavior. They appear therefore to designate purely 'subjective' factors.⁵⁴

We should be able to recognize that this does not apply to Dewey. Dewey's notion of ontological parity would respect the 'reality' of these qualitative contrasts between competing goods; and Dewey's naturalism leads directly to a view like Taylor's which refuses to reduce the diversity of goods in the world. An

appreciation of Dewey's naturalism would not only broaden Taylor's conception of naturalism, but might allow him to introduce a strain of consequentialism into his theory. He seems to find some appeal in the empirical nature of consequentialism but rejects it because he believes it always comes with a restrictive foundationalism.⁵⁵ Dewey provides a version of consequentialism (we will consider this presently) which is based on a rejection of foundationalism, and a respect for the diversity of goods. Also, Taylor's examples of qualitative contrasts sounds quite similar to the 'moral image' concept⁵⁶ we associated with Dewey's method. The agent oriented side of Dewey's moral philosophy has been relatively neglected. A re-assessment of this aspect of his theory in light of such agent-centered developments as presented by Taylor would, I believe, be a fruitful endeavor.

I have just referred to Dewey as a consequentialist, a consideration of this classification will be our final discussion. Consequentialism is typically associated with many of the drawbacks which lead Dewey to reject utilitarianism, i.e. maximization, sum-ranking, etc.; yet there is no denying the emphasis he places on consequences. Amartya Sen has suggested a distinction which I believe is quite useful. He distinguishes between 'consequentialism', which is an outcome morality based on an agent-neutral evaluation, and a 'consequence based evaluation', which is an outcome morality based on an agent-relative evaluation.⁵⁷ In Deweyan language 'consequentialism' seeks an omni-perspectival evaluation of a state of affairs,

while a 'consequence based evaluation' respects the perspectival nature of all judgments. By allowing the best state of affairs to be assessed from an agent-relative perspective it becomes acceptable to place greater weight on values and actions which are integral to the self. It takes the fixed notion of maximization out of consequentialism (though it is certainly compatible with this method to choose maximization). I believe that 'consequence based evaluation' is a more accurate description of Dewey's consequence-oriented method for just these reasons. This is also a further indication of the direction which a study of Dewey in contemporary context might take.

CONCLUSION

In concluding I shall turn once again to the words of James Gouinlock. He writes that "the perfecting of method... must take precedence over all other possible reflections about evaluation." This is because values do not exist antecedently in the world but must be constructed by us. Being as clear and as informed as possible in these constructive efforts is of great importance; and having a method is the best tool in that endeavor. It is in fact the means for constructing values intelligently. I believe that this work can contribute something to developing that method. I have tried to set out in a concise fashion just what Dewey's method is, which despite his voluminous writings (or perhaps on account of) was never explicitly stated by Dewey. I hope that this work will redirect some attention from Dewey's social philosophy toward his philosophy of the moral self. This has not received much attention, but I believe it to be central to his moral philosophy.

A major issue in this work has been the idea of a 'transactional perspective'. This important Deweyan notion may be the concept most ripe for study. It is a concept that Dewey paid close attention to only late in his career, so there is constructive work yet to be done with it. It is also a concept which, in different forms, underlies all of Dewey's efforts;

therefore a development of this concept may provide new insight into the worth and usefulness of Dewey's more general philosophical ideas. Aside from these specific contributions which I hope this work might make, there is a more general, but perhaps more important one. I mentioned at the outset of this work that despite Dewey's eminence in the first half of this century he has all but disappeared from the frontlines of philosophy; I then noted that there seems to be reversal of this trend. If the present work can add to this resurgence of interest in Dewey, then, even if its more ambitious aims falter, it will be, in my eyes, a worthwhile contribution. In a world as precarious and changing as ours, I judge it to be a very good thing to have a philosophical vision which embraces that change in order to increase our ability to deal with it; and I take the resurgence of Dewey to be a hopeful sign.

On Dewey's memorial at the University of Vermont are written the following words, taken from the final pages of A Common Faith; I believe they will provide us with a fitting summary of Dewey's philosophy. It says

The things in civilization which we most prize are not of ourselves. They exist by grace of the doings and sufferings of the continuous human community in which we are a link. Ours is the responsibility of conserving, transmitting, rectifying and expanding the heritage of values we have received that those who come after us may receive it more solid and secure, more widely accessible and more generally shared than we have received it. (ACF:L9,pp.57-58)

There is a continuity between the past from which our values come, and the future into which our moral works will go. Ours is the task of taking what is worthwhile in our heritage, correcting what is mistaken or outdated, increasing its meaning

and passing it on to those who come after us. I believe that this passage sums up eloquently and succinctly captures Dewey's moral philosophy; and yet to understand it fully we need to see it in the context of the issues discussed in this work. The notion of continuity is supported by Dewey's naturalistic metaphysics; the ability to rectify comes from the transformative power of inquiry; the sense of community is defined by the transactional perspective on individuals/society; and the moral method is the tool which makes the whole project work.

It is my hope that this work has sharpened that tool so as to make it appealing to those who labor with the moral dilemmas of our day.

NOTES

Chapter One: Evolution and Morality

1. For explanation of parenthetical references, see Dewey Bibliography, at end of this work.

2. I will be using the terms 'fixed' and 'final' throughout this work as a shorthand for the criteria for foundationalism, given on page two of this chapter.

3. In this work Dewey speaks of this approach as the historical method. I have opted to use the terms 'situational' and 'contextual' because I believe that they are more descriptive of the approach Dewey is using, as well as being more generic. Also, they are the terms he comes to rely on most regularly as his writings mature.

4. While Dewey is engaging in a bit of anthropology, he is putting forth a thesis consistent with research in that field. For example, see Mircea Eliade's The Sacred and the Profane, (London: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Pub.)

5. Richard Bernstein, John Dewey, The Great American Thinkers Series, (New York: Washington Square Press), p.2

6. Richard Rorty, "Dewey's Metaphysics", in his Consequences of Pragmatism, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), p.88, 1982.

7. Rorty, "Comments on Sleeper and Edel", Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society, vol.21, no.1, p.47

8. I do not intend to conflate the world views of Plato and Aristotle, or to gloss over their profound differences. However, despite his frequent naturalistic tendencies, Aristotle also possess a transcendental aspect in his philosophy which connects him to Plato, in this instance.

9. There is certainly a naturalistic flavor to much of Aristotle's ethics which is compatible with the moral philosophy Dewey is trying to develop. But there is also this foundationalist element, which Dewey is trying to combat.

10. By this I do not intend to imply that there was a derivative relationship between these concepts--although I

believe such an argument could be made--but rather that there is a functional correspondence.

11. James Rachels, Created From Animals: The Moral Implications of Darwinism, (Oxford: Oxford University Press) This is a very interesting work for someone interested in naturalism in ethics, or in the implications of Darwinism for philosophy. Rachels comes up with a different moral theory than does Dewey, although I believe they are compatible. I think it would be an interesting task to make a more detailed comparison of the two.

12. Rachels contends that we must give up the tradition to the degree that it conflicts with our scientific understanding of creation. While both Dewey and I would agree with this I believe we would both be interested in salvaging more of that tradition than would Rachels, although Rachels does present a credible argument for his more thorough revision.

13. Rachels, p.71 -- as is often the case in discussions of Dewey and Darwin, Rachels' account focuses on the 1909 essay, and ignores the 1898 article. It would be interesting to see Rachels' thoughts on this article, since it makes a case for humanity's moral uniqueness in a stronger fashion than I believe Rachels would.

14. A case may be made that Dewey is not speaking of a strict Darwinian version of evolution, be that as it may, what he has to say about evolution is certainly compatible with a strict Darwinian version. Also, I believe that the notion of a strict Darwinian version is somewhat ambiguous--is Stephen Jay Gould a Darwinian evolutionist? Does it matter? Darwin made a monumental contribution to intellectual history, but he did so by building on and correcting versions of the theory that had gone before him. If Dewey, a philosopher, can see deeper into the moral and philosophical implications of Darwin's theory than Darwin did, then he is paying his own form of tribute to Darwin by building on and expanding his theory.

Chapter Two: Naturalistic Metaphysics

1. James Gouinlock, John Dewey's Philosophy of Value, (New York: Humanities Press), p.57

2. Richard Rorty, "Dewey's Metaphysics" in Consequences of Pragmatism, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press)

3. Rorty, p.87

4. Rorty, p.88

5. Rorty, p.77

6. Rorty, p.87

7. Rorty, p.82

8. Rorty, p.85

9. A word on the use of the terms 'antecedent' and 'consequent'. Dewey is well known for his emphasis on the consequences of ideas, and rightfully so. When we seek to determine truth, or warranted assertions we verify through consequences. But, when we seek to determine the meaning of an idea or object we must take into consideration both antecedents and consequents. For example, if we want to know if it is true that Joe was wrong in having that drink we must look to the consequences of his action. But to determine the meaning of Joe having a drink we need to take a broader look. If an antecedent to this is that Joe has just had many drinks it changes the meaning of his having this one drink. Also, if one of the antecedents to this situation is that Joe is a recovering alcoholic this will be a much more meaningful act than it might be if we just considered the potential consequences. As we can see, in this case we would not even be able to make accurate assertions about the consequences of this act without a consideration of the antecedents. Dewey says that "the realm of meanings is wider than that of true-and-false meanings" (EN: p.332), and so the connections relevant to meaning will be wider also.

In using the term 'consequents' instead of 'consequences' Dewey risks sounding ambiguous, when in fact I believe he is trying to be inclusive. He definitely uses the term in the loose sense of consequences, or results of actions, but I believe he also often intends it in the more strict sense of being the second term of a conditional--if I do X, then Y will follow.

10. Rorty, p.77

11. This communicative function of philosophy as Dewey conceives it is a central issue in Ralph Sleeper's work, The Necessity of Pragmatism, (New Haven: Yale University Press), where it receives insightful treatment as a crucial link between Dewey's metaphysics and logic.

12. Rorty, p.77

13. In a recent work, The Moral Collapse of the University Bruce Wilshire discusses the troubles with higher education as being tied to an over-emphasis on professional isolation, and cites Dewey a counter example to this lamentable trend. I believe Dewey is an admirable example of what I call a 'specialist in generality'.

14. Rorty, p.77

15. A comprehensive discussion of the generic traits

of nature would be hampered by the fact that Dewey never developed too extensive a list. For discussion of this see Gouinlock's work cited in the first note to this chapter, p.12. It has also been noted that Dewey has a "bias in favor of change" (attributed to F.J.E. Woodbridge, in Horace L. Friess's article, "Social Inquiry and Social Doctrine", in John Dewey: Philosopher of Science and Freedom, ed. Sidney Hook, New York: Barnes & Nobles, Pub., p.108). I am not sure that it is a bias--it might be--but I can understand why such a charge would be made. Dewey spent more time focusing on this particular trait of existence than he did on others. I believe that this is at least in part due to the fact that change as a generic trait of all existence is a powerful antidote to foundationalist thinking.

16. Two particularly non-trivial traits are 'change' and 'relatedness'. Change, as indicated in the last note is particularly significant in arguing against fixed and final theories. The fact that all existences are related is a powerful tool in arguing against the isolation of ends from their empirical setting.

17. Rorty, p.87

18. George Santayana, "Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics", in Dewey and His Critics, ed. S. Morgenbesser, (New York: Journal of Philosophy Inc.), p.343

19. For such a detailed response see Dewey's article, "Half-Hearted Naturalism".

20. Santayana, p.348

21. Santayana, pp.348-349

22. Santayana, p.350

23. Santayana, pp.343-344

24. I believe that the phrase 'God's-eye-view' is a particularly apt way of describing the attempt to establish a notion of 'true Reality', or a 'thing-in-itself', especially if we see these foundational projects as Dewey does--modern manifestations of the 'sacred tradition'.

25. Santayana, p.353

26. Santayana, p.354

27. Even if our experience is of a past event, there must be an immediate quality in order to have the experience. If I have a memory experience of a meal I ate last night, it must be the case that one of the qualities of the meal is that it was memorable, and it is this quality that helps bring back the event to my immediate experience. In relation to history,

an event must have left something behind which can be an object of immediate experience in order to be an object of any kind of experience. A lost civilization which leaves no quality-bearing traits is truly a lost civilization.

28. I use the term 'scientific' in this context, not in any technical sense, but rather as used on page 47, as a generic heading for those forms of criticism concerned with belief-values. A more specific discussion of Dewey's use of 'scientific' will occur in chapter three.

29. The situation as it actually presents itself to the couple is cognitively indeterminate; they do not know the truth value of the situation. The process of determining the truth value of a situation was skipped over here, so as not to further complicate matters. It will be the topic of chapter three.

30. I borrow the phrasing 'naturalist in ethics' from Gouinlock, pp.196-197, who uses the term "naturalism in ethics" in order to try to avoid some of the "moronic" stereotyping of ethical naturalism. We will have occasion to discuss Gouinlock's views in greater detail later in this work.

Chapter Three: The Nature of Inquiry

1. The terms 'desire' and 'desirable' come to represent for Dewey the distinction between apparent good and true good. A fuller discussion of these terms will be taken up in later chapters.

2. H.S.Thayer presents one of the more in depth discussions of the role of continuity in Dewey's thought that I have come across in the literature. See his Meaning and Action: A Critical History of Pragmatism, (Hackett Publishing Co.), pp.460-488.

3. For a discussion of this analogy see Dewey (LTI:L12,p.30)

4. Bertrand Russell, "Dewey's New Logic", in The Philosophy of John Dewey, The Library of Living Philosophers, Vol.1, (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Press), pp.147-148

5. Russell, p.147

6. To support the point made earlier that inquiry is a refinement of the notion of reflective thought, compare this definition of inquiry with the following definition of reflective thought:

The function of reflective thought is, therefore, to transform a situation in which there is experienced obscurity, doubt, conflict, disturbance of some sort, into a situation that is clear, coherent, settled,

harmonicus. (HWT:L8,p.195)

7. Of course as soon as this original situation is dealt with a new problem presents itself, namely, what to do next.

8. In chapter four we will discuss this process as a 'transaction'. Even though Dewey uses the term in the following quotation I want to hold off from using it until a fuller discussion can be undertaken.

9. Inquiry is continuous, though not necessarily identical with this process. It is a more complex process which develops out of these basic survival strategies.

10. R.W. Sleeper, The Necessity of Pragmatism, (New Haven: Yale University Press), p.3

11. An interesting corollary to this political/scientific option is discussed by Hilary Putnam in his The Many Faces of Realism, (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Press), p.60. In that work he offers the cases presented in Brave New World and in B.F. Skinner's Walden Two as examples of what happens when morality is conceived of as a purely technical problem. This is interesting since, among other reasons, it is a charge that could conceivably be brought against Dewey. While Dewey does believe there are moral problems which can best be solved by seeing them as technical problems he cannot be grouped with these forms of technical solutions. Putnam does not group Dewey with Skinner or with Huxley's scientific oligarchs.

12. I believe that recognition of this distinction can lead to a broader understanding of both, and hopefully prevent a caricaturization of Dewey's reconstruction. To my knowledge it is a distinction which has not been treated in the literature.

13. Russell, p.143

14. J.E. Tiles in Dewey, (London: Routledge), pp.19-24, gives a nice discussion of the development of this concept in Dewey's thought.

15. Russell, pp.139-140

16. This example is telling of the connection between Dewey's aesthetic theory and his larger philosophy. In his work John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience and Nature: The Horizons of Feeling (Albany: State University of New York Press), Thomas Alexander contends that Dewey's notion of experience is best seen as an aesthetic concept, and that therefore his aesthetics is central to his larger philosophical endeavors. I believe that this is a valid claim. Aesthetic considerations are, as this example shows, relevant to understanding Dewey's views on experience, and I will argue are relevant for moral decision making, also. I think that Alexander's work provides a needed

highlighting of this aspect of Dewey's philosophy.

17. As stated, inquiry does not necessarily change an object materially, although this might be entailed by certain types of inquiries (e.g. bio-chemical experiments). We are not, however, dealing with things-in-themselves, indeed Dewey rejects any such notion, but with objects-as-situated; as the conditions that constitute the situational context change, so too, in a real way does the object. Sleeper has a helpful discussion of this which I believe is worth quoting at length. He writes

The extrinsic qualities of a thing are disclosed only as it relates to other things; indeed, they are its relations to other things. What happens in the process of inquiry is that these relations change. The thing is not merely seen differently as a result of inquiry, nor is the difference merely the effect of causal factors present in the operations of inquiry, which intervene between the non-cognitive object as known. For the object, by being placed in wholly new relationships becomes a different object. The transaction that takes place in inquiry reconstructs the object by reconstructing its relations. It is, of course, the self-same object that undergoes this transformation, and it endures this change because it is a feature of existences of all kinds that they are extrinsically stable through change.

We have as Sleeper concludes, "The original object...still real, but really changed." See pp.120-122

18. Interestingly, Heisenberg himself was aware of the impact of quantum physics on philosophical theories of knowledge. In a work entitled Physics and Philosophy, (New York: Harper and Row, Pub.), he addresses, specifically, the conflict between the traditional epistemologists, with particular emphasis on Kant, and quantum theory. His conclusion is that, contrary to tradition, pure reason will never be able to arrive at absolute truth due to the inherent inability to define concepts and meanings with absolute precision. He adds, sounding like a good Deweyan, that concepts are "indispensable tools" for doing scientific work. See especially pp.76-92.

19. Richard Rorty, "Pragmatism Without Method", in Objectivity, Relativity and Truth, Philosophical Papers Vol.1, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp.63-64.

20. Rorty, "Science and Solidarity" in same volume, p.39

21. Rorty, "Pragmatism Without Method", pp.65-66

22. Rorty, "Pragmatism Without Method", pp.75-77

23. Rorty, "Science as Solidarity", p.36

24. My conclusion concerning Dewey's use of scientific method is compatible in many respects with Rorty's position.

Although I believe that there is more to having a method than does Rorty. Also, as I point out in the larger discussion, Dewey gets more out of the concept than Rorty would claim is possible.

25. Ernest Nagel, "Dewey's Theory of Natural Science", in John Dewey: Philosopher of Science and Freedom, ed. Sidney Hook, (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc.), p.248

Chapter Four: The Social Context of Morality

1. Since this idea has been around so long it might be supposed to be a trivial commonplace, but I believe it is often given more honorary lip-service rather than true reflection. An atomistic individualism has reigned in political theory, and in many moral theories, for most of the modern era, as well as being a component of most monotheistic interpretations of religion. If Dewey can develop the individual/social transaction successfully his theory will present an alternative to these influential intellectual systems.

2. The role of transaction has not received the attention in the Dewey literature commensurate with its importance. If it is mentioned at all it is usually introduced with little or no explanation, and used as an alternative to interaction. Notable exceptions are Bernstein who has a discussion of the role of transaction in Dewey's philosophy. This is useful for a consideration of the way transaction functions to do away with dualisms and assert natural continuities, see his John Dewey, pp.81-88.

Sleeper discusses transaction, briefly, as a means of positive transformation in a way consistent with my interpretation of the concept, see particularly p.142, in his Necessity of Pragmatism. For a history of the development of this term one may refer to John Dewey and Arthur F. Bentley: A Philosophical Correspondence, 1932-1951, (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press), which contains over seventy references.

3. Sleeper uses a similar phrasing, see note 7, below.

4. Dewey originally was reluctant to use digestion as an example of transaction, but was convinced by Bentley of its appropriateness, see their Correspondence, p.527.

5. Of course, if there were no plants there would still be an atmosphere, but of a radically different sort.

6. There will be a fuller discussion of this article in the next section.

7. Sleeper, in above cited work, p.142

8. I find this letter poignant because here, in the last three or four years of a seventy year career, Dewey was gaining

a new insight into his work, and yet realized that time was slipping away. What is impressive is that at the advanced age of ninety Dewey was not only able to continue working, but was ambitious enough to begin to reconstruct his own work.

9. I believe the approach I am suggesting--seeing Dewey's social psychology as a transactional project leading to his moral method--is a unique approach; of course whether it is a fruitful approach is an open question.

10. Paul Kurtz, Essays in Pragmatic Naturalism, (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books), p.25

11. Kurtz, p.29

12. Thomas Leahy, A History of Psychology, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.), p.263

13. The beginning of the classical era of behaviorism in America is usually dated around 1913, with the publication of John B. Watson's "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It". Watson incidentally, was a student at the University of Chicago during Dewey's tenure there. See Leahy, p.281

14. Leahy, p.262

15. E. Flowers and M. Murphey, A History of Philosophy in America, (New York: Capricorn Books), pp.535-553

16. As another interesting coincident, it may be noted that this address given by Dewey, a former president of the American Psychological Association, occurs in the same year that John B. Watson, the leader of the behavioristic movement, is elected the new president of that same association.

17. It should also be noted that driving is a coordinated behavior, in the manner set out earlier.

18. This is clearly going to rule out any atomistic theory of the individual. An individual, as a moral unit, is the sum of his or her relations--how those relations are brought together is the unique aspect which gives individuality to an individual.

19. A full definition of society would contain more, but it would at least contain this element.

20. H.S. Thayer, Meaning and Action, (Hackett Publishing Co.), p.182

21. Being born is a social event in the sense that it took the coordinated actions of two individuals to make it possible.

22. There may be other social forces at work, but they

would be open to a similar analysis.

23. For definition of 'competent inquiry' see this work, chapter three, section three.

24. See this work chapter three, section three.

25. A more intelligent action is part of a more moral action, but the two are not identical. In chapters five and six we shall undertake a more detailed discussion of this issue.

26. This definition comes from the conclusion of our discussion of the meaning of 'scientific method', in chapter three, section three.

27. Dewey quickly adds that with this, as with all generalizations, we must leave the law and study the specific, concrete situation. As an absolute, it is as all absolutes, sterile--obviously a well placed swipe at Kant. See HNC:M14,p.196

Chapter Five: The Method of Moral Reconstruction

1. This is taken from the definition of inquiry. (LTI:L12, p.108)

2. Bernard Williams, Utilitarianism: For and Against (with J.C.C. Smart) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.116

3. This is also why we look at the consequences--what will happen--of an act rather than any 'intrinsic' quality.

4. This will hopefully be clearer when we discuss the method in detail.

5. Jean-Paul Sartre, "The Humanism of Existentialism" in Essays in Existentialism, (Seacacus N.J.: Citadel Press), p.55

6. Thomas Alexander, John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience and Nature: The Horizons of Feelings, (Albany: State University of New York Press), p.269

7. Bernard Williams also takes this view, see his Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy, (Cambridge,Mass.: Harvard University Press).

8. Before continuing it should be pointed out that we should not read too much into the artistic metaphors. Dewey is not setting the artist up as a moral exemplar, nor is he hinting at the need for artistic talent as a component of moral character. It is the values which animate, and for Dewey define, art which are of central importance. The values that lead to

the production and intelligent enjoyment of art have to be generalized to all aspects of living. (AE:p.344) These values include an open, inquiring mind, or imagination, which actively seeks out forms of relating other than those familiar to it; an appreciation of experience as worthwhile in itself and full of unrealized potential for meaning; and an indifference to praise and blame--which we saw in the previous chapter is a flaw in customary morals. (AE:pp.341-349)

9. Although I developed the concept from my reading of Dewey, I borrow the term from Hilary Putnam.

10. Hilary Putnam, The Many Faces of Realism, (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court Press), p.51.

11. Putnam, p.52

12. James Gouinlock, John Dewey's Philosophy of Value, (New York: Humanities Press), p.153.

13. While the concern of this project is centered on notions of the 'good', it does not indicate that Dewey was unconcerned with 'right', or that he believed it was a derivative of 'good'. In fact he makes a point of arguing, in several places, for the distinctiveness of 'right' and 'good', in both origin and function (TIFM:L5,p.285 and E:L7,p.215) Right also has a naturalistic basis; it springs from our social environment, i.e. claims made and respected in social intercourse. (E:L7, pp.217-219)

14. A procedural note: Dewey often uses the terms 'need', 'want', 'desire' interchangeably in the context of this discussion, but 'desire' is his most favored, and I believe best expresses the affective/ideational/motor aspect of his theory of action. Therefore I will use it as the term of choice in this discussion.

15. Gouinlock, p.138

16. Sidney Hook, "The Desirable and the Emotive in Dewey's Ethics", in John Dewey: Philosopher of Science and Freedom, (New York: Barnes and Nobles, Inc.), p.204.

17. Isaac Levi, in a book which he presents as a working out of Deweyan ideas, points out that choosing under conditions of unresolved conflict does not necessarily commit us to a value decision. It may be that though we are forced to choose we do not have enough information to make a definitive value statement; in which case the choice serves as data in the on going process of inquiry. See his Hard Choices, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), esp. pp.1-19.

18. This 'Nazi problem' has come up several times in the literature. Brand Blanshard, Reason and Goodness (New York: The Macmillan Company), p.190, and Hilary Putnam, Reason, Truth,

and History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.168, believe that Dewey's philosophy cannot deal with this issue. I believe he can (at least as well as it can be handled) and will try to demonstrate how in chapter six. Gouinlock, in the above cited work, also mentions this problem, but he believes Dewey can handle it. His arguments are similar in part to mine, but differ in my use of transactionalism. See Gouinlock, p.202.

19. Richard Bernstein, John Dewey, The Great American Thinkers Series, (New York: Washington Square Press, Inc.), p.171

20. Putnam has an interesting discussion of Kant's moral image in The Many faces of Realism, pp.41-62.

21. H.S. Thayer, Meaning and Action, (Hackett Publishing Company , p.175.

22. Enhancing a level of functioning may seem to be growth, but I believe it is correct, in certain instances, to count maintenance of functioning as growth, also. That is because as conditions change, become more demanding, to maintain a present level of functioning requires there to be absolute growth (even though the level of growth relative to the demands of the environment has remained constant) which matches the changes in environing conditions.

23. See chapter four and the discussion of transaction.

24. Of course the individual may be fired. In that case his selfish attempts at growth have been seen as socially harmful to the corporation and so he is let go. This is a perfect example of one-sided growth being ultimately harmful to the individual.

25. 'Ultimately' is an indefinite notion. It may be possible for an individual to remove himself from a society before the deleterious effects of his actions affect him. But such behavior as a characteristic way of behaving would likely make the formation of fruitful social bonds difficult and so cost the individual in that manner. Of course, it may not; this is not a perfectly just world in which the immoral are always punished. This may be seen as a loophole for immoral behavior, but I believe it is a loophole provide by existence, rather than by Dewey's theory. On the other hand, since a society can not divorce itself from the individuals of which it is comprised (even if the particular individuals change) social practices which characteristically ignore the individual side of the transaction are more likely to reap the consequences.

26. Interestingly, Dewey develops a similar point in one of his earliest works on ethics, Outlines of a Critical Study of Ethics, (1891). In that work he establishes an 'ethical postulate' which reads

In the realization of individuality there is found also .

the needed realization of some community of persons of which the individual is a member; conversely, the agent who duly satisfies the community in which he shares by that same conduct satisfies himself. (OCTE:E3,p.322)

The fact that this comes from Dewey's Hegelian rather than naturalistic period raises the question of just how much of Hegel is in the notion of transaction. While this is an interesting question for Dewey scholars, it is not within the scope of this work to address. However, I do believe that transaction can be defended and developed on strictly naturalistic grounds.

27. Sleeper's book, The Necessity of Pragmatism, (New Haven: Yale University Press) makes this distinction of central concern, and offers an insightful analysis of the implications of this for Dewey's philosophy.

28. See the definition of 'growth', p.194. this work

29. This should not be taken to deny the worth of ends, or of immediate experiences. Dewey pays a great deal of respect to consummatory values, but his lesson is to not rest content with the consummatory nature of ends, but to learn from them and use them in that way to go on to further and richer consummatory experiences.

30. From the context of this quotation we are justified in reading 'positive' as 'life enhancing'.

31. Abraham Maslow is one of the better known psychologists of self-realization. See discussion in Theories of Personality, eds. C.S. Hall and G. Lindzey, (New York: John Wiley and Sons), pp.241-277.

32. Sleeper, in above cited work, p.178

33. It is beyond the scope of the present work to develop a Deweyan theory of the self. However, enough has been said about the development of individuals, in chapter four, to allow us to continue with our present discussion.

34. It must be admitted that it would be valid to see this issue from the other side of the transaction, and interpret all of Dewey's writing on the individual as aimed at bettering society. Actually, I do not think we need be concerned with such distinctions, for it is the individual/social transaction which is at stake, from either view. However, I believe I am justified in emphasizing the self-development aspect of Dewey's philosophy since it is the individual who introduces novelty, and hence the possibility of progress into the equation and is therefore of central concern to either interpretation.

35. In John Dewey and Self-realization, (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, Publishers) Robert Roth uses the term 'self-realization' to name the process. While his interpretation does

not emphasize the notion of 'self' which I have associated with that term, it does not clearly reject it.

Chapter Six: Transactional Ethics

1. As we discussed this may require that we change our moral image.

2. A Nietzschean 'Blond Beast', for example.

3. Dewey often uses 'human being' instead of 'individual' to indicate individuality in a biological/numerical sense, as distinct from a moral or psychological sense.

4. An act may have a self-defeating quality about it without necessarily leading to self-defeat. It happens, as we all know, that sometimes unscrupulous, unethical people succeed; even over odds to the contrary.

5. John Stuart Mill, On Liberty, (Penguin Books), pp.75-118.

6. James Gouinlock, John Dewey's Philosophy of Value, (New York: HUmanities Press), pp.316-317. He also speaks of an organic relation between individuals and society, but not in terms of transactionalism, see pp.115-117, of his work.

7. This does not indicate the truth value of the theory since even false theories can have world-altering effects.

8. I would like to bring up a difficulty inherent in making categorical statements. Since it is not possible to discover the full meaning or nature of an object or action until we have assessed its consequences, it is difficult to say, prior to experience, that a particular experience will be incompatible with growth. We can refer to this as the 'Dorian Gray Paradox'. This character from Oscar Wilde's novel wanted to know as much of life as possible but realized that he had to actually experience things in order to know their true nature; this lead him to evil experiences more often than good. Here is the paradox: in order to come to the morally 'best' decisions we need to base our answers on our experiences, and so the richer a background of experiences to draw on, the greater the material on which to base our decision; but this might lead us to engage in 'immoral' acts in order to improve our chances of making moral decisions. The answer that suggests itself is that we do not need to directly experience something to be able to know it, we may rely on indirect experiences to judge; that is, we may observe the consequences produced by other people's experience with similar actions, in similar situations. For example, I do not need to directly experience the consequences of heroin in order to judge whether or not it is compatible with growth. I can observe the effects it has on others who

have tried it and I can read the reports of its affects on the body. This is the more intelligent way to proceed. However, since we are unique individuals no action or object will be experienced in the same exact way by each of us. This poses a challenge to be open-minded to new experience. Even drug use, though a good example of a counter-growthful experience, cannot be categorically judged wrong. For example, it may be countered that it had decidedly growth-enhancing effects on Aldous Huxley, as reported by him in The Doors of Perception.

9. This example also shows how a non-growthful personal activity can have consequences incompatible with the good of society.

10. John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism and Other Essays, (Penguin Books), pp.281-282.

11. H.S. Thayer writes that for Dewey growth is not a passive event that happens to someone, but is something that we do, and that it depends on an individual's plasticity to learn. This supports the contention made in this project linking growth to the educative process. See his Meaning and Action, pp.177-178.

12. Of course, if we start to add conditions to this example we will be likely to get different conclusions. For the sake of exemplifying the method it is necessary to except the scenario as presented.

13. For example, no one will be persuaded by Kant if they do not accept the need to be rationally consistent; nor Mill if they have no concern for the welfare of others.

14. Robert Westbrook, John Dewey and American Democracy, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press), pp.34-42.

15. For a discussion of Dewey's religious development see his biography by George Dykhuizen, The Life and Mind of John Dewey, (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois Press). There is also a collection of essays on Dewey's works written from a religious perspective, see John Dewey: His Thought and Influence, (Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press Publishers), ed. John Blewett.

16. This is another commonality between Dewey and Mill, see Mill's On Liberty. I think it would be interesting to make a more in-depth comparison between the two, particularly on issues of social philosophy.

17. This is a point of disagreement between Gouinlock and myself. He is of the opinion that Dewey did not intend for the principles of democracy to be extended to all forms of social life, see his above cited work, p.115n, and p.117n. Dewey does not intend for the actual mechanics of political democracy to

be extended to all forms of social life, but the meaning of democracy extends far beyond these mechanisms. Democracy as a way of interacting in a social group can, and should be extended to all forms of associations. As Dewey says, it is not an alternative to other forms of life, but is the idea of associated life, itself.

18. See chapter four, introductory section.

19. Since we do not know the full nature of an action until we can assess its consequences, we can not know beforehand that an action will have consequences that enhance functioning. We can however build up our knowledge of ourselves and our communities and so can choose actions which are compatible (i.e. the actions are not such as to be reasonably expected to be damaging to individual/social functioning) or conducive (i.e. the actions are such as to be reasonably expected to further the development of individual/social functioning) to transactional growth. This also highlights the need to complete the method and assess the consequences of our actions.

20. As noted above, it is possible to act in a way that is not conducive to personal development and still prosper, in some sense.

21. This has been addressed by Kantian philosophers. I do not mean that this is a fatal problem for Kantian morality or that this is the only alternative. The point of the example is to show how a Deweyan could have Kantian values in his moral image and yet avoid some of the pitfalls of Kant's foundationalism. The solution which the Deweyan reaches would not be satisfactory to a Kantian, but that is not relevant to the issue at hand.

22. Bernard Williams, Utilitarianism: For and Against, with J.C.C. Smart, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1973, pp.98-99.

23. I would add that even though Dewey's approach complicates moral discussion by denying the possibility of a single moral system, I believe it would achieve morally positive results just by being tried.

24. Richard Rorty, Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.197.

25. Rorty, p.197

26. Rorty, p.194

27. Bernard Williams, Ethics and The Limits of Philosophy, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), 1985, pp.28-29.

28. Williams, 1985, p.98

29. Williams, 1985, p.99
30. Williams, 1985, p.93
31. Williams, 1985, p.93
32. Williams, 1985, p.112
33. Williams, 1985, pp.116-117
34. Williams, 1985, p.74
35. Williams, 1985, pp.113-114

36. By non-linear is meant that there is not a progression from one point to the next until there is a definitive conclusion. There is a linear aspect to Dewey's method in the sense that there is a series of steps, but these steps do not begin from a foundational position but rather are a part of the on-going process of living in the world. Also, crucial to Dewey's method is the assessment of the consequences which feed back into the earlier steps to further inform them. Thayer also characterizes Dewey's method as non-linear, see his work, cited above, p.410. Also, in "Culture and Personality", in John Dewey: Philosopher of Science and Freedom, ed. Sidney Hook, Lawrence K. Frank, describes Dewey's conception of the relation between culture and personality as a circular process; see p.89.

37. For example, Williams does not even mention Dewey in his work--which makes some very Deweyan statements.

38. I in no way mean that only I appreciate Dewey's constructive side, but rather that most of the work on Dewey has been analytical work, aimed at clarifying his positions or defending him against criticism. This is important work, but equally important, I believe, is actually putting Dewey's ideas to work. After all that is, by Dewey's own standards, the only way to truly discern their worth.

39. Richard Bernstein, "John Dewey on Democracy: The Task Before Us", in his Philosophical Profiles: Essays in a Pragmatic Mode, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania), p.271,

40. Thayer, p.182

41. A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth, and Logic, (New York: Dover Publications, Inc.), see chapter six.

42. Ayer, pp.110-111

43. Ayer, pp.109-110

44. Moore is seen by many to have the definitive answer

to not only subjectivist definitions of 'good' but to any naturalistic attempt to define 'good'. I believe that while this may be so in some cases (for example, when 'good' is narrowly identified with some natural quality such as 'pleasure') it does not take anything away from Dewey's naturalistic system. For one, Dewey is not overly concerned with issues of definability. Even if all naturalistic definitions of 'good' commit the naturalistic fallacy it is still the case that we face moral dilemmas that must be dealt with. That action/object which successfully deals with a moral dilemma is 'good'. If Moore, or anyone else, wants to deny the use of that term to this function, then so be it. As far as Dewey concerned they may go on debating definitions, but for himself, he sees it as more important to focus his energies on actually resolving moral problems.

Also, Dewey pays little attention to Moore or the naturalistic fallacy because it does not arise if philosophical investigations begin with naturalistic premises. If we start with humans as wholly natural creatures, dealing with an environment that is wholly natural, then we come to moral dilemmas which themselves are wholly natural and which demand resolution on wholly naturalistic grounds--there is no room, or reason, to introduce non-natural qualities. Given all of this, if we stop to question the definition of 'good' there is no reason to expect anything but a naturalistic definition; and if we do come to a Moorean dilemma, then it makes more sense to re-examine our use of language rather than reject our naturalistic premises, which are intertwined with the findings of science.

45. See Charles L. Stevenson, Ethics and Language, (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp.253-264 and Dewey, "Ethical Subject-Matter and Language".

46. Stevenson, p.262

47. See Gouinlock, in above cited work, pp.187-201, and Sidney Hook, "The Desirable and Emotive in John Dewey's Ethics", in John Dewey: Philosopher of Science and Freedom, pp.217-230.

48. Stevenson, pp.258-261

49. Gouinlock, pp.191-192

50. If this seems too controversial an example, the reader is invited to supply his or her own.

51. For examples of this type of approach see Consequentialism and Its Critics, ed. Samuel Scheffler, (Oxford University Press); particularly the articles by Scheffler, "Agent-Centred Restrictions, Rationality and the Virtues"; Amartya Sen, "Rights and Agency"; T.M. Scanlon, "Rights, Goals, and Fairness"; and Thomas Nagel, "Autonomy and Deontology". Also useful is the editors introduction to Utilitarianism and Beyond,

ed. Amartya Sen and Bernard Williams, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

52. Charles Taylor, "The Diversity of Goods", in Utilitarianism and Beyond, p.132

53. Taylor, pp.132-138

54. Taylor, p.141

55. Taylor, p.144

56. Taylor, pp.132-135

57. Amartya Sen, "Rights and Agency", as cited above, pp.212-223

Conclusion

1. Gouinlock, p.356. I believe it appropriate to point out the valuableness of Gouinlock's work for a study of Dewey's ethics. Although we differ in the emphasis we give to certain aspects of Dewey's theory I believe the two works to be compatible; even complimentary. Gouinlock's work gives an in-depth introduction to the many facets of Dewey's ethical thought, while my work focuses upon the practical applicability of that theory, and attempts to build on Dewey's ideas in order to make them more serviceable.

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