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**Judgment within the game: The effect of the “other” on the
moral decision-making process**

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City University of New York, 1992

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JUDGMENT WITHIN THE GAME: THE
EFFECT OF THE "OTHER" ON THE MORAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Psychology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

JUDGMENT WITHIN THE GAME: THE EFFECT OF THE "OTHER" ON THE MORAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS

by Michael Glassman

Adviser: Professor Dalton Miller-Jones

This study attempts to combine the particularistic view of moral judgments with the more universal view of some type of ontological development of morality as a human process. Moral decision making is seen here as a co-determined phenomenon. That is that ecological circumstances combine with ontologically developed perspective taking abilities in a dialectical fashion to form particular justice systems for individuals in specific situations. This dissertation attempts to place this idea within the moral literature and research field. This is accompanied by a study that attempts to explore two important aspects of this idea. First, that while the perspective taking ability of individuals remains constant, their particular justice systems change according to the ecological circumstances of a particular problem. And second, that the ecological circumstances of individuals has some affect on the type of

decisions they make in different moral situations. Adolescents from three different settings (an inner-city youth center, an urban foster home, and a suburban private school) were presented with three ecologically distinct moral dilemmas (i.e., personal, community, and society). The participants were asked to choose a course of action in response to each of the dilemmas and justify it. The justifications were analyzed in terms of ontological level of response and ecological level of response. The first analysis suggests that while perspective taking ability remained relatively constant for the three populations, the ecological level on which these individuals developed their justification was dependent on the specific circumstances of the dilemma with which they were confronted. This is supported by both quantitative results and a qualitative review of the actual transcripts. The second analysis suggests that the ecological setting also has an affect on the type of justification the participants used in responding to the dilemma. This is second analysis in supplemented by an interpretive inquiry of the ecological settings that attempts to explore the reasons behind these differences.

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Chapter I. Introduction

"...apart from our relations to other people, there can be no moral necessity." J. Piaget (1965) pg. 196

The above quote by Piaget points to the idea that moral development is somehow connected with the socio-culturally developed ecological setting in which the individual exists; in particular the ecological settings that are created by the labyrinth of personal, social and community relationships that each person must deal with over a life time. Yet despite this axiom for the focus of moral development, and despite Piaget's later emphasis on process over product, much of the research concerning moral development has concentrated on content, on the search for moral codes. In particular there has been an emphasis on understanding morality in terms of general themes for action such as recognition of an independent justice system for the larger society, social contract, and a universal moral code of behavior. The manifestation of these themes is in the recognition of specific moral codes concerning how an individual participates in society. An underlying assumption of much of the research has been that certain moral codes transcend cultural boundaries, and can be assumed to hold for all people under varying conditions and contexts.

The focus on content may not only have slighted the study of process in moral development, but also may have ignored content problems of those who live outside the moral parameters of the researchers. Judgments of moral reasoning based on inappropriate assumptions about the content of moral codes or principles can lead the investigator to misunderstand the person's thinking and therefore his/her developmental level. One wonders how these moral theorists can pronounce one type of morality more highly developed than another. Are the moral codes of one people inherently superior to the moral codes of another? And who is it that determines this superiority? There is another, compelling side to the discussion. Can we argue, for instance, that there is development, during which the individual becomes progressively more complex, in all other manner of thought, but not in morality? And if we do accept that there is development in moral thought, doesn't it make sense (from an evolutionary perspective) that what develops later is in some way more adaptive than what it has replaced?

Among the more important issues concerning the study of moral decision making processes include exactly what it is that develops and why it develops. This study will attempt to start developing a model for understanding moral development based upon the notion that there is a broad cognitive development, that is endemic to the human condition, and that this developing cognitive ability

intersects with individual ecological circumstances to create individually generated moral codes. This idea attempts to take into account both the ontological development of moral reasoning systems and the social aspects of particularized, and often dynamic, moral codes.

The Question of Morality

The question of what constitutes morality and how it is acquired has perplexed philosophers for generations. Shweder, Turiel and Much (1980) break down intuitive moral theories into two basic camps; the universalists and the relativists. The universalists believe that the structure, if not the content, of morality is universal, and that basic similarities will be found in the way people reason about moral issues across cultures. Underlying this assumption of some type of similarities is the search for some form of moral logic or generalization that will, to one degree or another, reveal a moral code that all would feel comfortable following. Shweder et. al. (1980) divided the universalists into two groups: deductivists and inductivists. Deductive universalists believe that from a generalizable, universal process one would be able to deduce what should be the substance of any moral code. The logic of justice leads to a consensus of how one is supposed to react in ethical situations. The universal aspect rests in the developmental sequence of the reasoning about moral content. The

difficulty for the deductive universalist position seems to be that there is no pre-supposition of content, but at the same time there is the belief that there is a universal moral logic; and if all people follow the same logic conclusively to the end they will all find themselves in the same place, thus positing, in an a priori manner, certain well developed moral codes of conduct.

The universal inductivists argue that there are certain rules of action which are universally necessary for species-wide goals. The child, through experience, is taught certain prescriptive judgments in childhood: these judgments are distinguished as arbitrary or non-arbitrary. The non-arbitrary judgments provide a basis for inducing a general moral/conduct principle and become the basis for the moral code.

The moral relativists believe that moral codes are tacitly communicated by individual cultures or groups, and that the moral codes of one group do not necessarily bear a relationship with those of another. The moral codes are strictly the result of human transmission. This means that it is possible that there could be no similarities whatsoever between the moral codes of two diverse societies. It is the culture itself which declares what is important and what should be considered prescriptive behavior. According to Shweder et. al. (1980) the relativists do believe that there are general formal principles, such as

obligatoriness, generalizability and importance, which underlie most moral codes; but it is obvious that without recognition of such general principles discussion of moral codes becomes academic. The question this raises for the relativists is why these universal principles exist in the first place. Are they prescriptive, formed out of necessity for the survival of the species? If so, doesn't the difference between the relativists and the inductive universalists become one of degree rather than kind?

The dichotomy between the universalists and the relativists has helped to create a void in understanding how moral codes are learned and/or acquired. There are simply too many discrepancies, when one explores widely varying cultures, to accept any strong version of the universalist position; yet the relativist position leaves the study of morality vague and dissatisfying. One alternative is to bring together the two camps into a unified explanation of how children, and people in general, come to learn moral codes.

The universalist view is dominated by the structuralist position of Piaget and the person who elaborated on the skeleton of moral development Piaget created, Lawrence Kohlberg. In my view what is important to remember about Piaget (1932) and the later versions of Kohlberg (Kohlberg, Levine & Hewer 1983) is that they were stressing the development of structures over content. What was structural

for these men was the ontogenetic development of justice per se, rather than any particular system of fairness. For Piaget the development of a justice system is directly related to the child's perspective taking ability. The child moves from thinking that rules are omniscient and arbitrary to a system of cooperation among the players of the game. The child is moving from an egocentric system of justice to a self-other system of justice: this system is self-constructed in that it is the result of re-equilibrations in response to changing relationships. Piaget (1967) continued throughout his career to state the urgency of understanding the actual process of the creation of cognitive structures.

Kohlberg (1969) expanded the ontogenesis of the self-other system to six stages; each of the stages has been elaborated on in terms of the justice system it creates, but at the core of the stage development is the greater understanding of the self in relation to the other in terms of the rules of society. This is why his later theory stressed that its fundamental concern was with the study of justice reasoning per se and not with the content of the moral domain (Kohlberg et. al. 1983). In this later work he defends his theory as one which must be understood in terms its attempt to rationally reconstruct the human's knowledge development in justice reasoning. Kohlberg seems to be aligning himself with the rationalists, such as Bartlett,

who were more concerned with the development of structures inside the head rather than the content that occupied that structure. Kohlberg's theory is an attempt to understand the logic, or maybe more appropriately from his rationalist position, to understand the justice schemes that people use to make moral decisions and the way that they go through transformations.

Kohlberg (1983), in his redefinition of this theory, expresses an affinity for Habermas' (1983) discussion of hermeneutics in the social sciences. Habermas, following Hans-Georg Gadamer, sees the interpretation of data as a process in which the interpreter and the person attempting to express something about the world come to an agreement. In How to Interview (Colby, Kohlberg, Gibbs, Lieberman 1983) Kohlberg expresses a similar desire to understand what the interviewee is saying from the interviewee's point of view. The interpreter needs to try and understand what the interviewee is saying in terms of the interviewee's own system of rationality. In other words, the interpreter is attempting to recognize the justice system of the subject within the separate horizon of that individual. The horizon was a concept developed by Gadamer (1975) to explain the way an individual's understanding of the world was bounded by his/her experience.

Kohlberg's notion that his construct is not value-neutral may pose some theoretical problems for his use of

hermeneutics. He believes that the interpreter can stand inside of the role of the other, or take an empathic stand in relation to the other's horizon. Even though Kohlberg dismisses a Dilthey (1975) type of reconstruction in favor of Habermas' hermeneutic objectivism, the empathic mode seems to be essentially the direction his method takes. The danger with taking an empathic pose is that there is no way that the interpreter can escape his/her own horizon. A situation is created where the interpretation becomes more of a recasting of the data offered by the other in terms of the horizon of the interpreter. So instead of searching for the logic of the other by acknowledging that the other lives in a separate horizon, the interpreter is trying to lay claim to the other's horizon, thus potentially and probably skewing any data in favor of the interpreter's own horizon.

Kohlberg attempts to deal with this apparent problem by accepting that his theory is not value neutral; that it is a normative-ethical system in which certain reactions are seen as being more moral and certain reactions are seen as being less moral. He adopts Habermas' contention that certain endeavors can drop the postulate of value-neutrality. Habermas claimed that the nature of a value-laden theory is different from a theory based purely on ontogenesis. Kohlberg sees his theory of ontogenesis (based on perspective taking) as a check for his normative-ethical theory (e.g. that people move to higher levels because they

naturally want to achieve a higher level of moral development.) The ontogenetic theory is primarily psychological, the normative-ethical theory is primarily philosophical. This way the normative-ethical theory can be falsified if the theory of ontogenesis can be falsified, but it cannot be shown to be valid if the theory ontogenetic theory is shown as valid.

Unfortunately the underlying process in the creation of cognitive/moral structures has led many structurally based moral theorists to assume that there must be some universal content: indeed, the structural line of thinking has often been presented as if a well developed universal moral code was a "fait accompli". Kohlberg's (1983) claim that there are certain "normative-ethical" standards of adequacy which allow a person to take a position concerning the moral rationality of reason being interpreted has to assume some type of universal code as a "final destination" of thought (the deductivist universalist position described earlier). This necessitates raising the difficult questions of what is the standard? Who creates it and why? Is the standard a Platonic vision of ethics in which there is an existing perfect form we are always trying to attain? It is in this context that Kohlberg's sub-stage 6 has often been cast. Or does it exist as some Kantian type of thought space, an abstract thought category to which we add the relevance of the real world? If so we may have an innate understanding

of morality just as we have an innate understanding of time and space: basic morality is relegated to an a priori Kantian category that transcends experience. Or is this standard simply a skeleton, the same skeleton that Piaget set up early in his career, relying simply on the perspective taken by the person: a skeleton on which one can fit almost any moral skin.

Kohlberg has flirted with all three ways of thinking. He has shown himself to be in the Platonic tradition that justice is primary and guides society (1981). In his original formulation of the theory he showed himself to be something of a neo-Kantian, seeing justice as a categorical imperative and as a universalizable point of view any human being could and should use in a moral dilemma. And in his identification with Habermas (1983) he has shown himself to be primarily interested in the ontogenetic skeleton. Despite his desire to remain on the level of the ontogenesis of process, Kohlberg's universalist penchant cannot seem to keep him from using the ontogenesis of moral logic to look for that single moral destination to which this logic will naturally lead. Kohlberg (1981) admits that this is as much a result of personal bias in terms of how a moral theory should be presented as it is a result of theoretical acuity. So in spite of his the recognition of the primacy of process, at times Kohlberg's theory seems trapped within content. Kohlberg has admitted to confounding content and

process in his early work (1983). But he claims the newer version of his theory actually has two components, already discussed: social perspective taking (which he deems to be ontogenetic) and prescriptive moral systems.

Variations in Moral Thinking

Despite Kohlberg's attempts to "assimilate and accommodate" his theory, there has been a good deal of trouble among researchers who claim that the theory slights cross-cultural groups, minorities and women. They question how there can be so many diverse forms of moral thought and action if moral codes are acquired through a universal logic. Gilligan (1982), for instance, has claimed that Kohlberg's theory did not deal with dilemmas that involved special relationships and obligations. In interviewing women on the subject of abortion she found that particularistic care entered into the decision making process of most of the women. She questioned how Kohlberg could posit a system of generalized fairness when special relationships had such a strong effect on moral decision making. Gilligan felt that this was particularly true for women who were raised to nurture and have particular caring relationships.

Murphy and Gilligan (1980) claimed that there is a difference between the moral absolutism that they felt was inherent in Kohlberg's theoretical structure, and the type

of contextual reasoning actually used by adults in the solving of moral dilemmas; what Kohlberg refers to as particularistic reasoning. Their feeling is that according to Kohlberg's theory, moral development for most people would stop, or at least reach a state of atrophy, in the late teens at level 4 or 5: but actually adult reasoning advances by becoming more dialectical and contextually relative than exclusively formal. They cite Meacham's (1975) dialectical view of moral judgment in which context determines if a single judgment should be considered as moral or as immoral. They believe that W.B. Perry's (1968) contextual relativism, in which there is no such thing as a context free moral judgment, is the start of a new period of adult responsibility. The moral judgment of adults is based more on particularistic thinking because adults are more capable of taking individual situations into account.

Murphy and Gilligan (1980) believe that this helps to solve the mystery of the seeming regression often shown by individuals when they entered adulthood. Intelligent adolescents can figure out the general principles that society endorses, but they cannot easily apply them to real situations. They call for a differentiation between absolute principles, often perceived as more advanced, and contextualized principled thinking which is actually more advanced. This differentiation, combined with Kohlberg's earlier separation of the psychological and the

philosophical, creates three types of moral development that need to be recognized: the psychological theory of ontogenesis, the philosophical theory of particular universal moralities, and the sociological theory of the personalized, particularized morality.

Kohlberg argues that there are not two separate moralities. Rather he feels that special relationships are "supplementary" (pg. 21, Kohlberg 1983) to decisions about general fairness. Kohlberg does not seem to be addressing a basic point in Gilligan's argument: that for all but the most artificial of moral situations some type of "special" relationship probably plays an important role. But Murphy and Gilligan's contention that the adult progresses to a dialectical, contextual stage is has some difficulties: an underlying tenet in this type of thinking is that adolescents see things in terms of absolutes and their progression in thinking in terms of the other is in terms of absolute principles. This line of reasoning seems antithetical to the original ontogenetic framework developed by Piaget (1932). In the first section The Moral Judgment of the Child Piaget explores the way in which children develop and adhere to the rules of a marble game. It is possible to view the marble game as a metaphor for almost any social group and the explanations of how these children deal with the rule systems as explanations of how they might deal with other socially developed rule systems. In the

Piagetian perspective it is in the period of late childhood and adolescence that the human moves away from the notion of omniscience and absolutes and starts to develop rules and procedures in terms of "the game" (e.g., even if early forms of formal operations are considered egoistic, the absolutes are still based on a form of reasoning that recognizes the existence of the whole game, that is all the participants in the game). A conscious, dialectical approach to moral thought may not begin until adulthood, but a contextualized relativism probably effects, and may take precedence in, adolescent moral thought. Special relationships may not form their own morality, but there are strong arguments against their being merely supplemental, merely shading general decisions about fairness. It may make sense to view these special relationships as a major component of, instead of ancillary to, the individuals development of moral codes.

Shweder (1982) adds his own point of view to the controversy by questioning not only whether moral knowledge is self-constructed or other-constructed, but also the degree to which it is rational or non-rational. He claims that all logically possible combinations of all four exist. In introducing non-rational forms of moral knowledge Shweder is claiming that there are moral judgments that are not a fact of nature or prescribed by reason; they are symbolic virtues. He uses the moral imperative of not appearing naked in public as an example of this type of non-rational

morality. By moral imperative Shweder seems to be saying that decisions that involve such actions will be judged on a moral scale as either moral, immoral, or amoral. Another case of a nonrational, or arational, moral imperative might be found in the indignation that is often shown in the United States over flag burning. Both examples are based on the shared body of beliefs of a society, or a certain segment of society.

Shweder is asserting that people accept ideas such as these as moral imperatives without ever questioning their meaning or going through a reasoning process of justice. Shweder's position on non-rationality might be correct, but is too narrow to do damage to Kohlberg's purely rationalist position. The decision to participate in a particular segment of society, or group, and accept that group's rules can in itself be seen as a rational decision (i.e., based on judgments derived through taking the perspective of the "other"): it can be argued that the person becomes an actual member of a group only when s/he realizes that the rules of the group are what fosters continuation of the group, and if the group is to survive, in the same way it has been surviving, certain virtues must be accepted without question. The acceptance of what Shweder terms non-rational virtues might actually be part of the higher levels of justice reasoning. It is probably not on the same level of reasoning as the child who accepts omniscient rules. Is it

fair to call a judgment that is not based on rational thought on the surface, but which has underpinnings based on a highly developed sense of reason, non-rational?

Shweder seems to argue against this line of thinking himself (1986) in "Divergent Rationalities". In this article he takes the position that it is possible to perceive rationalities in terms of culture. To help illustrate his point he uses Whorf's example of people's reactions to the sounds "queep" and "deep". Whorf was attempting to explore the way in which reactions to sounds, which on the surface seem to be universal, can actually be controlled by culture. He presented both sounds to English and non-English speakers and asked how they reacted to them. When presented with the nonsense word "queep" all people reacted to it as if it connoted feelings such as sharp, fast and narrow. The word "deep" produced the same meanings for all people, except for those who spoke English: English speakers have the opposite reaction to the word. Historical meaning completely overrides "objective" sound qualities. Shweder believes that Whorf's observation depicts three important points about the relationship between subjective and objective states: subjective states can have object like qualities; subjective states are not only personal but can be found at group, societal and universal levels; and subjective states about things can be decisive for how we respond. The argument has already been made that our

recognition of subjective states may be part of a rational process which allows us to see ourselves as entrenched members of a specific group. The fact that individuals so readily take historically based subjective states as objective may show that there is an underlying rational development that precedes the acceptance of subjective states.

The focus on subjective states leads Shweder to argue against the objective universal moral qualities that you find in Kohlberg's post-conventional reasoning. What people consider objectively imperative behavior in one society may be very different from what people consider objective imperatives in another society. To illustrate his point Shweder compares a typical "American" outlook on moral obligations with the moral obligations of a group of Brahmin Hindus from the south of India. The belief in moral imperatives that each group holds, and that they consider objective, is actually based on subjective premises developed through the history of the group. The Brahmins believe in transmigration, that nature is just, and that current differences between people exist within a context of the larger cycle of life and death. The "American" view sees each person as an "individual" and as a builder of, rather than a transient player within, the social order.

Shweder's point seems to be that the reasoning process can bring two moral thinkers from two separate societies to

two separate "objective" moral truths: he refers to this in his title as "divergent rationalities". This is because rational thought is based on subjective, social/historical premises. The same thought processes, based on justice per se, which have their core in two different premises, can wind up with two very different outcomes.

This idea of divergent rationalities is important when one confronts Turiel's dichotomy concerning the decision making process about rules. Turiel (1983) makes the argument that there are actually two different types of rules systems on which people base their decisions about how to act and react in social situations. There are decisions based on moral thought and there are decisions based on social conventional thought. The difference lies in how the rule systems guiding the decision making processes are derived. The rule systems for social conventions are defined completely by the individuals participating in the social system. It is a shared knowledge of the social group and is validated, and can be altered, by consensus. Moral prescriptions on the other hand are not the result of a societal consensus; they are instead intrinsic to the social relationship. For instance, the rule involving killing another human-being comes directly from the social relationship; we recognize the pain involved in the killing, no matter what the societal rule, along with our own realization of what it would be like if we were killed, and

it is this, over and above any social canon, that leads to the moral canon that killing another human being is wrong.

Turiel's research on decision making processes attempts to show that people, from a very young age, separate rules determined by the social system from prescriptions based on issues outside of the social system. He cites studies which indicate, across ages, that obedience to institutional regulations and existing societal expectations involve different considerations from canons based on concerns for justice, harm and rights (Turiel 1983). He used two events to illustrate the dichotomy he was proposing. In event A a child pushes a playmate off a swing and starts hitting him because the child wants that swing at that moment. In event B all the children come into a classroom and say "Good morning, Mrs. Jones" to the teacher, except for one child who comes in and says "Good morning, Mary". In event A there are intrinsic moral features, and children, when asked about the event say that it is wrong, even when there is no rule against it. It is inherently wrong to hurt somebody. In event B the rule is defined by the social context. If there is no rule against calling a teacher by her first name then there is nothing inherently wrong about it. The source of a decision concerning event A is not based on the standard of the group or society, whereas the decision about event B is based on such a subjective standard.

Nucci (1981) did an experiment in which students in

grades 2,5,8,11 and college were asked if certain actions were wrong even in the absence of a rule. There were three types of action: moral (e.g., hitting, selfishness), social convention (e.g., chewing gum in class, addressing teacher by first name) and personal (e.g., watching television on a sunny day, keeping correspondence in private). Almost every student answered positive to the question when it concerned a moral action. Almost nobody responded that actions were wrong when it concerned a social convention, and even fewer when it concerned a personal action.

On the surface Turiel's argument for a dichotomy between social system rules and prescriptions from concerns transcending the current social conventions makes a good deal of sense. However this dichotomy may be based less on something inherent in the action itself, and more on whether the action has been viewed in terms of a justice principle per se, or "self-other" form of reasoning. The argument can be made that any action can be seen as a social convention or as a moral prescription, depending on the reasoning offered behind that action. Almost any action might be defined as moral if a high value is placed on the reasoning process by the society or group in which the individual is participating; and almost any action can be defined as a social convention. Take as an example the act of killing in a war. Turiel (1983) claims that there is something inherent in the act of killing another human-being that

causes the person to view the action as "moral": but there have been numerous accounts of soldiers treating the killing done in battle as the rule, something that is done without much thought. On the other hand the action of keeping one's gun clean, something that might at other times be labeled a social convention, is treated as a moral action, because the reasoning behind the action of keeping the gun clean is highly valued (e.g., If you do not keep your gun clean you may not be able to come to the aid of your compatriot on the battlefield, and how would you feel if you were the one who was left without help?).

The dichotomy between societal rules or conventions and moral codes then may not be in the actions themselves, but in the reasoning, that is or is not explicated, behind the action. It is proposed here that rather than a dichotomy existing between the moral action and the social convention, there is a continuum of moral reasoning for each action in which the justice reasoning for any action goes from highly valued and well explicated to little or no value and opaque. The continuum itself is set by the social context, and it is flexible precisely because there are divergent rationalities. Those actions for which the justice reasoning is well explicated in that context will be viewed as moral actions, and those actions for which the justice reasoning is opaque will be viewed as social conventions.

The problem of attempting to reconcile the universal

ontogenetic sequences with particularistic justice systems is compounded by the problem that a Piagetian program presupposes an invariant structural sequence. Lickona (1969) has claimed that as long as there is an invariant developmental sequence (presumably ontogenetic) then there is no contradiction whatsoever with Piaget's original theory. Therefore social variations can easily fit into Piaget's framework, as long as they are not regressive. However, a good deal of what seems to be regression has been found in moral development, especially among adolescents. This has led the rationalist researchers to attempt to be more specific about moral development and how it actually occurs in order to deal with the Piagetian notion of invariance. Levine (1979) has outlined three different ways of dealing with the social regression - ontogenetic invariance question: there are two types of displacement theories which have been proposed by Kohlberg and Turiel, and there is Levine's own non-displacement theory.

Kohlberg and Kramer (1969), in order to account for the regressions in moral reasoning they found in late adolescence, postulated what Levin terms an additive theory in which the more advanced stage supplements but does not completely squelch the existing stage. Kohlberg and Kramer's argument is that the reason the person is usually (or naturally) at the more advanced stage is because, in Kohlberg's scheme, the human has a natural pre-disposition

to choose the highest stage available to him/her. The reason for the seeming regressions, when the person actually chooses the less advanced stage which is still available, is because periods of disequilibrium create an aura of confusion and causes the person to revert back to the less developmentally advanced part of the whole.

Turiel (1974) postulated that earlier moral stages are completely displaced by later moral stages. There is no "still existing" earlier part of the whole to return to during a period of disequilibrium. (Although, he does believe, along with Kohlberg, that it is the periods of disequilibrium which cause the seeming regressions.) Turiel calls this type of development, in which higher levels of cognitive functioning do not completely displace lower levels of cognitive functioning, but simply subordinate them until pressures of the situation may place them in the dominant role, the "layer-cake" notion of development. He believes this type of development has certain conceptual difficulties in relation to the transformational and irreversible nature of the structural, developmental theories.

Turiel's own notion of development is that the new elements of moral thinking are assimilated, and not added, to the existing stage, to create a completely new stage. The new elements are the result of conflict causing a disequilibrium: moral development is caused by the

individual's interaction with the environment. The seeming regression occurs during periods of conflict and disequilibrium. During periods of confusion there is a de-differentiation, or what Turiel more specifically calls a disorganization, within the thinking of the individual. The seeming regression back to a prior stage is actually a disorganization of the current stage as the individual attempts to reorganize into a more advanced stage. Turiel goes on to state that in order to understand the stage transition there must be an analysis of both the mental processes of the individual that lead to the transition and the environmental characteristics that cause change.

Levine (1979) proposes his own non-displacement theory based on an additive inclusive process. In this process higher processes include parts of lower processes, but do not displace them. Levine feels that this explanation both explains the regression to lower stages and helps to make the researcher aware of the effect of the social environment on moral reasoning. So more and less complex structures can exist independently of each other in a person's mind, and occur concurrently in two different social situations. This allows two explanations for variations in moral reasoning: 1) disequilibrium associated with attaining a more complex structure and 2) the resolution to use one moral structure for one type of dilemma and another moral structure for another type of dilemma. If a person, faced with a moral

dilemma feels s/he does not have the appropriate means, based on the attained structural level, to deal with the situation, s/he must somehow adapt a new means, based on a different structure. Each new moral structure exists in what Levin calls a "compartmentalized" mode in the mind of the individual. This allows for moral consistency in certain types of situations.

Rather than viewing a moral response as being solely dependent on the cognitive abilities of the individual, one might want to take into account the effect of the particular situation. Different types of moral responses may exist simultaneously within the individual; and a regression may be more the result in change of situation than change in individual.

Levine's thesis fits in well with Piaget's more functionally oriented later work, in particular his book on possibility. In his book Possibility and Necessity Volume I (1987) a key idea was that operations are goal oriented and context bound and that the synthesis between possibility and necessity might be context bound. Any time a human-being is presented with a new situation or problem in an unfamiliar environment s/he must either fall back on possibilities (and operational structures) created for very different ecological settings or create procedural schemes, based on the new presentative schemes, which will allow him/her to overcome the limitations of that particular problem

(Glassman 1989). Presumably this would be relatively easy for situations that are the same or close to those already encountered. The person would be able to use intact operations, or at the very least have little problem creating procedural schemes. But the more foreign the situation, the further the presentative schemes are from presentative schemes already encountered, the more difficult the task of creating procedural schemes. Taken in the context of Levine's theory of non-displacement in moral development this could mean that people create moral structures to deal with certain moral dilemmas. They retain those moral structures until some type of social conflict convinces them that their moral structures are not appropriate for that particular situation. This might cause people to synthesize existing moral structures to deal with the new situation. The closer the moral dilemma to other dilemmas already encountered the easier it is to create a moral structure, based on how possibilities set up in terms of the original dilemma. The more alien the dilemma is to anything the person has encountered, the more difficult to create a moral structure.

Morality then would be as tied to the dilemma, and the individual's experience with that dilemma, as it is tied to the cognitive level of that individual. The moral dilemmas an individual confronts, and their contexts, are contingent on personal and social history. It can be argued that it is

impossible to define morality in the individual without an understanding of these histories. Justifications that seem the result of cognitive regressions may actually be the result of varying experience.

There seems to be at least two dominating themes in the study of transition in moral development: large transitions occur during adolescence, and these transitions are somehow spurred by interaction in peer centered groups. Turiel (1974), in talking about late adolescence as a time of transformation, sites some of the many theorists, among them Erikson (1950, 1968) and Sanford (1962), who have proposed that adolescence is the time of life during which there is much conflict and the individual goes through a period of ego formation. Lewin (1951) has developed something of an explanation for why it is that adolescents might be a population prone to transition, or maybe more specifically, change. He described the adolescent as a "marginal" person. It is the social position of a person inside or outside of a group that helps to determine, to a great deal, his/her life-space region; it is this region that helps to determine quality of immediate surroundings, possibilities for future actions, and actions that should be taken in terms of reaching a goal. Conflicts occur when forces from the different groups an individual belongs to come into contact with each other. This is particularly important for people in "marginal" positions; that is people who are not securely

tied to one group, but are in a position where they are on the outer fringes of many groups. Adolescents fall into this marginal position because, as their perspective taking abilities increase, they are between what is expected of them as children, where they follow rules without question, and what is expected of them as adults, where they have usually chosen a specific group around which to coalesce their identity.

Many studies of moral thinking and its development have dealt with interaction among adolescents and/or young adults (although this may, at least partially, be the result of undergraduates forming a large and easily reached subject group for university researchers). Berkowitz and Gibbs (1983) did an experiment with undergraduate students in which dyadic pairs were formed and over a period of two months had four discussions (and a warm up discussion) about moral dilemmas. They found that transactions, and more specifically operational transactions in which the moral reasoning of one member of the dyad "operates" on the moral reasoning of the other member, were crucial to moral development.

Maitland and Goldman (1974) did an experiment in which they had three predictions: 1) that participation in peer group discussions elevates the level of individual moral judgments; 2) that the moral judgment of the entire group is higher than the moral judgment of group members when tested

individually before entering the group; and 3) the greater the social pressure to agree with group consensus the greater the level of change in individual group members. They used thirty-six eleventh and twelfth graders for their study. Personalized vignettes based on Kohlberg's moral judgment dilemmas were used to test the individual students. They were then placed in one of three categories: either with a group that was asked to reach a consensus, with a group that was asked only to have open ended discussion, or with no group. Neither the students in the open ended group nor those who were not put into groups showed any significant movement, but participation in the consensus oriented group did result in a significant increase in moral judgment. Maitland and Goldman maintain that it is the specific nature of the interaction that caused the movement.

This specific interaction is based on the group creating a particular moral code for the type of dilemma in question. The particular moral code of the group has a strong effect on the thinking of the adolescent individuals within the group. The Kohlbergian vignettes, even when personalized, create a very specific, and often not particularly relevant, type or moral dilemma that must be dealt with through some type of moral code. Glick (1985) has stated that all social transactions should be studied in terms of each particular transaction at each particular point in time. This would include moral transactions: each

group's consensus of a moral code is based on the particular place and time in which the group exists. And any individual who participates in the group in which s/he takes the perspective of the other member(s) of the group will show movement towards the moral codes developed by that group.

It may be important in the study of moral development to recall what Damon (1977) termed the "worms eye view" of the person (in Damon's case the child) going through development. For Damon, in order to understand a child's social behavior we need to understand the subjective meaning of the experience of the child. This is essentially the same as Kohlberg's hermeneutical perspective. Durkin (1961) found that of a comparison in responses to different types of moral dilemmas, a group of children made significantly different kinds of judgments for the different types of behaviors. Durkin claims her study indicates that creating a justified answer to moral dilemmas in various situations is affected by the particulars of each situation. A person makes a decision based on a system of justice in light of the particular circumstances, and that decision is not necessarily representative of what judgments in other situations might be.

The group that the person belongs to, and the environment that this groups exists within is of great importance to an individual's moral code. Most researchers

seem to agree with this premise in theory, and yet in practice the group is often quickly translated into a culture and society independent variable and dealt with at that level. But groups can exist whenever two or more people get together for any reason. Piaget (1932/1965) points to Bovet's realization that a rule-creating group needs at least two individuals interacting. Justice has been defined as dealing with analogous cases in a similar manner, and dealing with different cases in a different manner. But what is analogous or similar is defined by the group (Shweder 1982). The universal ontogenetic development of justice per se, based on the development of perspective taking, does not imply comparable content across cultures, or even within cultures. There may be social systems and/or groups within the larger cultures that develop rule systems based on their own needs.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) explicated a system in which culture or society was actually a series of concentric circles made up of groups: the groups were generally defined as the micro-system of the family, the exo-system of the community, the meso-system of the society. Two competing groups within a culture, within a community, within a family, may develop two competing justice systems. For instance in the Indian society the Hindu religion has developed a very different morality from the Moslem religion.

If people do base their moral principles on some "type" of group, or develop moral codes according to the needs of a group, one of the major questions involved in the acquisition of moral development is on which group will the individual tend to base his/her moral principles and why. The groups might be chosen in terms of the needs it fulfills for the person in terms of what Lewin (1951) called the lifespace. The groups have what Lewin called a positive or negative valence, drawing individuals to them or pushing them away based on the intensity of need. And different groups may have different valences in different situations. The individual in general, and the adolescent in particular, may actually move in and out of groups, with different groups possessing different pulls at different times. An advanced state of moral development in terms of justice per se might even make it easier for the adolescent to accept and incorporate the particular justice systems of each group. While a part of the group, the adolescent sees likenesses and differences in terms of that group.

The group itself is a product of its creation, purpose and history. Scribner's (1985) explication of Vygotsky's uses of history are useful in this instance. Each group has its own ontogenesis, developing its own moral systems of what is right and wrong in the context of what it deems proper to pay attention to and what it deems proper to overlook. Actions are justified as long as they are

consistent within the group. The group itself will promote actions that will promote its own existence in the present environment. The ontogenesis of the adolescent, who is just beginning to recognize his/her position as part of a group/community that must cooperate interacts with the needs of the particular group creating what may be a high level of moral logic along with almost any possible content.

The fact that group interaction has an effect on moral content seems to have been documented, for the most part, in terms of "positive reactions". But many of these groups were created for the express purpose of creating a "value laden" response which would reflect progress in moral logic. It seems obvious that even though moral logic guides the application of moral content (i.e., perspective taking abilities determine the moral content chosen), moral content is not a definitive, or even a good measuring stick for moral logic (i.e., the same espoused "moral code" can be based on different levels of perspective taking). There needs to be an acknowledgment that justice per se comes in all shapes and forms. There also needs to be an understanding of the possibly changing nature of moral content, especially for people in stages of transition and conflict, such as adolescents and other marginal populations; and the ability of those with a well developed sense of moral logic to incorporate different justice systems into their thinking. Finally there needs to be a

greater recognition of the source of moral content. It should not be assumed that all people with a well developed moral logic automatically approach justice on the same basis as the dominant culture. Different groups within cultures may maintain their own justice systems, based on their history, and it may be these justice systems that the individual decides to incorporate into his/her lifespace. In heterogenous societies individuals often interact with any number of rule-creating groups during the course of normal activity. Not only may individuals in different groups have different justice systems, but single individuals may move in and out of competing justice systems of different groups, depending on the particulars of the situation.

Posing The Question

The broad question is how do people in general, and adolescents in particular, develop moral codes. There is the ontogenetic, what Kohlberg (1983) termed the psychological, aspect of moral development. This ontogenesis may be basic to human evolution and forms the expectation that certain features of the moral code will develop no matter what the environmental conditions; or principles underlying moral codes may emanate subconsciously from participation in the human community. Unfortunately

the question of whether certain aspects of morality are inherent cannot be resolved through scientific experimentation. Rather than disregard such an important feature of moral development completely, the ontogenetic aspect of this paper relies on the broadest, most clearly defined theory of the development of human knowledge available; Piaget's research program. In attempting to use such an enormous corpus of data and theory it is probably best to concentrate on features of development that Piaget applied directly to moral reasoning. So the basic development of moral codes is seen, in this paper, as going from thinking only about oneself and the needs of the self in terms of "the rules", to thinking about rules in terms of the needs of the other and the "whole game". This refers again to Piaget's (1932/1965) marble game as metaphor for social groups. Children begin accepting rules and laws as omniscient commands that exist of their own accord. These rules take on more of a resonance when the individual becomes capable of recognizing the "whole game" or whole group as a thing that must continue for the benefit of all concerned, and rules are created and recognized to that end. As an addendum there is Kohlberg's "in between" stage of ontogenetic development in which the person is able to think about the self and the other, but not think about both in terms of the "whole game" (i.e. all possible players or participants). The reason this retains the status of

addendum is well documented by Murphy and Gilligan (1980): sometimes particular circumstances and ecological forces make the person and the other, rather than society in general, the "whole game".

There is also the more particular development of individual moral codes; what Kohlberg labeled the philosophical and considered the value-laden aspect of moral development. As argued earlier individual, or particular, morality may be under the effect of the current environment. This would mean, in a sense, that the rules, the game, and the possible participants are all determined by particular circumstances. So just as a cat, under certain conditions, might protect a rat instead of attacking it as prey, as part of a normal, developmental process, anything might be possible in the development of human moral codes, even when we take the basic ontogenesis discussed above as a given. The psychological and philosophical aspects of development are inextricably linked.

There are two pieces of the puzzle that need to be dealt with simultaneously in the study of moral development. The first is what ontogenetic level of justice per se the individual is reasoning on, and the second is what group oriented ecological level the individual might be basing their reasoning on (i.e., at what group level is the individual choosing to use moral logic; which other(s) is chosen as the "other" perspective in the determination of

the imperatives of moral content). To attempt to define one without the other could easily skew any result. So the first question this study is attempting to deal with is: what is the relationship between the justice reasoning per se and the "game" or the "group" or the ecological "system" which the individual is using in terms of this particular reasoning. It can be argued that a plurality of moral codes exist for the individual to use to define the situation: the particular code chosen depends on the group to which that individual belongs at the moment.

Valsiner (1988) offers two important constructs for understanding the actions of individuals in particular ecological settings: the Zone of Free Movement (ZFM), which he borrowed from Lewin's notion of lifespace, and the Zone of Promoted Action (ZPA). The ZFM defines the boundaries of where a person can take his/her action. The ZPA is a construct created by Valsiner to help delimit the ZFM. That is, in certain ecological settings certain activities are going to be promoted. These activities are limited, and in a sense designed, by the boundaries of the ZFM and, in essence, are designed to help perpetuate the ecological setting. In a Koranic school, for instance, the ZPA is one of rote memorization, because this helps perpetuate that particular tradition. Each group will have its own versions of the ZPA, but the dominant group maintains a strong hold on the ZFM: the ZPA must fall within the ZFM in order to

have any effect on the individual. The question is; how fluid the Zone of Free Movement is in relation to the Zone of Promoted Action? For adults who have created an at least somewhat stable identity for themselves, the ZFM is defined at the community and/or the societal level. That is, a ZPA is only relevant if it falls within the guidelines created (and recreated) by the community. Adolescents, on the other hand, may be in a position where their Zone of Free Movement can be heavily influenced at the group level: for these young adults, the individual, the group, the community, and the society are all probably inter-related and, at some points, indistinguishable. This means that the Zone of Promoted Action of the group, which is created by the group to perpetuate the survival of that group, becomes the Zone of Free Movement for the individual.

There are two major questions which this study attempts to entertain. First, when the individual is confronted with a moral dilemma how does the mandate of the group, that the individual feels a kinship for in terms of that dilemma, effect the moral reasoning of the individual in that particular situation? Second, when the individual is confronted with a moral dilemma how do his/her ecological surroundings and socio-historical development help to form that individual's moral stance?

Chapter II. Method

Overview of Design

Three groups of participants from different settings (one inner-city, one urban but not inner-city, and one suburban) were selected for the study. There were fifteen participants in each group. Each participant responded to three moral dilemma vignettes designed to focus on different ecological levels (i.e., individual ecological level, community ecological level, and societal ecological level). The individual interviews were followed by an intervention which consisted of a group discussion among nine of the participants in each setting in which three similar vignettes were discussed. Finally, the nine participants who took part in the group discussion were interviewed a second time to examine whether the whether the group discussions had any affect on the participants' level of moral reasoning.

Participants

The participants in this study were in three groups of 15 and came from three different settings. The first participant setting was a youth center in an inner-city environment. The participants from this setting were, for the most part, Latino and were from a lower socio-economic background. The youth center itself has a varying

population of between 40 and 60 members, all of whom lived within two or three blocks of the youth center. A number of the youth center members had dropped out of school, and a large percentage of the female adolescents had children. The fifteen adolescents chosen from this setting were self-selected in that they were the only fifteen who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. They ranged between 13 and 19 years of age (with a mean age of 14.6 yrs.), and there were 8 males and 7 females.

The second participant setting was two urban foster-care homes, which functioned more or less as sister homes, with children going back and forth regularly and a great deal of interaction between the two. There were between 10 and 15 adolescents in each of these homes. All interviewed participants had been in the homes for at least six months. The majority of participants at this site were African-American. They had been placed in the homes, by the state, because of crisis in their family life (e.g., a caretaker had to go to jail). The 15 adolescents interviewed from this setting were also self-selected in that they were the only ones who chose to participate in the study. They ranged between 13 and 19 years of age (with a mean age of 15.6 yrs.), and there were 6 males and 9 females.

The third participant setting in this study was an elite suburban private school. It was an extremely expensive school with small classrooms and a large campus in

a wooded setting. The school was non-residential, with students arriving by bus in the morning and leaving in the afternoon. The administration of the school presents it as a community as well as a school. Almost all the 15 adolescents who participated from this setting were white (there was one Asian-American), and from the high tuition it can be assumed they came from at least an upper middle-class socio-economic background. The 15 adolescents were both self-selected and randomly selected (this was the only setting in which more than the requisite 15 adolescents wanted to participate). The students who wanted to participate gave their names to a contact person at the school and that person randomly chose 15 students. They ranged between 14 and 17 years of age (with a mean age of 15.2 yrs.), and there were 8 males and 7 females.

Stimulus Materials: Moral Dilemmas

The dilemmas were based on the model used by Kohlberg and his colleagues (1981) in their studies. Each dilemma placed the participant in a moral situation and demanded that the individual make a choice in that particular situation. The situations were hypothetical. The dilemmas did differ from the style used by Kohlberg in a few important ways. First, the dilemmas were written specifically for the populations being interviewed at the time they were being interviewed; the dilemmas were all written for adolescents in a metropolitan area in 1990.

There were two sets of dilemmas; one was based on the use of "crack" cocaine and its implications and the other was based on the use of intravenous drugs and its implications.

The second difference is that there were three dilemmas in each interview set. Each dilemma was designed to represent a particular ecological level based on the model created by Bronfenbrenner (1979). The first dilemma of the set was based on a single relationship or a micro-system. The second dilemma was based on a community situation or meso-system. The third dilemma was based on a larger set of inter-relationships that could be interpreted as corresponding to either a macro-system or exo-system and is referred to in this study as societal. The use of the three different types of dilemmas in each set enabled us to examine how changing the situation might change the type of moral answer used in making a choice when faced with a dilemma. (See Appendix).

Procedure

There were 15 participants from each of the three participant settings. All 15 participants took part in the first interview session. Nine participants took part in the group discussion that followed the first interview section. The nine participants who were part of the group discussion were also part of the second interview.

All interviews were conducted by the same researcher at the site described above in the participant's section. Each

interview session took place on a single day and encompassed all three dilemmas. Participant responses were tape recorded, with the participant's permission, and later transcribed. The interviews, group discussion and second interview for one participant setting were completed before the process was begun at another participant setting. The researcher usually had to return to the participant setting a number of times to complete the procedure. This was especially true for the second set of interviews. The span of time over which the procedure took place at each participant setting ranged from six weeks (at the inner-city youth center) to three weeks (at the private school). There was at least one week lapse time between each phase of the procedure (i.e., first interview, group discussion, and second interview). All populations were self-selected in that they volunteered to participate in the research.

The first interview sessions began with a short set of instructions and an apology. The instructions told the participant that s/he would be asked to make a choice in a moral dilemma and that they would have to make that choice. They were then told that they would need to justify their choice, that the justification should be as detailed as possible, and that they should keep talking until they absolutely could not say anything. They were also told that the interviewer would continue to ask them about their justification until he was satisfied that they no longer had

anything to say. They were then offered an apology with the realization that this process could be very annoying.

The dilemmas were counter-balanced. In each group the first participant received the dilemmas in the one, two, three order, the second participant received the dilemmas in the two, three, one order, and the third participant received the dilemmas in the three one, two order. This counter-balancing was continued for all 15 participants. The same procedure was followed for the second set of interviews. The dilemmas were administered in exactly the same order to the participants (i.e., a participant who received the dilemmas in the two, three, one order during the first interview also received them in the two, three, one order during the second interview.).

The nine adolescents who participated in the group discussion were self-selected at the inner-city youth center and the urban group home settings (i.e., they were the only nine individuals who agreed to participate). Nine adolescents were chosen in a random fashion (i.e., computer draw) from the suburban private school setting. All three small groups met in a small room located within the participant setting. The individuals were told that their participation in the group was totally voluntary and that they could leave any time (this only occurred once in one group and that individual returned after a short absence). They were told they would be given three dilemmas similar to

the ones they had been administered in their individual interviews. The inner-city youth center and the suburban private school received the dilemmas administered to the urban group home in the interview sessions, and the urban group home received the dilemmas administered to the inner-city youth center and the suburban private school in the interview sessions. The individuals were told that they had to act like a jury in each of these dilemmas in that they had to come to complete consensus on what they would do in that situation. They were then read each of the dilemmas. If they felt they could not come to a consensus opinion they were encouraged to keep trying. The three groups did reach a consensus opinion in all but one instance. (See Tables 1 and 2)

Analysis

The analysis of data was done using a dual coding system. The first set of codes was for determining the ecological level of the justification. The second set of codes was for determining the ontological level of the justification.

Ecological Levels of Justification

The set of ecological codes were loosely based on the model set up by Bronfenbrenner (1979), and were to determine the type of "group" the individual identified with and/or is concerned. The codes for the ecological level were as follows:

Level 0: Self-System or No System - This is the level at which the individual does not identify with any system of relationships. The individual is only concerned with the needs of the self and the repercussions of actions on the self. No other relationship can be identified as having a determining factor on the justification. The individual would use phrases such as "I want..." and "I need...".

Example: "I can't give him that because I might need it."

Level 1: The Micro-System - This is the first level of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model. It is described as one physical setting in which the individual actively participates. It represents a single relationship in which an individual is actively involved. If the individual were on this level, the individual would be concerned with one dominant relationship that s/he felt must be maintained (or at least dealt with). The individual would not really consider any relationships outside of this single relationship in making moral decisions. There would be no recognition of the needs of any other person outside of this single relationship.

TABLE 1
Structure of Methodology

Participants	15, Inner city Youth Center	15, Urban Foster Home	15, Private School
Apparatus used for Interviews	Dilemma I - Personal Dilemma II - Community Dilemma III - Societal	Dilemma IA - Personal Dilemma IIA - Community Dilemma IIIA - Societal	Dilemma I - Personal Dilemma II - Community Dilemma III - Societal
First Interviews	All 3 dilemmas all 15 part.	All 3 dilemmas all 15 part.	All 3 dilemmas all 15 part.
Intervention Group Discussion	9 participants self-selected discuss dilemmas IA, IIA, IIIA	9 participants self-selected discuss dilemmas I, II, III	9 participants self-selected discuss dilemmas IA, IIA, IIIA
Second Interview	9 participants from group discussion. Same dilemmas as first interview.	9 participants from group discussion. Same dilemmas as first interview.	9 participants from group discussion. Same dilemmas as first interview.

TABLE 2

Structure of How Codes were Applied to Data

Story Level	I. Personal Based Story	II. Community Based Story	III. Societal Based Story
Ontological Codes Before Intervention	Each story presented to each of 15 participants in each of 3 participant settings.	Each story presented to each of 15 participants in each of 3 participant settings.	Each story presented to each of 15 participants in each of 3 participant settings.
Ontological Codes After Intervention	Each story presented to each of 9 participants that were in group disc. in each of 3 participant settings	Each story presented to each of 9 participants that were in group disc. in each of 3 participant settings	Each story presented to each of 9 participants that were in group disc. in each of 3 participant settings
Ecological Codes Before Intervention	Each story presented to each of 15 participants in each of 3 participant settings.	Each story presented to each of 15 participants in each of 3 participant settings.	Each story presented to each of 15 participants in each of 3 participant settings.
Ecological Codes After Intervention	Each story presented to each of 9 participants that were in group disc. in each of 3 participant settings	Each story presented to each of 9 participants that were in group disc. in each of 3 participant settings	Each story presented to each of 9 participants that were in group disc. in each of 3 participant settings

Example: "I have to give him the money because if I don't we won't be friends anymore." or "I need to help her because she is my friend."

Level 2: The Meso-System - This is the second level of the Bronfenbrenner model. It is described as spanning or involving two or more settings in which the individual actively participates. The idea of active participation in more than one setting is very important; it represents a series of relationships with which the individual was involved on a regular basis. At this level the individual would only be concerned with people and/or things that s/he felt some sort of kinship with. This could be a family or extended family (in which the individual must participate with the members in more than one setting), a neighborhood or a community in which the individual lived. There was recognition of more than a single dominant relationship involved in the actual justification of moral judgments, but there was no recognition of any relationship with anything outside of the settings in which the individual does actively participate.

Example: "I have to be concerned about the safety of my neighborhood" or "I need to worry about my cousin but I also have to be concerned about my aunt and everybody else in the family."

Level 3: The Exo-System - This is the third level of the Bronfenbrenner model. It is two or more settings in which

the individual does not actively participate. For this study it encompasses all settings that could be considered outside of the boundaries of the settings defined in the meso-system, but still exist as settings in which the individual can, but not necessarily would, actively participate. There is recognition of the individual of not only the web of relationships that exist as the result of active participation, but also of the larger web of relationships that exist with the strangers outside of active participation. This system does not encompass an entire social system set up by a larger society because that would include settings in which the individual would never participate. There is no higher order establishing legal or ethical rules and sanctions, there is simply a recognition that other settings can and will be effected by individual actions.

Example: "I need to worry about my neighborhood, my people, but you also have to worry about the people in the other neighborhoods around us. People there could get killed also, and I wouldn't want to see that." or "I think it's important because of those guys you sometimes see sleeping on the subway. You can't leave them with no home like that."

Level 4: Macro-System - This is the fourth level of the Bronfenbrenner model. This level was defined as consistencies of the lower order system which combine to

form a sub-culture or culture. This system defined the larger group of settings which together form a culture. It is not possible for the individual to be involved in all of the settings that make up the culture. This system is seen by the individual as an abstract law-maker that creates a set of sanctions which the individual must fear and cannot readily change. There is a concern for the preservation of this legal and/or ethical system for the good of the larger society; society being almost a separate entity from the settings in which the individual participates. This system would pre-empt every other relationship or web of relationships that the individual might consider in terms of the dilemma. The preservation of this social construction is the dominant aspect of the justification the individual offers.

Example: "It may be difficult to do but you have to do that because it's the law. If you don't pay any attention to the law, then you have anarchy." or "It's based on trust. If people can't trust each other then you have nothing."

Ontological Levels of Justification

The codes for the ontological levels were reflected a Piagetian model of perspective taking. They are loosely derived from part of a larger coding system developed by Bearison (1991) for the coding of peer interaction, and adapted for the needs of this particular study. The

ontological codes were as follows:

Level 0: Unjustified - At this level the individual does not offer any justification for his/her answer to the dilemma. (This level is primarily for younger individuals and was not used by any of the participants. It is used here as a marker for future research in this area.)

Level 1: Factually Justified - This is a detached type of justification in which the individual uses facts as objective reasons for reaching a decision. The individual does not offer these facts in terms of any other person or point of view. Instead they are offered in a laundry-list type fashion, as arbitrary absolutes. There is no desire to explain any of the reasons in terms of the effect it would have on the self (other than the effect the rule professes to have), on any single other person, or on any group of people.

Example: "You can't do that because it's illegal. The law clearly states that in this situation you must go to the police." or "He should not do drugs. Drugs are bad, they kill people. It is wrong to do drugs."

Level 2: Justified in terms of the Self - In this type of justification the individual sees things in terms of how the situation will effect his/her life. The individual does not see things in terms of a laundry list of givens but s/he also does not see it in terms of other people. It is more

or less a level of thinking in-between the factually justified described above and the perspectively justified described below. It is something of a solipsistic view point in that the individual is justifying the situation only from his/her own point of view.

Example: "I wouldn't do that because I don't want to put myself in that type of situation. What's going to happen to me if he decided he wants to keep coming back for money" or "If I rat on him I'm the one who is going to get it, they're going to come after me."

Level 3: Justified in terms of the Other - In this type of justification the individual takes into account the position and reasoning of one other person in the decision making process. The individual is able to put him/herself in the place of the other and interpret the others feelings, desire, wants or needs in that situation. The position of the other is recognized and the reasoning of the other in that situation is taken into account. This does not necessarily mean that the individual is sympathetic to the other's position, simply that s/he recognizes it and is able to incorporate it into his/her decision making process.

Example: "You see if he's my friend he's gonna feel bad just about coming to ask me for the money, so I know he needs it really bad." or "She's taking drugs, that was a free choice she made because she

wanted to get high at the moment, didn't want to think about the future. I can't be taking responsibility for that."

Level 4: Justified in terms of the Group - In this justification the individual takes into account the position and needs of an entire group in the decision making process. Here a group is defined as any system of relationships (that involves at least two other people). The individual recognizes the needs and reasoning processes of others, not as single entities, but as members of a collective that exists for the benefit of the individuals. Not only is the collective recognized, but the needs of that collective are recognized, and the reasoning behind those needs are understood. Once again this does not necessarily mean that the individual is sympathetic to that position, simply that s/he recognizes it and is able to incorporate it into his/her decision making process.

Example: "You have to understand that if I do that it's not only gonna hurt my cousin, it's gonna hurt my aunt, my other cousins, my own mother and father. I do that and nobody trusts nobody and the whole family is going to fall apart." or "You got to accept him because what he's doing is good for the community. People weren't happy before; now they finally acting together and they're getting something out of it. I've got to think about that

first."

Reliability

Two outside coders were used as a check for inter-rater reliability. After a short training session in the ontological and ecological schemes each person coded twenty percent of the dilemma justifications. The ontological codes had seventy-eight percent agreement from the first coder and eighty-five percent agreement from the second coder. The ecological codes had seventy-eight and eighty-one percent agreement respectively.

The statistical method used for the quantitative analysis of this qualitative data was the Chi-Square statistic. This kind of contingency table statistic was employed because the numbers were based on qualitative data that was then coded so there could not be an assumption of a normal distribution. Pearson's "Goodness of Fit" test is not dependent on a normal distribution, can be used with almost any size population, and is able to determine whether a population is independent of a particular variable. The quantitative analysis is followed, in each of the next two chapters, by a more qualitative, textually based analysis. This is followed by a chapter which uses a more interpretive analysis to try and determine what socio-historical aspects might have been behind the data that was collected.

The method described in this section was used to address the question of how moral decision making processes

are expressed in different cultural/social contexts as the result of dynamic interaction between the possibilities engendered through the development of certain human capabilities, and the necessities that develop from specific ecological circumstances. The results are organized into two general sections: chapters three and four deal with whether moral decision making processes change as the result of variance in ecological contexts, and chapter five attempts, through an interpretive exploration of the object, to explain why this occurs.

Chapter three attempts to examine whether an individual's moral decision making processes change as the ecological level of the situation changes. The Chi-Square statistic is used to determine if the population distribution within each participant setting changes as a result of a change in the circumstances of the dilemma. This would mean that the individuals within these population samples have different moral outlooks for individual relationships, community relationships, and societal relationships. The qualitative exploration of the justifications is used to reinforce and illustrate this point.

Chapter four attempts to determine whether a person's ecological circumstances might effect the moral judgment/justification processes within specific settings. The same Chi-Square statistic was used to determine if this

was the case.

The fifth chapter takes a more interpretive approach to the problem in an effort to locate at least part of the process behind the phenomena. Chapters three and four developed the object of study and chapter five is an attempt to expand this object in terms of how and why the variance discussed occurs. The method used for this expansion of object is the hermeneutic circle, in which the object is re-investigated in terms of the traditions of the subject. In this case there were three subjects (i.e., the three participant settings).

The structure of this study is reminiscent of light moving through an adjustable lens in order to illuminate a larger canvas. In each chapter the lens is opened a little wider. While the light reflected on the canvas increases, the degree to which it can be controlled decreases. The chapters may offer progressively more insight into the question, but with less certainty: scientific control is slowly sacrificed on an altar which guards the gateway to understanding.

Guide to Analysis

There were three ecological levels of stories that were presented to the participants in the study: personal level, community level, and societal level. The three levels of stories were administered to participants from three different participant settings: "the inner-city youth

center", "the urban group home", and "the elite private school." (See Table 2) The justifications given in response to the stories were analyzed in two different ways.

- 1) Justifications were analyzed according to ecological effect. This analysis consisted of coding the justifications by ecological level of the story. There were five system levels: "no-system", "micro-system", "meso-system", "exo-system", and "macro-system." Each justification was given only one code for ecological effect.
- 2) Justifications were analyzed according to ontological effect. This coding system consisted of four judgment levels for justifications: "justified factually", "justified in terms of the self", "justified in terms of the other", "justified in terms of the group."

The data were analyzed in two different ways. The code categories remained the dependent variable through both analysis. In the first analysis the story level was the independent variable: the analysis was done to determine the degree to which ecological/system level and judgment level was dependent on particular story level. In the second analysis the participant setting was the independent variable: the analysis was done to determine the degree to which ecological/system level and judgment level was dependent on particular participant setting.

Chapter III. Differences Between Story Levels

This chapter deals with the first goal of the study: whether changes in the type of dilemma or "story level" the individual must deal with (i.e., whether it is based on personal relationships, community relationships, or societal relationships) produces changes in the ontological and/or ecological level of that person's moral decisions and justifications. Each individual in each of the three participant settings was presented with dilemmas representing each of the three story levels (see Table 1 in Chapter 2). A quick over-view of the results can be gained from an examination of the mean scores for the ontological and ecological justification codes (See Tables 3 and 4).

The general finding was that while the ontological level of the participants' justifications remained relatively constant across story levels, the ecological level of justifications varied along with the story level. The differences in the mean scores for the ontological codes were small. On the other hand, scores for the ecological codes varied according to the story level such that there was a correspondence between the two. That is, the majority of responses to the personal story level were coded at the micro-system (1) level; responses to the community story level were coded at the meso-system (2) level; and the

TABLE 3
 Mean Scores for Ontological Codes
Before Intervention

	<u>Story Levels</u>		
	Story Level I Personal	Story Level II Community	Story Level III Societal
Inner-City Youth Center N=15	2.0	2.13	1.8
Urban Foster Home N=15	2.2	2.26	1.93
Private School N=15	2.4	2.2	2.63
Total \bar{X}	2.2	2.2	2.12

After Intervention

	<u>Story Levels</u>		
	Story Level I Personal	Story Level II Community	Story Level III Societal
Inner-City Youth Center N=9	2.33	1.88	1.77
Urban Foster Home N=9	2.22	1.44	2.22
Private School N=9	2.66	2.66	1.66
Total \bar{X}	2.4	1.99	1.88

Code: 1= Factually Justified
 2= Self Justified
 3= Other Justified
 4= Group Justified

TABLE 4
Mean Scores for Ecological Codes
Before Intervention

	<u>Story Level</u>		
	<u>Story Level I</u> Personal	<u>Story Level I</u> Community	<u>Story Level III</u> Societal
Inner-City Youth Center N=15	1.06	1.86	3.53
Urban Foster Home N=15	1.43	2.13	2.86
Private School N=15	1.63	2.8	3.2
Total \bar{X}	1.34	2.26	3.19

After Intervention

	<u>Story Level</u>		
	<u>Story Level I</u> Personal	<u>Story Level II</u> Community	<u>Story Level III</u> Societal
Inner-City Youth Center N=9	1.55	2.44	2.66
Urban Foster Home N=9	1.33	2.11	2.55
Private School N=9	1.22	2.55	3.11
Total \bar{X}	1.37	2.37	2.77

Code: 0= No system
1= Micro-system
2= Meso-system
3= Exo-system
4= Macro-system

majority of the responses to the societal story were coded either at the exo-system (3) or macro-system (4) levels.

One of the underlying assumptions of this study was that the justifications given to moral dilemmas presented were dependent on the story level (or more precisely on the interaction between individual and story level.) A Chi-Square test of association was used to determine the degree to which ecological level and the ontological level the individuals in each sample used in responding to each of the stories, depended on the level of the story.

The level of dependence was determined by comparisons between all three stories and comparisons between personal and community stories, personal and societal stories, and community and societal stories. The Chi-Square tests for comparisons between all three stories had three columns and four rows for the level of judgment analysis and three columns and five rows for the level of group analysis. The Chi-Square tests for comparisons between individual story levels had two columns and four rows for the ontological level analysis and two columns and five rows for the ecological level analysis. A significant finding means that the "level" used in justifications across the story dilemmas is different enough to suggest the difference is due to the difference in story levels.

The ontological level analysis showed significant differences dependent on story level in only one of a

possible six situations (the three story levels before and after the intervention). The participant setting that showed significant dependence of ontological justification on story level was the elite private school before the intervention ($X^2 (6)=13.33, p \leq .05$) (See Tables 5 & 6). Neither the inner-city youth group nor the foster home group showed this kind of interdependence between the level of ontological judgment and the story level.

In contrast to the relative stability of ontological level across stories, the ecological level reflected in participants' moral judgments showed a significant dependence on story level in all three settings. The choice of ecological level participants made showed significant dependence on story for the inner-city youth center setting ($X^2 (8)=42.75, p \leq .001$) before the intervention (i.e., the group discussion) and ($X^2 (8)=21.25, p \leq .005$) after the intervention; the participants from the foster group home ($X^2 (8)=29.13, p \leq .001$) before the intervention and ($X^2 (8)=23.25, p \leq .005$) after the intervention; and the participants from the suburban private school ($X^2 (8)=33.03, p \leq .001$) before the intervention and ($X^2 (8)=27.00, p \leq .005$) after the intervention (See Tables 7 & 8).

In order to get a better understanding of the relationship between the different story levels for each participant setting, the individual stories were compared to each other within each setting. There were 18 possible

Table 5

Frequencies of ontological levels of justifications
according to story level and participant setting
Before Intervetion

Story Level

Ontological Justification Level	<u>Personal</u>			<u>Community</u>			<u>Society</u>		
	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>
Level 1: Factually Justified	6	5	1	5	5	5	5	6	3
Level 2: Justified in Terms of Self	3	2	7	3	4	4	9	4	6
Level 3: Justified in Terms of Other	6	8	7	5	5	3	0	5	1
Level 4: Justified in Terms of Group	0	0	0	1	2	3	1	0	5

Table 6

Frequencies of ontological levels of justifications
according to story level and participant setting
After Intervention

Story Level

Ontological Justification Level	Personal			Community			Society		
	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>
Level 1: Factually Justified	4	3	0	4	5	2	4	2	4
Level 2: Justified in Terms of Self	2	2	4	3	4	2	3	3	4
Level 3: Justified in Terms of Other	3	3	4	1	0	2	2	4	0
Level 4: Justified in Terms of Group	0	1	1	1	0	3	0	0	1

Table 7

Frequencies of ecological levels of justifications
according to story level and participant setting
Before Intervention

Story Level

Ecological Justification Level	<u>Personal</u>			<u>Community</u>			<u>Society</u>		
	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>
Level 0: Self System	3	0	2	4	1	2	1	0	3
Level 1: Micro-system	10	9	9	1	1	0	0	3	0
Level 2: Meso-system	1	6	1	5	9	4	1	1	0
Level 3: Exo-system	0	0	0	3	3	2	1	6	0
Level 4: Macro-system	1	0	3	2	1	7	12	5	12

Table 8

Frequencies of ecological levels of justifications
according to story level and participant setting
After Intervention

Story Level

Ecological Justification Level	<u>Personal</u>			<u>Community</u>			<u>Society</u>		
	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>	<u>Youth Center</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Private School</u>
Level 0: Self System	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	1	2
Level 1: Micro-system	6	6	7	0	1	0	0	1	0
Level 2: Meso-system	2	3	0	4	6	4	1	0	0
Level 3: Exo-system	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	6	0
Level 4: Macro-system	0	0	1	2	0	4	5	1	7

cases in which it could be determined whether the justifications were dependent on the story level for both ontological and ecological dimensions in each setting (i.e., three story levels times three participant settings times two administrations, before and after, equals 18). On the ontological level dimension there were three out of a possible 18 instances in which there was a significant level of dependence on the story level. All instances were before the group discussion. There was a significant level of dependence on story level for the inner-city youth center participants in comparing the personal and society story levels, ($X^2(3)=10.1 p \leq .025$). Inner-city youth used more justifications in terms of the other at the personal level than they did for stories at the society level where they used more self justifications. There was a significant dependence on story level for the suburban private school, in comparing the personal story level and the community story level ($X^2(3)=8.10 p \leq .05$). The community story elicited more ontological justifications that referred to the group or were factually justified while the personal story level had more self and other references in their justifications. This same pattern held in comparing personal and society story levels ($X^2(3)=10.6 p \leq .01$).

The ecological level, once again in contrast to the ontological level, showed significant dependence on story level in eight out of a possible nine instances before the

intervention and six out of a possible nine instances after the intervention. The inner-city youth center participants showed significant dependence of ecological level on type of story when comparing personal and community story levels before the intervention ($X^2(4)=14.17 p \leq .01$) and after the intervention ($X^2(4)=10.00 p \leq .01$). The same participants showed dependence of ecological level on story level when comparing the personal and societal story levels before the intervention ($X^2(4)=21.30 p \leq .01$) and after the intervention ($X^2(4)=14.32 p \leq .05$); and before the intervention when comparing community and societal story levels ($X^2(4)=14.80 p \leq .01$). The inner-city youth center participants used the micro-system for the great majority of their justifications to the personal story level in both instances and the macro-system for the great majority of their justifications to the society story level, while the justifications to the community story level were fairly well distributed among the different systems.

The foster home group also showed significant dependence of ecological level on type of story when comparing the personal and community story levels before intervention ($X^2(4)=12.00 p \leq .025$). The personal and societal story levels before intervention ($X^2(4)=17.60 p \leq .01$), and after intervention ($X^2(4)=14.57 p \leq .05$). The community and societal story levels before intervention ($X^2(4)=12.00 p \leq .01$) and after intervention ($X^2(4)=10.00$

$p \leq .05$). The justifications that the participants from this setting used for the personal story relied completely on the micro-system and the meso-system; the justifications for the community story level tended to use the meso-system far more than any other system; the justifications for the society level story focused on the exo-system and, to a lesser extent, on the macro-system.

The suburban private school showed significant dependence of ecological level on type of story when comparing the personal and community story levels before intervention ($X^2(4)=14.40 p \leq .01$), and after intervention ($X^2(4)=12.80 p \leq .01$), and the personal and societal story levels before intervention ($X^2(4)=15.60 p \leq .01$), and after intervention ($X^2(4)=11.33 p \leq .025$). There were no significant findings for the private school population sample when comparing the community and the societal story levels. The justifications to the personal story level for this population focused on the micro-system, with a few using the self-system of the macro-system; the majority of justifications to the community story level relied on the macro-system; almost all of the justifications to the society story level also relied on the macro-system.

Discussion of Quantitative Analysis

These findings suggest that what have been termed the ontological aspects of moral decision-making capabilities, are not, for the most part, really affected by changes in

story level for individuals within a particular group. The findings also suggest that, although the processes were only compared in terms of the factor of story level, this aspect of the decision making process is not wholly dependent on the participant's own ecological surroundings. There were very few significant differences between the different story levels for each of the three participant settings. The one anomaly is the private school setting, where this might be explained by the fact that the participants from this setting are often involved in discussions about ethical dilemmas and their repercussions, and this may have enabled them to adjust or modify their perspective taking when justifying their answers to the dilemmas at the societal story level.

The finding was that the ecological level for the justification was significantly influenced by the story's content level. There was significant dependence of ecological system on story level in all three participant settings. One question raised by the findings is: to what degree the type of story controls different people from different backgrounds in the same way. For instance, would a story based on personal relationships have the universal affect of individuals approaching the dilemma in terms of the micro-system; or, to be more specific, would any person confronted with a story about the neighborhood automatically form a justification based on the needs of the neighborhood?

If this were completely true, as the fact that the majority of individuals who heard a dilemma from a particular ecological level seemed to base their justification on that same level might attest, then the findings would still be interesting. These data suggest that the sensibilities of all individuals change as the type of situation they are dealing with changes. However, it does not seem to be simply the story's that dominate the individual justifications.

The ecological levels used by the individuals in each participant setting were not only dependent on the story level, but also on their particular setting, the unique context it offered, and its particular relationship to the dilemmas with which the individuals were confronted. The private school setting participants did not show any significant differences between the community level story and the societal level story either before or after the intervention. This might lead one to conclude that there is less of a difference between community concerns and societal concerns than there was for the other two settings. The boundary between community and society may be less delineated for this population than for the other two populations. The only time the youth center did not have a significant difference was between the community level story and the societal level story after intervention. The only time the foster group home did not have a significant

difference was when comparing personal and community stories, once again suggesting a less defined boundary between these two ecological levels. (See interpretive chapter for in-depth discussion as to possible reasons for this).

Qualitative Analysis

The above statistical analysis offers a general overview of the ways in which justifications are the result of interaction of the individual and the context of the dilemma. The major generalization that can be drawn from the analysis is that, while perspective-taking is relatively stable within participant settings across story contexts, the ecological levels which are used are, for the most part, significantly dependent on the context of the dilemma. However, that is simply a generalized overview of an individual phenomena, and the impact of the phenomena can be best appreciated in terms of the changes in individual justifications. The ways in which these individual justifications are used and the repercussions they have on how moral situations are approached is well illustrated by some specific examples.

The following participant was a female from the inner-city youth center, and her justification was in response to a second story level dilemma about neighborhood. In this justifications she combined the highest possible

perspective-taking ability with a ecological level centered on the needs of the neighborhood (i.e., the meso-system):

DILEMMA 2, CRACK-COCAINE, INNER-CITY YOUTH CENTER

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE GROUP)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (MESO-SYSTEM)

"I say no, I'm not going to go and tell on somebody that helped us when we needed him, because when, if I would of turned him in, we wouldn't of, we would go back to the old ways, with, you know, broken houses, no money to eat. He helps them. Even though he did it by selling drugs and by taking little kids to help him, but he helped them, you know. They wanted to live again. The builders, the building were better, they have food and everything. If I turn him in, then it's like I'm turning in a friend. You don't do that to friends, you help friends, you know, you try to protect them. And you know he did a lot for them. So to turn them in, they gonna go back to the old ways, you know. No one else cares but him. And like you say, he's gonna help the kids, you know, to go to college when they get older, that's good. If he's in jail, how's he gonna help them. There ain't no one else gonna help them. He's the one that sacrificed himself to help them, you know, he promised them, a and he

kept his word. So you know you should help him and be a friend and not turn him in. Because if you turn him in, you ain't no friend, and you not paying him back in no way."

In this justification the person is reasoning in terms of the needs, wants and desires of the entire neighborhood. She takes into account the perspective of the entire group and how they would react to the dilemma, and what effect her decision would have on the ability of the entire group system to maintain itself. So she has taken on, in terms of her ontological level, the perspective of the entire group. The ecological level she chooses to identify herself with, for this dilemma, is that of the neighborhood. As far as she is concerned, whatever is occurring in the outside world appears to be of no relevance to her in this decision; any boundaries, in terms of moral justification, ends at the boundaries of the neighborhood, concerning herself with only people she knows and settings with which she will deal first hand. In this justification the ontological level and the ecological level appear conjoined and inseparable.

One possible interpretation of this particular mix of ontological level and ecological level is to say that this person has spent her entire life dealing with situations at this local level and that the neighborhood is her entire world. She does not switch her justification system to match the story, but has her justification systems defined

by her own particular context. This is probably true to some extent. A member of another group might be more prone to choose another ecological level in creating a justification for a similar dilemma. But, as mentioned earlier, it is the interaction of the two that created the justification systems for the individual. This becomes apparent when one examines how the same participant responded to the third story (society) level dilemma:

DILEMMA 3, CRACK-COCAINE, INNER-CITY YOUTH CENTER
ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE GROUP)
ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (MACRO-SYSTEM)

If I was drafted, well, I would be happy about it because I'm doing something that's worthwhile, I'm doing something that's going to help other people and, you know, I want, I want the drug war to stop because you know, a lot of young kids and older people are hurting themselves, and you know by taking drugs and selling, it ain't good. So I be real happy that, you know, they drafted me to help. Because the more people they have to help, you know something could be done about it, instead of having all the little people. So the more people they have to help is good, so I would like to be drafted and help them out.

(Why is important to help them out?)¹

It is important, you know, because it shows that you care, that you know, you're not all by yourself, that you don't want to run away, you know like in your own corner hide from being drafted. It's good because you helping other people, you ain't only thinking about yourself, you thinking about other people too. And the more people that help, you know something could really be done and this world could be, you know, a better world and what this world is drug wars and all that.

(Why is that important?)

It's important because this world don't need drugs. We don't need drugs. It's not that drugs are something to make you high or something, we don't need that. You could be, you could be, it's best for yourself, and be you and not using drugs, and be like other people. We should, I think that I would be happy to be drafted and help people out.

In this justification for joining the army to help fight the drug war the participant once again achieves the highest ontological level. In her response she takes into

¹Quotes in parentheses are probes offered by the interviewer.

account the needs of all other members of a defined group. That this answer is more abstract and less personal in tone does not detract from the notion that she saw the problem in terms of how her actions would have effected an entire group and how the entire group must act in terms of the problem. This time however, the ecological framework used in the justification did not consist solely of the neighborhood and was not limited by the boundaries of the neighborhood. Instead she recognized the larger nation as the social fabric which she must preserve. Her ontological judgment level did not reflect how her reaction to the problem would affect her family, or her immediate community as she did in the prior dilemma, but expanded it to address the entire society as the important social group. Her reasoning was in terms of people working together for the survival of the larger social networks (which received no mention in the earlier dilemma) and she stresses how happy she would be to be part of the type of effort.

The ability of the participant to take the perspective of the entire group with which she identifies herself, along with her ability to realize that there are social networks in place and their ability to survive is at least partly the result of her actions does not really change between dilemmas. Yet there is no doubt that the types of answers given have dramatic differences. What appear to have changed are the boundaries of these important social

networks. In two different situations this participant decided to apply her ontological abilities to two different ecological levels.

This movement from neighborhood to societal level might be the result of the individual's particular social context. But it can occur for other people for different reasons. The choice of similar ontological levels and similar ecological levels does not necessarily mean that the justifications will have the same type of response or even the same tone. The following example is from a participant from the elite private school setting. The responses to the same two dilemmas achieved the same ontological levels and same ecological levels.

DILEMMA 2, CRACK-COCAINE, PRIVATE SCHOOL

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE GROUP)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (MESO-SYSTEM)

No matter, probably no matter how much I wanted to, I don't think I would be able to, because uhm, since I am, I would guess, I mean, was born in that neighborhood, or if not born I lived my life in the neighborhood, I never had the luxuries of being rich, and the luxuries of being rich are known to be very good, and I wouldn't, and that's not something, sort of like a drug, you don't want to give it up, and, uh, I'd want to keep the money, and thought I would be scared of the

outside neighborhood, cause he can't really promise that, even though he said it, that no violence is gonna happen between the two, and uhm, I don't think that i'd be able to.

(Why?)

Because, everyone in the neighborhood, a, uhm, this depends now on if the kids in the neighborhood are not only selling it, but using it. If they're using it it's sort of a different story it's sort of a different story cause then the neighborhood just become dirt again, after a while there's nothing you can do to stop that probably, and uhm, if they're not using it and he helps them through college and there's definitely things wrong with it, but if it's giving a new sense of hopefulness to the town, and uh, other things then it might not be good for the town but it might hurt it as badly, and uhm, I might turn him in, but if I could start educating some of the younger generation kids about him and about drugs and maybe they, by the time they get older, can have him pushed out and other people, and the town will still be in good shape.

(Why is that?)

Because drugs kill, and there's no way you can get away from that, uhm, it's starts, you know, a

chain reaction, you know one person can start and then ten years later the whole town is all, you know not what it used to be, it's not worth living there anymore.

(Why is that important?)

Cause if that happen then, a, the people in that town stay there or maybe they move out, it's gonna happen to another town, it's gonna happen to another town, and sooner or later it's gonna happen world wide and if it happens world wide it's big problem, bigger problem, and there'll more drug addicts in the world than there are clean people and the rate of killing, rate of, uhm, decision making will be interfered with because of the drugs, and it could lead to disasters.

The different background of the two participants is apparent in comparing this justification to the justification of the participant from the youth center. It is in this community level dilemma that the reasoning becomes more abstract, as the individual takes pains to remove himself from the situation, setting himself up as an outsider. It was as if it were a situation in which he believed he would never find himself. In spite of this he used the same combination of the highest ontological level with the meso-system ecological level. He sees the

situation in terms of the needs of the other people in the group. He understands that they exist, that his actions will have some effect on their lives, and that in his actions he must take a responsibility for the members of that group. The group he chooses to identify with in this situation is the same neighborhood that the prior participant chose. He has made a decision, a decision that might be more consciously deliberate than that of the prior participant to view the situation only in terms of the needs of the immediate community; claiming that no matter how much he wanted to he simply could not see past those neighborhood boundaries. Even the caveat he offers in terms of the drug dealer is based on the needs of the kids in the community, not on anything that might be occurring outside this context.

The ecological level changed for the societal story dilemma:

DILEMMA 3, CRACK-COCAINE, PRIVATE SCHOOL

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE GROUP)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (MESO-SYSTEM)

Uhm, I would try my hardest not to be drafted.

(Why?)

Because, uh, being drafted, if you ask me is jus, is, in this situation is just like being dead already. There's no way you can win with a war against drugs, cause no matter, you can kill

kingpins of drugs lords, and whatever, but another one is just gonna bump up, his second hand man, and, there's always hundreds of thousands of people who are depending on drugs and when you're depending on drugs nothing is real, reality is distorted, and you'll do anything, uhm, it's stupid to even try to fight a war like that, cause, uh, you just can't win, and uhm.

(So what would you do if you were drafted?)

Either hide away, or, depending on the draft policies move another country, to another country.

(Why?)

Uhm, to get away from, I mean in other countries I'm sure it's, it's jus, either just as bad or maybe not, or a little bit less, and it's happening all over the world. But, uh, I'm sure it wouldn't be as severe, and, as in, in the U.S.

(Why would you not fight?)

Cause, I'd still believe in the U.S., and uh, as being one of the best, uhm, government in the world, government, but, uh it just is no use in fighting, cause, uhm, no matter how hard you try, you're not going to get anywhere. You're just going to run around in circles and fight forever and ever and you're going to also ruin your children's lives and their children's lives, you

know, generations to come, even they probably will be ruined, they could be ruined even more.

It was in this situation that this participant's answer became far more personalized, and in a way more thoughtful. But at the same time he maintained the same ontological level in his reasoning while moving to a much higher ecological level. He sees the situation in terms of the larger group, and his actions as affecting, and being affected by the actions of that group. He demonstrated that he was worried about the larger social network and how it would continue to exist and benefit the larger population of which he considers himself a part; and was determined to fit his actions into that pattern of thought. But the tone was different from that of the participant from the inner-city youth center; the attitude conveyed could be thought of as either more sophisticated or more cynical. He was worried about how the country would survive and what effect his fighting might have had on that survival. He felt that the larger society could not hold together under these circumstances. The circumstances were based on his interpretation of the social structure of the United States and based on what he perceives to be a certain cultural implications inherent within the dilemma: that there are hundreds of thousands of people dependent on drugs, that it doesn't matter if you kill one drug king pin because another will simply bump up to take his place. While his own

personal safety was assured by his decision, the decision was justified in terms of the social structure he cares about and respects, but which had become a social quagmire.

Only differences between the community story level and the societal story level were explored in the first two sets of examples. The most dramatic differences however, were between the personal story level and the societal story level. The reasons for this may be obvious; yet paradoxically it rarely seems to be discussed in moral development research and theorizing. People use very different justifications when dealing with intimate relationships as opposed to more global issues. Gilligan (1977) alluded to a similar notion in terms of gender. Many individuals have one set of rules for a close friend or family member, a second set of rules for a distant family member or an acquaintance, and a third set of rules for strangers they read about in the newspaper. Yet it is doubtful that there is drastic movement in terms of ontological ability. An interesting example of this idea comes from a participant from the foster group home. While his ontological level remains constant his ecological level seems to adjust itself to the situation and those involved in it. This allows him to move across a moral landscape while remaining true to his ontological abilities. He had

the following answer for the first dilemma²:

DILEMMA 1, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 1 (MICRO-SYSTEM)

I wouldn't tell her nothing.

(Why?)

Cause we made the pact, you know, and, he trustes me and I trustes him and you know, he said it's all under control and stuff like that, you uhm, then I wouldn't say nothing.

(Why?)

Because, you know, a pact is like, you know, something that's, it's like an oath, you know, you swear and stuff like that. And when you swear to someone, you know, it's like a real strong promise, and you can't, you can't lie to them.

(Why?)

Cause that's, that's what you do, you know, in situations like that, you know, if you end up against the wall somewhere, and you know, somebody's putting you, your relationship between someone in jeopardy, you know, you have no other choice.

²This is to remind the reader that the foster group home dilemmas were different in concrete terms (although similar in abstract terms) from the youth center and the private school.

(Why?)

Because you're closer to him than the mother, you know.

(Why is that important?)

Because, you know, when you around someone, you know, if I'm close to someone, more than, you know we're still family members, but if I'm closer to someone else, you know, that means that I'll talk to that person, you know it'll always be that person. So you know, friendship is, it's a very valuable thing.

(Why?)

Cause, like I said before, you will always need someone. I don't care what condition you're in, or whatever, you will always need someone. You could be rich, poor, middle class, king, queen, aristocrat, or whatever, you always need somebody. You can't live alone.

In this answer and justification the participant was focusing completely on his individual relationship with his cousin. At the same time he took a fairly sophisticated approach in terms of ontological level. He saw the problem both in terms of himself and in terms of the other person involved in the situation. He felt he had made a pact and the only way that pact was worthwhile, the only way it maintained any social meaning, was by maintaining his

integrity. In the justification he was implicitly taking the perspective of his cousin and understood the betrayal and anger he would feel if the pact was broken and how it would diminish the rule system they had created together. At the same time he viewed the dilemma in terms of his cousin and only his cousin, and his justification system does not go outside of the boundaries of that singular intimate relationship. No thought was explicitly given to the needs of the mother, the needs of the family, the needs of the larger society. Compare that strictly delimited justice system with his answer/justification to the second story level:

DILEMMA 1, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (MESO-SYSTEM)

I will help them.

(Why?)

Cause, you know, that's, that's better stuff.

Things like that gotta stop. You know I wouldn't want drugs around my neighborhood, you know.

(Why?)

Cause it's just bad, you know, it's a bad environment for your kids to grow up in, you know, they might see them, see them shooting up or stuff like that and you know they probably think that it's nice or something and you know they go out

and do it. So I would stop it and help the police and aid, you know, aid the police in fighting them.

(Why is it important?)

Because, you know, children are out future, you know, we need them. If I die, you know, my kids is, you know, gonna live on, you I know. And I don't want them to grow up bad, with a bad life or whatever. I want the best for my kids.

(Why?)

Cause, you know, that's what I want. You know, the best for your kids, you know, the well better off they will be.

In this justification the participant maintained the same ontological level (Justified in terms of the Other). Once again he understood the situation in terms of the other and the feelings/needs of that other. He was able to put himself in the place of a naive individual and gauge their reaction to the sight of drugs being bandied about and being used and treated in a casual manner. He was able to realize, in a non-judgmental fashion, that they will begin to think of drugs as good or as an interesting thing to do - and the situation becomes, to those naive viewers, acquiescence by omission. He never put himself in the position of the entire group where he was a functioning member of the group which is why the justification is seen

here in terms of the single other rather than in terms of the group.

The ecological level of his justification shifted as a result of the new dilemma. The participant no longer saw the problem in terms of a single intimate relationship which he wished to preserve. Rather, he saw the situation in terms of his entire family, acknowledging the importance of his children and maintaining their safety, and the importance these children had in the larger family structure. The new dilemma caused him, in a sense, to switch his allegiance from a single social relationship to a small network of social relationships--a network of relationships he did not address in his justification for the personal story level. This individual carried the same perspective-taking ability in which he takes the position of the single other in justifying his answer through both justifications: at the same time he moved from a one-domain relationship to a multi-domain relationship where he had direct contact with the members of the network. The ecological level of the justification changed again at the societal story level:

DILEMMA 3, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (EXO-SYSTEM)

Yes.

(Why?)

Because, uhm, you know, like I said before, you know, these people need treatment, you know, you might want to help them out, the best way I can, you know, the only way, if that's the only way I can help them out, you know. So I have to cut down on things that I, you know, that I'll buy.

(Why is it important?)

I mean they have a problem there, you know, I'm gonna try to to like, some people have a problem, and stuff like that, you know.

(Why?)

Cause, you know, the world, you know, the whole world is like, in a way, it's like falling apart, you know. With drugs and shooting and dying and war and stuff like that. That's the way I can help them out. From dying, you know, cause I don't like to see people die, if that's the only way I can help them out, you know, give them a treatment center and stuff like that, I'll do it.

(Why is it important?)

Cause people need help and people need each other, you know, like, one hand washes the other, you know, you, you, no matter where you are, you, you know, you still always need somebody. You still always need somebody.

The ontological level in this justification remained

consistent with the other justifications. The participant was using the perspective of the other, and only the single other, in his justification. He identified himself with the way an individual would feel, the problems an individual would face in drug addiction. He felt that you had to help an individual out any way you can because of the difficulties they face in their lives; individuals need to help individuals. In terms of perspective-taking this justification was not qualitatively different from either of the other two justifications. But at the societal story level the individual did not identify himself with a single important relationship, or a network of social relationships with which he was more or less continually in contact (e.g., family). His concern expanded to settings with which he was not regularly involved. He was worried about a set of relationships, out there, which he might come into contact with every so often (e.g., people he might see on the train while commuting, or on a trip to Times Square). They were not part of his immediate community, but he saw the problem in terms of them, in terms of helping them. In his narrative he identified with them, was concerned about their survival, and expanded the boundaries of his justifications to include them and their needs in terms of the dilemma.

The examples to this point might lead one to conclude that the choice ecological level is always progressive along with the story level (i.e., the larger the population

involved in the story level, the more encompassing the ecological level of the justification). While this might be a trend it is not always the case. As already pointed out, and to an extent illustrated in the quantitative section of this chapter, the choice of group level is primarily the result of an interaction between the individual, his/her current participant setting, and the dilemma with which the individual is presented. Take, for example, the following justifications offered by one of the participants from the private school:

DILEMMA 3, CRACK-COCAINE, PRIVATE SCHOOL

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE SELF)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 0 (NO-SYSTEM)

Uhm, am I allowed to ask you some questions to make things clearer for me?

(If it's contained in the story. You can ask a question, I may or may not answer.)

Okay, uhm, am I seeing this on the street corners throughout my life. Am seeing all this go on, is it effecting me directly in any way?

(No, your life is smoother than its ever been.)

Then I'd probably wouldn't want the draft re-instituted.

(Why?)

Because when things aren't aren't directly affecting me I tend to kind of just let them, you

know, just be around and kind of not dwell on them too much, I don't pay them too much attention. Because if I'm not effected by something then if it's gonna be a burden to me, and if it's gonna be a hassle, or a danger, then I won't get involved. But if it's something, like, you know giving the money to charity, or, or helping a sick kitten or a bird or something then I'll do it, but if it's gonna be a danger to me and mess up my situation, then I won't get involved.

(Why?)

Because if it's not directly affecting me it seems to me that it's not really my problem and why should I get myself in danger over something that's not my problem, or, or the problem of somebody I care about, which would make it my problem in my life.

(Why is it important that you don't get involved in things that don't directly affect you?)

What do you mean why is it important?

(Why would you make that decision not to get involved with things that don't really effect you?)

Well, I don't see why I should make a decision to get involved.

The above justification for the societal story was seen

in terms of the participant's own perspective. He understood that whatever his decision was going to be in terms of the dilemma it was going to have a direct effect on him. There was no "other" involved in the equation, except in the way the actions of the other might have a direct effect on him. The justification for this problem, indeed he claimed for any problem, is seen only in terms of how he acts, reacts, or is personally impacted. The ecological level was at the level 0: that is there were no social networks that he was taking into account in his justification. The boundaries of who and what is to be considered end right outside of himself. This was in contrast to the societal story level dilemmas already presented in this section in which the individuals chose a larger ecological level. This raises the question of whether the ecological level is the result of the individual or the dilemma--in other words was this simply an individual who views all dilemmas only in terms of himself. (A secondary question is whether a person at an ontological level where he justifies things only in terms of the self will necessarily choose the 0 ecological level.) A change in dilemma, to the community level, showed a dramatic change in this person's ecological level:

DILEMMA 2, CRACK-COCAINE, PRIVATE SCHOOL

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 1 (FACTUALLY JUSTIFIED)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (MACRO-SYSTEM)

Uhm-hmmm

(Why?)

Well, uhm, even if something appear to be the right solution, okay, if you take that situation, obviously the ideal things to be done are to get the, the violence out and the crime out and to get more money in so that everyone can live better and dress better and have more to eat, and obviously those things were done, but still the method doesn't, you can't justify how they were done, and it was just, it's wrong.

(Why was it wrong?)

Because, at the expense of these kids futures and at the the expense all the people who were being influenced by the drugs, that's not worth bringing everybody else up, because of the method in which you brought them up.

(Why?)

Because, it out-weighs. Like if you would put it on a scale, the murders and the people whose lives are getting effected by the drugs is too powerful for the good effects that come of it.

(Why would the scale balance that way?)

Because of the human set of morals.

(What morals?)

The morals that we are trained to have by our society and the code of ethics.

(Why is that important?)

Because it's what's socially accepted by everyone. And if you have a different code of ethics, not only are you maybe not gonna fit in socially, but if your code of ethics goes outside of the law then it could be legal repercussion on you. That's important because nobody wants to go to jail.

In this justification the ontological level was factually based. This was because the individual justified his answer not in terms of how it might affect the other, or even in terms of how it might affect the self, as he did in the societal story, but in terms of a more or less pre-ordained set of rules, presented as facts and identified as ethics and/or morals, that every person is obligated to follow. No attempt was made to justify this rule system: this is simply the way we are trained by society, the way our society expects us to act, and if we do not follow these rules we will not "fit in socially" and will be punished and placed in jail. While this participant's ontological level was at the factual justification, the ecological level was at the level of macro-system. No longer was the

justification based only on his own needs, his own wants, his own fears; no longer did the boundaries to his justification end just outside of his body. In this dilemma the participant went in the opposite direction. The one idea that "out-weighed" all the others was the survival of the social networks that make up the larger society. Implicit is that all decisions, all justifications have to be dealt with in terms of the larger society and it was the preservation of its rule system that was of paramount importance. It is interesting to note that just as in the case of the previous participant from the private school, the justification to the community story seemed much more abstract, less personalized than the justification to the societal story. This provides some support that story level and ecological level do not inevitably correspond.

The following justifications from an urban group home participant provides another example of how individual setting and dilemma intersect to create a justice system based on ecological levels. Her answer to the societal story was as follows:

DILEMMA 3, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 0 (NO-SYSTEM)

I like to save my money and stuff like that. And even though some, uhm, some people, you know, like make up treatment centers of heroin people, right,

how many people do you actually think are going to go? And that's gonna be a waste of money right there. And you can't literally make people go to, to, to the...cause then they would, you know, run that () garbage and stuff like that. You know, I have a right to do whatever I feel like getting away with, something like that. So, obviously nobody, you know, they feel that it's their life and they do whatever they want, so, as long as, as long as that's not mine, I don't care. As long I'm happy, and people treats themselves like they like, or whatever, hey that's them, that's their problem, not mine.

(Why is it their problem?)

Cause they stupid enough to do it. They don't have no good sense.

In this justification the participant saw the situation in terms of another individual. In deciding whether a care facility was worthwhile she took the point of view of a person who might use such a facility; and while some might label the type of perspective she takes as cynical, there was a certain worldliness and even sincerity to the point of view she proposed. She had an understanding of the position of the other, in this case the drug addict, and puts herself in the situation of that other to justify her position. She then used this perspective to justify what

she might think was an unattractive ecological level; because of the way the "other" would view the care facility she felt that she can and should approach the situation in terms of her own needs. She understood the position of those outside of herself, but in spite of this, or maybe more appropriately because of this, she felt no responsibility to any person other than herself. The boundaries of who and what she was willing to identify were different in her justification to the personal story:

DILEMMA 1, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (MESO-SYSTEM)

Nothing.

(Why?)

Well, a promise is a promise.

(Why is that important?)

Because if you make promises to people, you say, you expected, you expected to keep them, because if you make promises and you always breaking them all the time then people know that they can't trust you.

(Why is it important that people trust you?)

I don't know.

(Why would you want your cosine to trust you?)

Cause if I tell you a really important secret, and I trust you, and say you not to tell nobody, and I

trust to tell nobody, then I trust you enough to tell you how I feel, you should be able to keep that promise.

(Why is it important for people to keep promises?)
So you have, so you have people who can trust each other, and...

In this situation she maintained the same perspective-taking ability, she was able to see the situation in terms of the other. She understood that if you tell a person a secret they expect you to keep it the same way she would expect somebody to keep a secret that she told. At the same time she was expanding the boundaries of who she would identify with in her justification: she was no longer concerned only with herself and what she needs, but was intent on preserving the relationship between herself and her cousin.

Summary Discussion

Moral codes have long been described as resulting from internal, universal thought structures or from cultural predispositions. While it cannot be denied that both of these play some role, what seems to have been lost various theoretical points of view is the idea that moral codes are the result of moral decisions. And moral decisions are made by individuals. Without understanding how the moral decision making process occurs in individuals in specific

situations it is difficult to make any claims about moral codes in general.

To this point there has been little research done in attempting to combine the effect of the ecological level of the dilemma, what I have called story level, the individual is presented, with that individual's ontological perspective-taking abilities. Kohlberg (1981) tended towards a more universal scale concerning the development of moral codes, and seemed to view them as absolute standards of reasoning based on ontological development rather than ecologically negotiated conduct linked to ontological development. While he did recognize the need to take into account particularistic moral reasoning and view moral codes as value-laden (1983) he never really developed these ideas to the point where one could examine the affect movement in the ecological circumstance might have on particular moral codes of the individual. Gilligan (1977) was willing to look at relevant moral dilemmas in particular circumstances, but she did not connect these ideas up with any form of ontological development. This leaves out the role the developing individual plays in his/her own moral decision-making process. In fairness, it did not seem to be Gilligan's intention to examine this issue. But her work, taken at face value, leaves open to speculation whether a seven year old and a seventy year old would reach the same moral conclusions for the same reasons simply because they

were dealing with the same particular circumstances. The work of Shweder and Turiel is more culturally oriented, and discussion of their theoretical frameworks are best left for the next chapter.

The dual coding system used in this study was designed to capture some of the inter-play between the ontological development of the human-being in society and the effect of specific ecologically driven instances on the individual. The moral decision is, at least in part, the result of a dialectical relationship between the two. This establishes moral decisions, and indeed moral codes, as a dynamic that will change within the individual not only as the individual develops, but also as the situation develops. A person has different moral codes for a situation that involves only family, for a situation that involves community, for a situation that involves country.

The study shows that for most individuals, no matter what the background, the level on which they approach the problem is more or less determined by the specific situation that the individual is facing. Morality is a general human endeavor based on organizational abilities of the human mind, but its type is specific to a number of variables.

The information provided in this chapter seems to show that individuals appeal to moral codes based on the degree to which they fit the particular situation the individual finds him/herself in at the moment; only if they work to

preserve the group, the web or relationships, the ecological surroundings, with which the individual identifies. And the individual identifies with a group dependent on the situation.

The identification of group in terms of moral code is as much based on ontological perspective taking as it is on ecological surroundings. Two people in the same ecological surrounding, but at two different "ontological levels" will most probably attain two different moral justifications. It is the ontological aspect of the moral decision making that remains constant for the individual, acting and inter-acting with the ecological surroundings.

The following chapter will examine the ways in which the specific ecological surroundings and cultural history, apart from the actual dilemma, might influence their response to the dilemma.

Chapter IV. Differences Between Ecological Settings

This chapter focuses on the way in which an individual's ecological surroundings influence his/her moral decision-making process. It is an attempt to determine how correct Piaget (1932/1965) was when he described the rules of a children's marble game as being created to benefit the needs of all those playing the game at the moment. Thus for Piaget the genesis of moral decision-making is closely tied to group processes. An important aspect of moral development, when considering the genesis of moral decision-making processes, is the notion that moral judgment is tied to group processes. This would suggest that the interactions between organism and environment that lead to a moral landscape are far more complex than the individual and the immediate circumstances. Decision-making processes are the result of the social milieu of the individual. And because most individuals function in more than one social milieu, moral judgments are, consequently, a function of many environments and the amount of time the individual spends in each. In this study adolescents from varying backgrounds were considered in terms of participant settings or social milieus. It was asserted that the social contexts in which the individuals were functioning would have an impact on the type of answers the individuals offered in

response to the set of dilemmas. It was expected, for example, that a participant from the suburban private school might take a very different approach to the same (or similar) dilemma than a participant from the inner-city youth project or a participant from the urban group home.

The differences in terms of the coding scheme were not very large (See mean scores Tables 9 & 10). The private school had the highest mean for ontological code both before and after intervention, while the youth center had the lowest. The private school also had the highest mean for ecological codes both before and after intervention, but here the group foster home participant setting had the lowest mean in both instances.

The same Chi-Square Test of Association that was used in the previous chapter was the method of statistical analysis. Once again there is a quantitative and qualitative aspect to the analysis of data. The quantitative analysis was done to offer a larger context for the phenomena that will be discussed in more detail in the qualitative section. The quantitative analysis of justifications was done for both over-all comparisons between participant settings for the three story levels, and more particular comparisons between participant settings for each of the story levels.

TABLE 9
Mean Scores for Ontological Codes

Before Intervention

Participant Settings

	Inner-City Youth Center	Urban Foster Home	Private School
Story Level I Personal N=15	2.0	2.2	2.4
Story Level II Community N=15	2.12	2.26	2.26
Story Level III Societal N=15	1.8	1.93	2.53
Total \bar{X}	1.97	2.13	2.39

After Intervention

Participants Settings

	Inner-City Youth Center	Urban Foster Home	Private School
Story Level I Personal N=9	1.88	2.22	2.66
Story Level II Community N=9	1.88	1.44	2.66
Story Level III Societal N=9	1.77	2.22	1.77
Total \bar{X}	1.84	1.96	2.36

Code: Story Level I = Personal
 Story Level II = Community
 Story Level III = Society

TABLE 10
Mean Scores for Ecological Codes

Before Intervention

Participant Settings

	Inner-City Youth Center	Urban Foster Home	Private School
Story Level I Personal N=15	1.06	1.4	1.63
Story Level II Community N=15	1.86	2.13	2.80
Story Level III Societal N=15	3.53	2.83	3.20
Total \bar{X}	2.15	2.12	2.54

After Intervention

Participants Settings

	Inner-City Youth Center	Urban Foster Home	Private School
Story Level I Personal N=9	1.55	1.33	1.22
Story Level II Community N=9	2.44	2.11	2.66
Story Level III Societal N=9	2.77	2.55	3.11
Total \bar{X}	2.25	1.99	2.33

Code: Story Level I = Personal
 Story Level II = Community
 Story Level III = Society

Overall Comparisons Between Settings for each Story Level

There were three settings that were being compared; the inner-city youth center, the urban group home, and the suburban private school. There were six instances in which the justifications for the three different participant settings could be compared. There was one instance for each of the three story levels before the intervention (with fifteen participants) and one instance for each of the three story levels after the intervention (with nine participants). When comparing the ontological level of the justifications there was one instance in which the coded level was significantly dependent on the particular participant setting: that was at the societal story level before the intervention (i.e., the group discussion) ($\chi^2(6)=17.00 p \leq .01$) (See Tables 11 & 12). The youth center responses were mostly justified in terms of the self, while the foster home had far more responses than either of the other two participant settings being justified in terms of the other, and the private school had more justified in terms of the group.

Significant differences were found in the ecological levels chosen by participants in each setting in two of the six possible instances: for the societal story level before intervention, $\chi^2(8)=22.736 p \leq .005$, and the societal level after intervention, $\chi^2(8)=17.565 p < .025$ (See Tables 13 & 14). In both cases the youth center and private school

Table 11

Frequencies of ontological levels of justifications
according to participant setting and story level
Before Intervention

Participant Setting

Ontological Justification Level	Youth Center			Foster Home			Private School		
	Story Level 1	Story Level 2	Story Level 3	Story Level 1	Story Level 2	Story Level 3	Story Level 1	Story Level 2	Story Level 3
Level 1: Factually Justified	6	5	5	5	5	6	1	5	3
Level 2: Justified in Terms of Self	3	4	9	2	3	4	7	4	6
Level 3: Justified in Terms of Other	6	5	0	8	5	5	7	3	1
Level 4: Justified in Terms of Group	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	3	5

Table 12

Frequencies of ontological levels of justifications
according to participant setting and story level
After Intervention

Participant Setting

Ontological Justification Level	Youth Center			Foster Home			Private School		
	Story Level 1	Story Level 2	Story Level 3	Story Level 1	Story Level 2	Story Level 3	Story Level 1	Story Level 2	Story Level 3
Level 1: Factually Justified	4	4	4	3	5	2	0	2	4
Level 2: Justified in Terms of Self	2	3	3	2	4	3	4	2	4
Level 3: Justified in Terms of Other	3	1	2	3	0	4	4	2	0
Level 4: Justified in Terms of Group	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	3	1

Table 13

Frequencies of ecological levels of justifications
according to participant setting and story level
Before Intervention

Participant Setting

Ecological Justification Level	Youth Center			Foster Home			Private School		
	Story Level 1	Story Level 2	Story Level 3	Story Level 1	Story Level 2	Story Level 3	Story Level 1	Story Level 2	Story Level 3
Level 0: Self System	3	4	1	0	1	0	2	2	3
Level 1: Micro-system	10	1	0	9	1	3	9	0	0
Level 2: Meso-system	1	5	1	6	9	1	1	4	0
Level 3: Exo-system	0	3	1	0	3	6	0	2	0
Level 4: Macro-system	1	2	12	0	1	5	3	7	12

Table 14

Frequencies of ecological levels of justifications
according to participant setting and story level
After Intervetion

Participant Setting

Ecological Justification Level	<u>Youth Center</u>			<u>Foster Home</u>			<u>Private School</u>		
	<u>Story Level 1</u>	<u>Story Level 2</u>	<u>Story Level 3</u>	<u>Story Level 1</u>	<u>Story Level 2</u>	<u>Story Level 3</u>	<u>Story Level 1</u>	<u>Story Level 2</u>	<u>Story Level 3</u>
Level 0: Self System	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	1	2
Level 1: Micro-system	6	0	0	6	1	1	7	0	0
Level 2: Meso-system	2	4	1	3	6	0	0	4	0
Level 3: Exo-system	0	2	1	0	2	6	0	0	0
Level 4: Macro-system	1	2	5	0	0	1	1	4	7

responses were concentrated on the macro-system while there were more foster home responses centering on the exo-system.

Individual Comparisons Between Settings Within Story Levels

In order to get a closer and more particularized view of the differences between settings for each story level the individual settings were compared to each other within story levels. This meant that there were a possible eighteen instances in which it could be determined whether the justifications were dependent on the story level for each dimension in each participant setting (i.e., this represents three before intervention and three after intervention measurements for comparisons between participant setting one and participant setting two, between participant setting one and participant setting three, and between participant setting two and participant setting three).

On the dimension of ontological level dimension there was only one instance out of a possible eighteen in which there was a significant difference between participant settings. This was when comparing the urban foster home and the suburban private school at the societal story level before intervention ($\chi^2 (3)=15.883, p \leq .025$). The foster home had more responses factually justified while the private school had more responses justified in terms of the group.

The ecological level showed significant differences in

four out of eighteen possible instances. There was a significant difference between the youth center and the foster home at the personal story level before intervention, ($X^2(4)=10.45 p \leq .05$). The youth center justifications mostly concerned the self-system and the micro-system, while over a third of the foster home responses used the meso-system. There was a significant difference between the youth center and the private school at the community story level before intervention ($X^2(4)=9.527 p \leq .05$). Almost half the private school responses dealt with the macro-system, while the foster home responses were fairly well distributed. And there were significant differences at the between the group home and the private school at the societal story level before intervention ($X^2(4)=15.882 p \leq .005$) and after intervention ($X^2(4)=9.067 p \leq .025$). In both cases the urban foster home had a majority of responses centering on the exo-system while the private school had no responses the used that ecological level; the private school had many more justifications which used the macro-system ecological level.

Discussion of Quantitative Analysis

There was some dependence on participant setting at the ontological level, and a bit more at the ecological level (most centering around the societal story levels), but nowhere near as much as when comparing the individual's responses to different type of stories. The levels of

dependence that were found do suggest that environment and socio-cultural history do have some influence on moral decision making processes. At the ecological level individuals from the suburban private school had by far the most answers using a macro-system type justification, while the urban foster home easily had the greatest concentration at the macro-system and exo-system levels. The youth center seemed to have the most even distribution of ecological levels chosen.

The data then suggest that the ecological level of the justification is at least partially a function of the particular participant setting. The differences between individuals from participant settings seemed much more apparent from the qualitative analysis than the coding scheme was able to portray.

Specific Examples of Changes in Justifications

The above statistical analysis offers a general overview to the ways in which justifications are the result of interaction of not only the individual and context of the dilemma, but also the context and history of that individual. Moral decision-making appears to be relative within a universal framework. While many differences between participants' responses were too subtle to captured by the current coding scheme. However the coding scheme and

subsequent analysis do offer a context within which it is possible to explore the more subtle differences.

The type of dilemma where it is was most difficult to find a difference between settings was the personal dilemma. The majority of justifications for all three participant settings examined used the micro-system ecological level. Individuals in the different settings, who chose not to identify with the micro-system in their justification, centered their justifications on three different ecological levels. For instance in the inner-city youth setting a majority of individuals chose the micro-system, but of those individuals who did not choose the micro-system the majority were judged to have identified with the non-system (or the 0 level system). The majority of those from the urban group home who did not choose the micro-system identified with the meso-system. And the majority of the private school participants who did not choose the micro-system opted for the exo-system.

First compare the same ecological level answers from the three different participant settings. The following justification is from a participant from the inner-city youth center:

DILEMMA I, CRACK-COCAINE, INNER-CITY YOUTH CENTER

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 1 (MICRO-SYSTEM)

I won't give him the money for the simple fact, first, when he would knock on my door, I would take him in, and I won't give him the money, and I would try to make

him stop drugs, stop taking crack, cause he's been my friend since we were small, and I don't want to see him die.

(Why?)

Cause he's my friend, and he's part of like a family, or close relative, so I don't want him to die.

(Why is that important?)

Because I probably would love him or her. Cause it would be hard to miss somebody that you knew all your life. And I won't give him the money.

(Why?)

Because...because...I don't know why he's important, but he's important.

In this justification the individual approached the situation in terms of his friend and how he has to think in terms of his friend. The most important aspect of the situation is his inter-personal relationship with this friend.

The following justification is from a participant from the urban group home:

DILEMMA I, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 1 (MICRO-SYSTEM)

I would tell her, you know, even though I've never been, you know, promised and everything, you know, I would tell her mother because to me it's more important for her to, you know, to get better, to live, than you stay shut and let her die, and let her just die and

then, cause then I'm the one who's gonna feel awful, like I didn't do nothing about it. Like I should of helped her and I didn't because of that nonsense about, you know, betrayals. And I'm not betraying her. She might think I am, but I know I'm not, I'm doing what's right, so I would tell, for her to get help.

(Why is it important for her to get help?)

Cause if she keeps going like that, even though she thinks she has it all under control and everything will be just fine and she's happy with it, it's not, it's not going to be like that forever, sooner or later she's gonna, she's gonna get sicker, she's, she's gonna get treated (). She won't be able to stop and then she might, you know act wild, and, you know, start. Cause right now she's rowdy, who knows what she could, what she would do next. She could kill people and stuff. So I would, no I would tell. I would say before, you know, the matter gets worse.

(Why is it important if she gets wild or she kills people?)

You have to, you have to do it. I mean even if you feel bad about it, you gonna have to tell on them. It's not, it's not really that you doing it, you doing it on purpose, but you gonna have to say something. Cause if you really, really care about that person, that's what you would do to help her.

(Why?)

Cause if you care, you know, if you care, you know, you

want for her to live on and to have a better life than that, you'll do it. Especially if that's like your best friend, your closest family member, a part of you all your life, you will help her.

This participant used the same type of reasoning, as the preceding participant from the inner-city youth center, for justifying her response in this situation. The only personal relationship she was worried about was the one with her cousin. But she was worried about the cousin because of the responsibility she felt towards her. Telling on her was something you do because you feel the responsibility and if you don't do it you are going to feel awful.

The same sense of responsibility is exhibited to an even greater degree in the following justification from a participant from the private school:

DILEMMA I, CRACK-COCAINE, PRIVATE SCHOOL

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 1 (MICRO-SYSTEM)

Uhm, well, without thinking about it I'm not sure. One of two things, one just take him inside, calm him down and get him some help. If, if it seems like he's gonna resist, or even just run away from me if I try that, then, only after some type of agreement, like, I might be afraid have a, he might have a debt to pay off and that his life could be in danger, so, also what I would probably do is call the police though and get him checked into a place, but the other thing I might do is after some type of agreement, like, after this.

one time he'll agree to talk to me and tell me what's going on and let me help him, then that's the only condition under which I'd give him the money and that would be only because I was afraid for his life.

(Why would you do that?)

To save his life.

(Why would you want to save his life?)

Cause I care about him, he's my friend.

(Why is that important, that you care about him?)

Well, it's always important, when you care about people.

(Why? Why is it important?)

Well if you care about someone you don't want to see any harm come to them.

(Why?)

Because, not only would that be bad for them, it would upset you, especially knowing that you were responsible for something harmful coming to someone you care about.

(Why?)

Guilt, it's a human emotion that we all have.

(What's guilt?)

Well if there is something you could have done about it and you didn't, then you would dwell on that in your mind, and you'd feel terrible, you'd feel, well, if I could only have that situation back again, and I'd react differently, it's all my fault.

(Anything else besides guilt?)

Well, just that you care.

(Why is it important that you care?)

It can't be answered in a question of important, it's just there.

The above three justifications are symbolic of some of the similarities that existed between these three settings at the personal story level. But even answers that were similar on the measured dimensions, such as these, showed important differences in articulation and tone. The participant from the youth center focused more on just feeling bad, the participant from the urban foster home focused more on responsibility, almost a mini-social contract, while the participant from the private school focused on the more societally recognized motivation of guilt.

There were some very interesting measurable differences. Those from the youth center who did not identify with the micro-system in their justifications tended to not identify with any system of relationships at all, or the self-system that is described in the methods section of this study. It was more important, to these particular participants, to focus on what was going to happen to the self in this situation. This attitude was exemplified in the short, but very effective, justification that follows:

DILEMMA I, CRACK-COCAINE, INNER-CITY YOUTH CENTER
ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)
ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 0 (SELF-SYSTEM)

I won't give it to him.

(Why?)

Because then I know that I'm supporting her habit, and if she wants to have a habit she should support it herself.

(Why?)

Because nobody told, got her, she got herself, right. I didn't help her get into it.

In this justification the participant, in a very few words, took a very sophisticated view of the situation in terms of inter-subjective awareness, but the only important person in her system of relationships was herself. She was able to place herself in the position of her friend, and even though it is not a very sympathetic position, she was able to determine that her friend got herself into this situation. She saw that habit of the friend as a free choice, and that free choice relieved her of any sense of responsibility. This release from responsibility allowed her to not identify with the relationship with that friend. It did not need to be identified as important, as something that must be preserved. (This is another overt example of how ontological and ecological levels work together in a dialectical fashion to create the individual's justification.)

The next justification, with the same ecological level but a less sophisticated ontological level, is from a participant from the same youth center setting:

DILEMMA I, CRACK-COCAINE, INNER-CITY YOUTH CENTER

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE SELF)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 0 (SELF-SYSTEM)

I wouldn't give it to him.

(Why?)

Because he's gonna keep on doing it, he's gonna keep on smoking.

(Why is that important?)

Cause if you give him money, he gonna keep on begging you. Every time he needs it he gonna go to you, and ask you for money.

(Why is that important?)

Because he's smoking crack.

(Anything else?)

And he smoking crack, he needs the money to buy more crack, so I shouldn't give it to him. Cause then if something happened to him or something, don't want to get blamed or nothing cause I was the one who gave him the money to buy the crack.

(Why wouldn't you want to get blamed)

Cause you don't want to be paying for drugs so he can die. That's it.

This time the participant did not take the perspective of the other at all. Instead he saw the situation in terms of how his actions might reflect back on the self - only how he feels, only the choices he is obligated to make. The other's reasoning was not incorporated into the justification at all. He also was only worried about the preservation of the self. He did not show any need to preserve the relationship with this friend or any other .

systems of relationships. He just did not want to give up a lot of money.

In the urban group home setting the majority of those who did not identify with the micro-system opted for the meso-system. There were certain differences³ between this dilemma and the dilemma offered to participants from the other two settings. These differences notwithstanding, the two dilemmas were very similar and the justifications probably reflected the differences in environmental surroundings at least as much as the differences in the actual dilemmas. In the following justification from the urban group home the participant expressed the choice of the meso-system by taking the needs of the family into account:

DILEMMA I, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 1 (FACTUALLY JUSTIFIED)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (MESO-SYSTEM)

I'd tell her mother.

(Why?)

We had made a, we had made a pact together, but. Some

³There is a caveat in comparing the second setting to the other two settings. As mentioned earlier in this study the second setting received a different set of dilemmas than the first and third settings for methodological reasons. The story level one dilemma offered to the participants from the second setting were dissimilar from the story level one dilemma offered to the other two settings in two important ways. First, the pact mentioned in the dilemma seemed to have a stronger impact than anticipated on the respondents. Second, the aunt mentioned in the second setting dilemma may have altered the thinking of the individuals in a certain direction.

things not worth keeping a secret.

(Why is it not worth keeping a secret?)

I mean, ya her mother's worried about her. And she wants to know what's happening with her. And if she takes too much heroin she could die.

(Why is it important that her mother know?)

So that her mother could, you know, try to help her, try to, uhm, get her away from that.

(Why is that important?)

So she doesn't die.

(Why is that important that she doesn't die?)

Cause her mother loves her.

(Is that the only reason?)

Even though she steal, she probably steal money from the rest of her family members, they still, we still worry about her too. And in spite of me being her cousin I tell her mother anyway.

In this justification the respondent really did not take the perspective of any other (although an alternate interpretation might claim that she takes the perspective of the mother). Instead she saw the situation in terms of what will happen because her cousin was taking drugs. People will be worried about her, she could die, her mother loves her. She seemed more to be reciting a litany than actually taking the perspective of others in the situation. The group this participant identified with in the justification was the different members of the family. She was not only concerned about the welfare of the family, but was also

concerned with how the family system would survive this difficult problem. She was more concerned with the web of relationships that made up the larger family unit than she was concerned with any single relationship.

The following justification is another example of an identification with the meso-system by a participant from the urban group home setting:

DILEMMA I, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 1 (FACTUALLY JUSTIFIED)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (MESO-SYSTEM)

What would I tell his mother? That'd be hard, cause if we made a loyalty pact, I wouldn't know what I could tell her. I probably have to be, change it around. Or, I'd tell her, I think I would. You'd still be breaking this loyalty pact, but it's for his own good. He sure enough, he could die, he could o.d., overdose of it, and, uhm, he stealing, he stealing stuff from his family, it's not good to be stealing. I'd have to tell. It's only for his won good. Even though we made that loyalty pact, I have to tell. Cause he's my cousin and I love him a lot and I don't want nothing to happen to him, or him to do anything that happen to somebody else.

(Why is that important?)

Why is that important? Uhm, I think it's important cause he might hurt somebody in his family or try to kill somebody in his family, it might go to his brain, he might see illusions and stuff, he might hurt

somebody in his family, or hurt somebody outside, or get hurt. He might jump off the roof or something. He could get buried or something. Jump off the roof and kill himself.

(Why is that important?)

Why is that important? I don't think, I don't think, I think it because he might hurt somebody, or get hurt.

(Why is that important?)

Why is that important? Cause he might kill himself, or kill somebody else, or...uh, he might kill somebody or something. He might kill himself or hurt somebody in his family. Die or something.

Once again the situation was presented in terms of what could happen, but without any real inter-subjectivity.

Instead the participant merely listed the things that could happen as a result of the situation, drug addiction. But this individual was also concerned with relationships that went past his cousin. Not only was what his cousin might do to himself important, but just as important was what this cousin might do to other people he knows - particularly the members of his family. The prior participant was worried about the emotional impact the cousin might have on her family, while this participant was worried about the type of physical impact this cousin might have on his family. Both were worried about preserving a larger set of relationships that the relationship with the cousin existed within.

The majority of participants who did not identify with

the micro-system from the private school setting seemed to identify with the macro-system. The following participant from the private school based his entire justification on a societal definition of trust:

DILEMMA I, CRACK-COCAINE, PRIVATE SCHOOL

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (MACRO-SYSTEM)

I think...I...well... you said he came, he had, he looked, you said he looked kind of crazed?

(He had a crazed look in his eye)

I think, at first I think that I might try to figure out why, but if he wouldn't tell I think that he's been, if he's been such a good friend to me all my life, we've been really close friends, I think that I could trust him to do was right for himself and for, hopefully, everyone else.

(And would you give him the money?)

I would give him the money.

(Why?)

Because its, we had been friends for such a long time, since we were children, he, he knows me well and I would know him well, and I think that he'd be somebody who I would I would be able to trust, because if you can't trust the people who you know best, there's no one you really can trust, and so I, I would, I think that'd be the only thing I could do, would be to trust him, to give him the money.

(Why is that important, to trust him?)

Cause, the most, one of the most important things in a relationship in my mind would be trust.

(Why?)

Cause, if you, if you can't trust a person then, then how do you, then you have no way to know, like, anything, like if they tell you something, you, you are, if you're, if that friend calls up and tells you something generally you believe it, because in a friendship trust is one of the things that is established, I think.

(Why?)

Because, uhm, I think that'd be, because, because, like, uhm, good friends act (nasty?) towards one another, and one of the things of good behavior is honesty.

(Why? Why is honesty so important?)

Because without honesty then you never know what is true and what's not, and if you have no idea what is true and what's not, then you have no way to base, no way to base judgments or other such things like that.

This participant took the position of his friend in his justification; he claimed that any person in the position of a friend has the right to trust. But this trust he talked about was not the type of trust that is built up over a period of time in a single relationship. It was instead viewed as part of the larger social contract that exists between people. It was presented almost as a law in terms of the way friends, any friends, have to treat each other:

The trust was extended more to preserve this social contract than to preserve the individual relationship (although the relationship is necessarily preserved by the social contract). He was more concerned with what he perceives as a general set of cultural rules about how one acts in a friendship.

The following justification from the private school is also concerned with the macro-system, but less according to a culturally conceived social contract and more according to a strict legal definition:

DILEMMA I, CRACK-COCAINE, PRIVATE SCHOOL

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE SELF)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (MACRO-SYSTEM)

I wouldn't give her money.

(Why?)

Cause it's, uhm, because it's not, it's not right to do drugs, so I'm not, if I give her money, it's rot of helping her do her, it's helping her with her drug problem. Instead of, I would give her money to not do drug, but if I give her money it's just helping her get worse on her drugs.

(Why is that important?)

Because drugs aren't good for you and she'll di-, end up dying. And, a, I sort of, in a way, be the cause of her death, by giving her money to buy drugs I'll helping kill her.

(Why is that important?)

Cause she's supposedly, she's my friend and I don't

want to see anyone die over something stupid like drugs.

(Why?)

Because they're not, uhm, cause she's wasting her, you're wasting your life if you're doing drugs and, why should I, I wouldn't want to help her destroy her life.

(Why?)

Because drugs are bad for you, uhm, a, I don't know. I'd help her stop drugs, but if I, if I give her money to do, to get drugs, cause I assume that's what she's using it for. She doesn't say it, but I assume that's what she's using it for, and, or if she's probably paying off someone who she borrowed to get drugs for, but either way it's helping, it's helping her make her problem worse, and if I refuse then maybe other people will refuse to give her money and she'll realize that it's not good for her, and then she might get help.

(Why is it important that she does this?)

Because no one....no matter how bad you are it's not worth, no one's that bad as to be worth dying over drugs for.

(Why?)

Because, because, drugs aren't good, and they're not good for you, and there must be something wrong with her if she's doing it.

This individual seemed to see the situation completely from her own point of view. The repercussions of her actions took only her own point of view into account. The

friend was seen as nothing more than an object on which she is taking these actions. Her justification was based on a societal view of the problem rather than an individual or even small group view. Drugs are bad because they are deemed as wrong; and people, including her friend, should not be doing them because society has said they are wrong. Her friend was never viewed as the individual who must be dealt with in terms of her own needs and problems, but rather as a member of a larger society in which drugs are bad, which necessarily makes her friend bad. This allowed the respondent to ignore her friend's individual needs and focus on her actions affect her own life.

The community story level brought some of the most interesting quantitative and qualitative difference between settings. At this story level there was a difference in the ecological level chosen by the actual majority of each of the three participant settings. The participants from the private school focused, for the most part, on the macro-system. Many were concerned with the proper functioning of the moral code for the larger society, and they put this moral code ahead of all other considerations when determining what they would do in the situation, and why they would do it:

DILEMMA II, CRACK-COCAINE, PRIVATE SCHOOL

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 1 (FACTUALLY JUSTIFIED)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (MACRO-SYSTEM)

Uhm, ya, I, I would help to catch him. Uhm, I didn't, I didn't get the impression that the guy came from my

neighborhood, just he came in from somewhere else. Uhm, he, eh brought something back to the neighborhood that wasn't there before, but in a way that really wasn't beneficial, you know, helpful at all in the long term, he wa, I mean he's, he became at the end almost like a dictator and he started recruiting kids from around and that can't help in the end cause people wind up getting killed, hurt, uhm, like, like said, he's been responsible for murders, so I would definitely help....

(Why? Why is that bad?)

Well.... it, its' like, it's a dangerous type of thing, it's something that's illegal, I mean it, it's, it's like that because, I mean some people decided it would be like that and like even if you disagree with it you should try to follow the law.

(Why?)

Because it's really whether or not it actually does, it's there to help you and you can't try to change even though sometimes that doesn't work, uhm, and it's, I mean basically the things he was doing are wrong. He was killing people, uhm, kids from the neighborhood were starting to get involved with something like this which is, which is just, I mean they're, they're in danger, they're, they could possibly be hurt and their par, their families and parents would be, you know, devastated by something like that.

(Why are the things he's doing wrong?)

Well, crack, I think is just basically something that's wrong. I mean there's like, crack is dangerous. There's, there's other like less dangerous substances like alcohol say, that aren't illegal, but, crack is just like, you know, that'll kill you. You can be, you can get addicted to that in five minutes or whatever it is, first time you try it, and you know, to get people involved in something like that, that you can't really get out of, I mean whether you want to or not, it's just not right, cause it's taking away their freedom, their choice, and it's putting them in a situation that they would probably not want to be in. I mean at first it may seem like okay, it's gonna be great, cause I'm have a lot of money, etc., etc., but you could be killed by either a bullet, a bad, you know, a bad fix, whatever.

In this justification the participant from the private school presented the legal system as something that must be defended and preserved at all costs. No matter what the circumstance it was the legality of the situation which must come first, because the laws were created to help all people. The best course of action to follow is the course of action that is sanctioned by society; the rest of the justification followed from this basic premise. All things can be judged and compared according to the degree of sanction the general society gives them (as in his comparison between crack and alcohol). The individual relies on the rules of society to protect him, and believes

in the preservation of these rules above all else.

The macro-system answer did not always mean an overt reliance on a legal system with definite sanctions. It sometimes meant reliance on an ethical system that guides all subsequent behavior. The following justification from the private school setting is an example of this:

DILEMMA II, CRACK-COCAINE, PRIVATE SCHOOL

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE SELF)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 4 (MACRO-SYSTEM)

Well, was he friend of mine, or is he just somebody who I happen to know.

(Well he's somebody and int he neighborhood and you have to go by what I read to you.)

Well, if he wasn't really a good friend of mine then I'd say I'd, I'd help them, cause if we had enough money to live well we might by, by this time, we might be able to, be able to get something for ourselves other than dealing crack. I mean we have enough money to, maybe to buy, buy a small shop somewhere like this. Maybe buy things, make clothes, or something, something like that.

(So why would you help the police?)

Because if this guy is going around causing murder and stuff like that then something, like, not very, it's, it's, it's immor, it's immoral.

(Why is it immoral?)

Because, we, just to kill another person is something that I would, to kill another person is something that,

that in my mind is something, one of the worst things you could do to someone else is to kill them.

(Why?)

Because li, life is, like, without life you have nothing, if you're dead you can't really do much.

(What if he were your friend?)

If were my friend then I really don't know, because, if he were a good friend of mine, and he were, but were killing, I, first thing I would do is I would try talking to him, seeing, like, what exactly was going on with it, cause he said there'd be no violence in the neighborhood and nothing bad would happen he said, but it he, if people were getting killed, I don't, I...

(But people are getting killed outside of the neighborhood.)

If he were a friend of mine I'd try talking to him before I help, before I helped the police, I would want to talk, talk to him first.

(Why?)

So I could find out exactly what was going on, like, cause he had promised that nothing bad would come of this, but if people are getting killed then something bad is coming of the, of the drug scene. So I'd want to talk to him, find out like why he said, why he said the things he said, things like that.

(But would you help the police?)

If I, if after I talked to him he wouldn't like, if he wouldn't tell me anything, or, if I found out like he

was just doing that for personal profit, instead of some good reason, if he had no good reason, then I would help the police to catch.

In this justification the participant put the ethical considerations involved in killing another human-being above every other factor. You cannot forgive or forget the sin of killing (in these circumstances) no matter how much the person might have helped those around him and, in the end, no matter what relationship this individual might have had with him. The participant was not concerned that people in his neighborhood might get killed, or even that people in the surrounding areas might get killed; there was no real identification with individuals or easily delineated groups. The drug dealer had to be turned in for killing because killing is an absolute wrong, and that supersedes any other possible justification for a decision.

The justifications from the private school that relied on moral and legal codes were very different than the justifications from the urban foster home. The major concern for the majority of respondents from the urban group home setting was the general health and preservation of the immediate community:

DILEMMA II, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (EXO-SYSTEM)

I say no.

(Why?)

Because if they can't help the community with the drug

dealers then what makes the people think that, you know, they can help them now? Cause they didn't want to help them, the police didn't want to help them.

(Why is that important?)

Because, you know, they're happy, the children are happy and can go back outside. You know there's drugs and everything, but, they're, they're.....

(Why is that important?)

Because everybody is happy.

In this justification the participant was concerned only with the needs of the community. Unlike some of the answers from the private school little thought was given to the legal systems created "for the good of everybody", or to absolute systems of ethical and/or moral behavior. The justification was delivered in terms of the community and how that community was going to survive the situation. If people within the community were happy that was all you really need to worry about. Any decision to help the police had to be made in terms of how this decision would effect the community.

It should not automatically be assumed that answering in terms of the meso-system, or the survival of the neighborhood, meant protecting the drug dealer. The following justification from the second setting takes the same approach to the problem in terms of ecological level, but achieved a completely different outcome:

DILEMMA II, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (MESO-SYSTEM)

Well, I wouldn't kill them or nothing but...Ya I would help them.

(Why?)

Because, you would want, of course I would want peace and happiness in a, around the neighborhood, you know, so, it's not safe for me, or anybody else, and it's not right for, whatever happening, it's not right, for them to be doing that, and other people's suffering. So I would help them.

(But there is peace now.)

So would I help them?

(Help the police get rid of the drug dealers.)

Ya.

(Why?)

Cause the block, or whatever, the neighborhood, gets spoiled and stuff like that, cause of the drug users. And, it get badder and badder every day, so, it'd be good to take the drug dealer away from the neighborhood.

(Why?)

It'd be better.

(Why would it better?)

Why would it be better? So there won't be no, no shoot-out and drug dealer around them...the block.

(Why is that important?)

Because, all the kids is gonna look after them and do the same thing, and kids is gonna grow up doing the same thing. So why would you want somebody to come around and spoil the little ones?

(Why is that important that the little ones are going to be spoiled?)

Why is that important? Cause their gonna have more drugs dealer and drug user, drug dealers and users will never stop, cause there's drug dealers around. Cause once they don't get rid of the drug dealers, you know, people that is using drugs, they won't stop using drugs, cause they have people selling it, that's why it's good to get rid of them.

(Why is that important, getting rid of drug dealers and people using drugs and all that?)

Because it's, it's bad, because they don't know that they doing something wrong to the people that use drugs. They probably think that they doing it for their own good cause they already in the drug situation, they already using drugs and stuff like that and they only care about the money, they don't care about people's life. And there's people out there who cares about people, you know, life and stuff like that.

But they don't care, they just care about getting money every day and selling to the people that use drugs, that's a, that's abusing them and stuff like that. But they don't know that they...they just want to get rid of the drugs and sell it and stuff like that. Once they got their money they happy, they don't care if they die the next minute, they sell'em the things.

In this instance the participant felt it would be better to help the police and get rid of the drug dealers, but only because that was what would be best for the people of the neighborhood. He did not see the problem in terms of some larger set of legal rules and sanctions, or in terms of some general ethical system, but rather he saw it in terms of how what exactly was happening and how it was going to affect his block and the children that live there. The drugs were not presented as being absolutely wrong or absolutely right, but in the context of what would happen to the children of the neighborhood if they started taking these drugs.

The inner-city youth center justifications were more or less split between focusing on the micro-system and focusing on the meso-system. This may have been a signal of the distinction between the justifications offered by the youth center and the justifications offered by the urban group home. The participants from this youth center showed more concern for their personal safety than the participants from

the other two settings. The following is an example of somebody more concerned with the self than with any system of relationships:

DILEMMA II, CRACK-COCAINE, INNER-CITY YOUTH CENTER

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 0 (SELF-SYSTEM)

I don't know nothing. I don't know nothing.

(Why?)

Cause if he's helping out in the neighborhood and, he seems, like the way it used to be before and not the way it used to be now, why I gonna snitch on him I'm not like that. If it's none of my business I stay out of it.

(Why?)

Cause that's me, I stay, I tell him, I keep my distance, I don't who you talking about.

(Why will you keep your distance?)

Because why my gonna snitch on somebody, I'm not like that, I don't snitch on nobody. I could see it with my own eyes, and I'll say didn't see nothing.

(Why is snitching bad?)

Because I don't like it, and what's gonna happen to me in the long run? How about if I snitch on him and then he says off. So she snitched on me... and gets people to kill me. I ain't dyin' for nothing stupid. It's not me.

This participant believed that what was going on in the neighborhood was none of her business. She basically saw the situation from her own point of view. She was not protecting any web of relationships in her justification. There was a passing comment about community, but the dominant theme was preservation of the self. She was worried about what was going to happen to her in the long run; not what was going to happen to her community, not what was going to happen to the surrounding communities. The only person she was identifying with was herself.⁴

A plurality of individuals from the youth center setting actually identified with the meso-system. However many of these meso-system answers had a very different tenor than those offered by the participants from the second setting. As a matter of fact these meso-system answers reflected the same type of thinking offered by the individuals from their setting who were interested only in preserving the self; except these individuals expanded their

⁴An ongoing problem with this study needs to be mentioned here. That is that this justification could possibly have another coding (as could all other justifications that were coded for the self-system in this setting for this dilemma.) While the individual identifies only with the self and is concerned about the preservation of the self, the sanctions with which they are concerned come from an outside source (the drug dealer and his cronies who would kill them if they spoke). So while the individuals identify solely with the micro-system in terms of effect, they identify with the exo-system in terms of cause. This probably signals the need for some refinement in the coding system for the ecological level that identifies both cause and effect: an interesting project for the future.

answers to include preservation of family. (The reason that families expands to meso-system is because these individuals often lived in close proximity to cousins, aunts and uncles and other extended family members, and in an interpretive move the family came to mean meso-system.) The following two justifications are examples of this type of thinking:

DILEMMA II, CRACK-COCAINE, INNER-CITY YOUTH CENTER

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (EXO-SYSTEM)

No. Cause, like you said, he's so powerful he got people protecting him. He probably need like, I would, I would like, if I say ya, and I help them catch him and they find, he'll find out it's me, he'll probably kill me or my family. So I won't help them. I just say, I just moved into the block. I would lie to the cops. Cause if he's helping me, why I gonna rat him out. Like if you helping me, ever since I was small, and you do something, I ain't gonna say nothing, you been helping me, you been kind to me. And I'm not gonna turn my back on you. I won't..I won't tell.

(Why?)

Because he would probably kill me or my family.

DILEMMA II, CRACK-COCAINE, INNER-CITY YOUTH CENTER

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 1 (FACTUALLY JUSTIFIED)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 2 (MESO-SYSTEM)

I tell them, if he committed how many murders?

(Twenty)

I squeal on him.

(Why?)

Cause I could be one of his next victims, I could get killed.

(Why is that important?)

Because if he committed that much uhm, that much murders, you know he could murder anybody else, and it could be me, or somebody from my family.

(Why is that important?)

I don't know.

These two justifications are two examples of the "me and mine" attitude that prevailed among many of the participants from this setting. In the first justification the individual was worried about the survival of his family: he was worried about his family being killed if the drug dealer found out he talked and he was worried about his family losing the quality of life the patronage of the drug dealer offers. He did not want to risk either of these things by helping the police. The second individual showed even greater concern for the drug dealer finding out who talked and going after his family. There was some concern about the quality of life the drug dealer offered among the youth center participants as there was among the urban group home participants, but the dominant theme at the youth center was survival of yourself and those close to you. It

was obvious that all other concerns were secondary.

While the differences between participant settings were most pronounced at the community story level, there were some interesting distinctions between participant settings at the societal story level as well. The dilemma for at this story level for the private school and the youth center dealt with joining the army and fighting in a (drug) war. The administration of the dilemmas coincided more or less with the building up of forces in the Persian gulf (but was long before the fighting actually occurred). The inner-city youth center dilemmas were administered very early in the conflict, while the private school dilemmas were administered a few months later. There is no telling exactly what effect the general political circumstances had on the participants from these two settings. There was probably some cohort effect. What does seem apparent is that the differences in participant settings did have an impact on the way participants from the youth center and participants from the private school answered the dilemma.

The vast majority from both the inner-city youth center and the private school used the macro-system as the identifying group for their justifications before the intervention (12 in each case), while only five urban foster home participants identified with the macro-system. The majority of the urban group home participants (six) identified with the exo-system type of group in their

justifications.

If the participants from the urban foster home were more concerned with their own community in their justifications for the community story level, they were more concerned with the "other" communities they might come into contact with over a period of time with the societal dilemma. They were concerned with how their actions would affect populations that were separate from their every day lives. An example of this follows:

DILEMMA III, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (EXO-SYSTEM)

Against.

(Why?)

Because, I know and I understand that it's helping people and helping their heroin habit and stuff, but it's not helping the people that have to pay for it, you know, pay for it. Some people, they can't afford it. It's like, they only get so much and they have to make it stretch until the next one and the next one. And, so that this is, this is gonna happen if people, people start to shoot, shoot up, cause in a way I think the heroin addicts deserve it because they chose to do that. Nobody, nobody put a gun to their head and told them, told them, shoot up heroin or I'm gonna kill you. Nobody told them that. They just voluntarily did it.

On the other hand, if people decide to, you know, pay the taxes, the its, its like not really gonna help cause the more, the way they raised the taxes it's not gonna help. Because the more they agree to tax they gonna pay and pay and then you don't, you don't see the money. Because the more you pay, it's like the more people come, you know, and get out off on heroin (). So really it's not helping people. It's not helping nobody really. The people that pays, it's not helping them and they don't paying, it's not helping them neither.

This example is fairly sophisticated. The individual laid out the two populations that would be most influenced by her decision; the drug addicts who would be helped by the center and the poor people who would be hurt the most by the taxes. She then balanced the affect her decision would have on each of the populations. She was not concerned with the entire social structure, but only with these two populations. Her descriptions of the two communities did suggest a certain detachment; they were seen as "out there". At the same time she took a somewhat personal approach to the dilemma suggesting that even though she did not actively participate in these settings, as she would with her own community, these settings did exist as separate entities to her.

The same types of sentiments are exhibited in the

following justification:

DILEMMA III, HEROIN, FOSTER HOME

ONTOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF THE OTHER)

ECOLOGICAL LEVEL 3 (EXO-SYSTEM)

Damn, I feel like I'm a politician or something. Look, I think if they try to do the thing that they doing, I mean so they gonna open up new drug rehabs, they have to clean the neighborhoods first cause they could go to the rehab and they could really clean themselves, but once they go back to the same old friends and the same old thing that they used to, like to do, they're gonna wind up doing it again, they're gonna get influenced no matter what. What you need to do is, first of all stop giving out free needles, you got to stop that, word up. You got to stop that, it's, all they doing is...it's all right for you to shoot up, you know what I'm saying, just don't share with your friends. I mean I know that AIDS, the AIDS problem is, is getting worse and everything, and I'm sure that in the near future someone hopefully will find a cure for it, but, you just making more drug addicts, you know what I'm saying, and it's not like their gonna make sure they're gonna go clean their needles. No drug heads gonna do that once they got the...they want to shoot up. That's the main purpose they go and jeopardize their lives and, and living the way they live. For, for, for, just

a little high. They ain't gonna stop it and say, oh let me clean my needle. They're gonna shoot up anyway. What you giving out, if you giving out free needle, you're giving them more needles in case one breaks, so they got another one, you know what I'm saying. It's crazy.

(So you wouldn't vote for the tax?)

No, not the fifteen percent man.

(Why?)

I mean that's a lot of money man. A lot of poor people out there, you know what I'm saying. And if you put that fifteen percent tax increase through, so you open a little, a few rehabs, well what happen to the poor people, the homeless people. What about them? What you gonna do with them. They out, they still out there, and they still gonna be out there, and they ain't making matters any better.

(Why is that important that they're out there?)

Cause, ain't nobody likes to get on no train and have some bums smelly feet all in your face. I mean you've been on the train, right? (Ya) You go on the subway, you know how they be stinking, and I ain't (), they be stinking. And I feel sorry for them, cause, you know, they don't have nowhere to clean themselves and take care of themselves, but... That tax increase is crazy, word up, I wouldn't vote for it myself, I don't,

I don't know.

Summary Discussion

The quantitative data presented in this study at keeps open the question of whether the type of answer an individual gives to a moral dilemma is dependent, at least in part, on their ecological surroundings. The ontological perspective-taking abilities showed some change across settings, while the ecological level seemed to show slightly greater variation. It is important to point out that many of the differences occurred at the societal story level. There may be many reasons for this. A Kohlbergian perspective might argue that moral decision making at the societal level is more dynamic because it entails aspects of post-conventional thought that were not considered at either the personal or the community level. Turiel might claim that individuals are dealing more with conventional aspects of morality at the personal and community levels and more moral aspects at the societal.

The qualitative data presented here seem to present a much clearer picture of the variations associated with historical and environmental differences among the separate participant settings at all levels. This leads to the idea that individuals at the same developmental level in terms of justice per se, if justice per se is recognized as the ability to take the perspective of the other in a moral

situation, could, and at times do, have radically different content as a result of socio-historical context. But unlike the cultural relativism proposed by Shweder (1982) the combination of quantitative and qualitative data suggests that it might be a combination of cognitively based constants and varying contexts. This is an aspect of moral decision-making that has been too often ignored in psychology.

Kohlberg (Kohlberg et. al. 1983) attempted to deal with this problem in his later work with his hypothesis that specific morals were normative, but he failed to specify what exactly caused the normative, value-laden aspects of individual moralities. These data suggests that individual moralities are normative, but the ecological circumstances to which they are normative changes according to situation and historical circumstance. The individual in the inner city youth center might address morality and its repercussions in terms of the self and the immediate family. This is because historical circumstances and the ecological situation create a atmosphere where the choice of that ecological is normative (this will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter). The greater the individual's understanding of others and their motives, and the repercussions of their actions on others, the greater the likelihood that the individual will choose this normative ecological level. The moral reasoning is then

played out on this particular stage. The same type of process would be true for an individual from the urban group home or the suburban private school; yet the outcome might differ radically. Change the setting and/or the situation and you change the nature of what is normative.

Moral decision-making is a confluence of different factors at a specific point in time. There is the ontological development of the individual which acts as the deep structure for the process. There is the history leading up to the dilemma, the history of the individual, the history of the ecological surroundings. There is the current set of ecological surroundings and there is the history of the various groups in these surroundings. Out of these dynamic interactions, in which the needs of the individual and the needs of the groups in which s/he participates struggle for meaning, come norms for action. It is futile to try and universalize this process as some of Kohlberg's earlier work attempted. A large part of the equation of what occurs within the individual is dependent on dynamic variables. It is futile to attribute definite norms to a specific sub-category as Gilligan (1977) attempted because individuals change along with particular circumstances; there has to be a recognition of the historical factors leading up to a moral situation. Dividing situations between conventional and moral as Turiel (1983) does is possible but not satisfying. It may be more

informative to view moral action as a broad spectrum along which an individual travels. What may be conventional in one instance may be moral in another. The determining factor in where along the continuum a moral dilemma falls is not determined by the individual, or by any group, but by a confluence of the type mentioned above.

The individual is both the actor and the result of actions. The first two parts of this study showed that there are changes in moral reasoning within the individual based on the particular situation, and there are changes in moral reasoning across individuals as the particular context of the individual. The question is how these two interact. This requires an interpretive approach to the problem.

Chapter V. Interpretative Exploration

The major point that can be extrapolated from the research up to this point is that there is a seemingly universal aspect to moral decision-making, perhaps because it is endemic to the human condition but not native to the human-being. There is also an ecological, or situational, aspect to moral decision making. The position taken by this study is that the actual moral decision comes out of an interaction between the two. This point however only offers a certain theoretical knowledge, and according to Kockelmans (1975), knowledge is only the beginning of understanding. An understanding of the interaction, that is to understand how the interaction occurs, requires a certain degree of interpretation. Interpretation of the phenomena may be considered a re-investigation of the knowledge generated by the phenomena (the object) in terms of the participants (the subject). According to Kockelmans the object allows a greater understanding of the subject (the participants in each of the three groups) and the re-investigation allows a greater understanding of the object (the actual interaction that occurs between the ontogenetic and the ecological).

This is the emphasis of Kockelmans' (1975) five canons of hermeneutic interpretation, the most important of which is the hermeneutic circle. Kockelmans stresses that

hermeneutic understanding, as an inter-subjective process, does not come simply from knowing your subject: knowing the subject that you wish to understand is only the starting point of the interpretive process. It is approach, more than any simple, concrete adjustments in methodology, that enables the researcher to pursue an interpretive course.

Kockelmans' first canon is the autonomy of subject; the necessity of the observer not to let pre-judgments about certain criteria affect the way in which s/he perceives the actions of the subject, e.g., a strict Piagetian should realize his/her own pre-judgments in the examination of behavior and make a concerted attempt to set them aside. The second canon exhorts the interpreter to dig beneath surface meaning in an attempt to find the true meaning, what he calls the "maximally reasonable" or human meaning of phenomena. The third canon says that the interpreter should know the subject as well as possible without actually becoming empathic. The fifth canon outlines the need for the interpreter to establish meaning in terms of his/her self. Intersubjectivity represents knowledge a social group shares; if the interpreter cannot share the understanding s/he gains through the process with the larger group s/he wishes to communicate with, it is not a worthwhile endeavor.

The fourth, and on my view the most important, of the canons is the hermeneutic circle, the central methodological and interpretive link to hermeneutic understanding. The

hermeneutic circle is the central methodological and interpretive link to interpretive understanding. The circle allows all other aspects of hermeneutics to become achievable. In Dilthey's (1976) version of the circle, the only way to really understand what he calls the "life expressions" (expressions which make mental content intelligible for us) of another person is to understand the "inner context" behind them. But the only way to understand the whole inner context is through an inductive process of piecing them together from individual life experiences. In an attempt to understand we are constantly going from part, to whole, to part.

Thus, the first step for any investigator, with a particular research question in mind, entering the circle is to establish his/her own horizon. This is not as easy a task as it may sound. As Heidegger (1962) pointed out, the researcher cannot escape the life s/he lives. S/he is therefore constantly trying to fight tradition (in an attempt to find something new) and at the same time a slave to it. The researcher should attempt to locate his/her tradition through a process of framing the question. This can often be accomplished through empirical research that could be acceptable to the larger scientific community.

The researcher begins with empirical work in an attempt to locate or become conscious of his/her own horizon. In the case of this study the empirical work also

establishes the object. This allows the researcher to obtain a certain degree of developed understanding with intersubjective validity. Once a more narrow question has been defined the researcher can return to the various parts of the study more aware of where the question falls in relation to his/her own every day world.

Unfortunately at this point two things happen to most research. The findings are not presented as falling within a particular framework or horizon and therefore it is not assumed that they are limited by that horizon. The results of empirical work are instead often times presented as if they transcend all horizons and/or ideologies. But even more important is that at this point most researchers stop. This means that the researcher stops at his/her own particular brand of "truth". Heidegger (1962) defined truth as merely the unconcealment of something. If one wishes to go further one needs to understand and then to develop that understanding. Heidegger called this development of understanding interpretation. Interpretation is the working out of possibilities projected in understanding: the circumspectively taking apart of that which has been explicitly understood. This process means not only is something accessible, but that something is seen as something. In a hermeneutical analysis this process of framing the narrow question would only be the beginning.

The researcher, cognizant of the limitations of his/her

own horizon, must then go back and re-explore the parts of the study with the intention of re-creating the whole (i.e., the question). This serves two purposes: it begins to acknowledge the horizons of the observants and how these separate paradigms might have effected the question while at the same time expanding the researcher's personal horizon. An expansion of the horizon means an expansion of the question (and of the whole) and therefore an expansion of the parts to be explored.

The re-creation of the expanded question should lead the researcher to try and determine how the actions being studied fall within the observant's horizon. This is not to say that the researcher is attempting to stand within the observant's tradition; it cannot be an empathic act. Information obtained standing within another tradition may have no communicable aspects for the scientific community the researcher is working within (a point made by Kockelmans.) It is therefore incumbent upon the researcher to explore the observant's tradition in terms of his/her own tradition. What puts the parameters on any exploration of parts is the whole (just as the parts create and recreate the whole). So the tradition of the observant must always be studied in terms of the question being asked.

The researcher's horizon then in this study has been established in the first two chapters (through the object). The work established a starting point for further

explorations. The circle is established by using this object as a starting point to explore the horizons of the participants; the object of the study requires that as a starting point there be three separate horizons represented by the three defined groups. This is because the justifications to the dilemmas, and maybe more importantly the way the justifications were analyzed, found certain similarities within these groups, or settings that could be traced to a shared tradition or horizon. The similarities were more apparent than they were quantifiable. They do however seem to represent particular stances which the participants in each setting take, which are at least partially the result of the actual settings. It is important to remember that all understanding is only partial and limited. The limitations are twofold. One is that the researcher's experience with the subject is limited. In this case the researcher's experience with the individuals is limited to the settings in which they were interviewed. Each of these individuals has both a number of current settings and a number of historical settings which impact his/her fluid horizon. The second limitation is that the researcher brings his own horizon, in the form of the research knowledge, to the interpretive process. This limitation becomes more apparent through the discussion of the different settings that follows.

An Overview of the Settings

The Inner-city Youth Center

Each of the three general settings in this study had a unique character. The first setting was an inner-city youth center. The center was located in a basement, was underfunded, had very little in the way of supplies, and was being threatened with closure by the larger parent organization. The center itself was poorly furnished and had a very small, though committed staff, that felt underpaid and overworked. Almost all the adolescents who participated in the center's activities were of Latino descent, and almost all came from a two or three block radius around the center. The incidence of adolescent pregnancy was very high, and many of the teenage females brought their babies down with them when they came to the center. Rules were strict but difficult to enforce, and exceptions had to be constantly made or there would have been a youth center without very many youth. Some of the participants had family ties, including a great many "cousins".

The extent to which the population the youth center was attempting to serve actively participated was a continuous problem for the staff. More than one staff member complained that they could not get their population to become involved in anything, and that the "kids" were

unreliable and would often not show up after they had promised they would. It was very difficult to get the adolescents intrigued by any of the projects they were trying to develop through the center, and it was close to impossible to maintain their interest over an extended period of time. This was apparent to the researcher during the interview process; it was extremely difficult to get individuals to agree to participate. Even those who did agree were rarely interested in the project itself and rarely asked questions about the why and the how of what they were doing.

There was one further aspect of the center that took on importance in terms of the project; that was the relationship of the center, its population and staff, to the local school. Prior research at a local school had led to the expectation of a close working relationship between center and school; the administration of the school, when seen in a vacuum, seemed committed to working with the type of students that would come from that community, at their own level. What I found instead was an adversarial relationship in which many of the adolescents, as well as the center staff who acted as ombudspersons for the center population, distrusted the school and saw it as part of a system that did not care about them and would hurt the members of the community for its own benefit.

This short overview of the center may offer some

insights in terms of establishing part of the shared horizon of the population. The interpretive move is to develop the relationship between this now established subject and the justifications that came from this group's participation in the study. This would foster a greater understanding of the interaction that occurred in the moral decision making process of this collective group.

The justifications of the individuals from the center were, on the whole, much more individualistic in quality, and much less concerned with anything but the most immediate web of social relationships than either of the populations from the other two settings. In responses to stories from both the micro-system and the meso-system, concern often centered on protecting the self and/or the immediate family. This was especially apparent at the meso-system level where individuals feared retribution to their families and/or themselves and did not believe that any "outsiders" could be trusted in terms of promises offered. The following two justifications are examples of this type of thinking:

I would say I don't know nothing about him, because he helped me a lot.

(Why is that important?)

I would really rat him out, because what if one of my family was the next victim. Ya, I'd swear him out.

(Why?)

Because I don't want nobody of my family dying, by this

drug dealer, you know, in the neighborhood. But if my family was safe I wouldn't have nothing to do with it, wouldn't give them no information.

(Why?)

Cause, he's helping us out, giving us something to eat, something they ain't doing, so...

(Why is that important?)

You know, you don't want to suffer or nothing, you don't want to die or nothing.

(Why?)

Cause nobody want to die.

.
.

No.

(Why?)

Because he had helped my family and me. And he's willing to help me go to college. And I won't rat him out.

(Why is it important that he helped your family and you?)

Cause if it wasn't for him we'd probably be dead, or starving or something. Or we would have been living in the streets. And I'm not gonna get killed just for telling on, telling on somebody. So I won't.

The answers to the macro-system dilemmas provided an interesting counter-point to the answers from the micro- and

meso-system dilemmas. When responding to this dilemma the individuals were far more concerned with obeying rules; they didn't seem to want to join the army as a personal sacrifice for the good of the country, but many of the participants seemed resigned to the fact that if there was a draft they would not be able to escape it.

This combination of justification (to an admittedly contrived situation) and ecological/historical overview of the justifier offers a chance to view the way in which the ontological interacts with the ecological to create a pattern of development. (The historical context of the setting for the interpretation is admittedly slight, but it offers insight more through comparison of the other two settings than through singular, clinical interpretation).

In this setting it is apparent that protection of the self is of great importance to this population. One of the major reasons for that may be that the larger inner-city neighborhood in which they reside is considered a very bad area in terms of crime. (This might be illustrated in anecdotal fashion. When looking for a participant from the study for a second interview I located another member of the center on the street. I asked this adolescent if he had seen the person that I was looking for, and he answered, "Oh him, he got shot in a gang fight." This turned out to not be true, but it brings into focus the type of immanent danger with which these individuals live, and have lived for

a good part of their lives.) The individuals in this community must constantly be aware of their own safety, and the safety of those they are close to, when confronting any situation that involves a choice of action.

The apparent lack of participation in larger groups is probably the result of a set of complex circumstances. From casual observation one of the circumstances involves personal reputation. Individuals observed doing things for other people are seen as being in danger of being taken advantage of and/or being "played for a fool." The sociological reasons for this are manifold and tied to the larger political landscape that these individuals must traverse on a daily basis. The members of the community often feel put upon and abandoned, as witnessed by the way the community center was currently being treated by the larger organization in budgeting. This may lead to an attitude of wariness of outsiders and that you can only allow those you can fully trust a place in your web of relationships which you would want to preserve. There is little confidence in any imposed, systemic organization outside the immediate cadre of family (and maybe close friends) because they are attempting to take advantage of you while giving little in return. The desire to abide by the rules of the macro-system represent similar feeling that manifest themselves in a different way. There was a sense of powerlessness in the justifications for this group that

was not apparent in the answers of the individuals from the other two settings. Many of the participants from this setting felt that this was what they must do, not because of any allegiance to a larger group, but because of impending repercussions if they did not obey; repercussions that there was no way to avert.

These interpretations of actions are the result of knowing the delimited answers to the moral dilemmas as well as an understanding of the historical/ecological implications of the setting. The contrived psychological study acted as an entry point into the mode of interpretation.

moral
decisions

researcher
observations

In an attempt to apply this mode of interpretation to the developmental model that is at the core of this study, Piaget's example of the marble game will be used as an ongoing metaphor. If "marble game" is replaced with "morality game" we might begin to develop an understanding of the way the individual acts in concert with the ecological context (in this study limited to the immediate social setting) to form behavioral rules for the individuals in the setting.

Individuals enter into the setting of the center early in their adolescence, bringing rules with them on how to act, but not on how to act within the center. Some of the younger participants in the study referred to omniscient forces in their justifications. An example of this is the way a younger participant uses absolutes and implicitly refers to God through, the signifying of hell as the final outcome in this justification to the second dilemma:

Ya.

(Why?)

Because he's killing people.

(Why is that important?)

A lot of those people who use the drugs, they're going to be sad, trying to, they be stealing from their mother, they be killing and robbery.

(Why is that important?)

Well, they might do something crazy.

(Why shouldn't they do anything crazy?)

That's not right.

(Why?)

Because they shouldn't be using that stuff. They know that it kills them.

(Why is it wrong to be doing something that kills them?)

Because then they won't be living any more.

(Why is that bad?)

They could go to hell.

Not only did this young man believe in an omniscient rule structure, but he also treated these rules as breakable. The center staff found this adolescent to be very difficult to control; he was constantly being reprimanded and punished for his actions. Despite a constant presence he was treated more or less like an outsider by the other regular attenders. The same was true of another adolescent who developed justifications based on a universal ideal about how people could behave in concert with each other if only given the choice: while she was not the control problem the prior adolescent was, she seemed to be treated as an outsider despite the apparent affection for her by the staff and the fact that she was often at the center and participated in its activities.

As individuals continue to participate in the center setting they begin to become cognizant of certain realities. If they put too much trust in an idealism they are going to get hurt. They are constantly witness to situations where those around them, including staff, are put into unfair, compromising positions that are not necessarily of their own making. An example of this is the high incidence of teenage pregnancy among the center's female adolescents (estimated at 75% by the center's director). The almost romantic ideals of love and relationship are quickly turned to the sight of the fifteen year old mother carrying her baby on

her arm. These babies are a constant, at time numerous, presence down in the center. The growing ability of the young female adolescent to take the perspective of the other, in this case the young mothers, might cause her to conclude that rules in the center are not part of a social ideal, there is no omniscient force to protect you; that if you allow yourself to think that way you are going to get burned. While the individual's cognitive abilities grow, his/her horizon is delimited by the boundaries of his/her setting. This was a point Piaget made with much more mundane props (e.g., the position of props) in his book on possibility (1987).

It is the reality of the situation, within a context, joined with the slowly advancing ability of perspective taking that lead to an understanding of rules of conduct within the center setting. The inter-relationships in rules systems between contexts, between settings, between competing realities in the adolescent's life is shown in the fact that these female adolescents still engage in unprotected sex; there are obviously other rules, created through experience, for sexual conduct.

The shift from ideal to reality is a slow turn for these adolescents. As the individual in this setting begins to become better and more efficient at taking the views of the other, s/he will begin to recognize more and more the pain and repercussions behind seemingly harmless actions.

The rules of behavior come into closer and closer focus: always expect the worst, don't trust what other people say to you, never leave yourself vulnerable, never leave yourself open to attack. These become the standards of survival among the people who live and act in their setting. If you do not follow the rules you create a dangerous situation not only for yourself, but for those around you. You will not be trusted and face some degree of ostracism. A person who opens him/herself up to thinking about the other is not taking into account the needs of the group, in terms of what the group feels is most beneficial to its survival. The game is at its apex, and the individual is playing by the rules, when s/he realizes that you must never make yourself vulnerable to another person.

The Urban Foster Home

The second setting was made up of two foster group homes in an urban, although not inner-city, environment. The two homes were a short walking distance away from each other, and members of the homes seemed to visit each other on a regular basis. There was at least some transfer of adolescent back and forth between the two homes; in spite of this there was also a rivalry with adolescents from one home complaining about the adolescents from the other home. The members of each home were there on a semi-long term basis. All of the adolescents in the homes had been there at least six months, with some having lived there as long as two

years. However the major goal for all the adolescents was to be eventually reunited with their families.

The two homes had a "team", with a psychologist, a social worker, and a nurse; each home also had a staff of child-care workers. Most of the adolescents in the homes lived two to a room, some lived three to a room, and a very few had their own room. The rooms were dispensed in terms of seniority which may have made the mission of the place ambiguous for the children; all aspects of the home are supposed to be geared towards re-uniting parent and child, but the longer an adolescent remained in the homes the more benefits s/he accrued.

Each adolescent had specific chores which s/he were required to do during the week. In exchange for these chores the members received a small allowance. If one of the house members did not do a chore another house member would be asked to do it. There was a good deal of "that's not my job" and "he was supposed to do that" during the times that the group home was visited.

The adolescents went to school during the day and returned home in the evening. During the weekend they went on planned outings. They were allowed to spend free time in the house, either in their rooms or in recreation areas, or within a block of the house if they wanted to go outside (unless they wanted to go to the sister house, in which case they had to ask permission). The members of the house then

were very dependent upon each other for any type of recreation. Social functions were, for the most part, done in a group atmosphere. Meals were eaten together at a large dining table; there was a common television room with a VCR and a nintendo game set. The adolescents were always encouraged by staff to include all members of the group in whatever was occurring inside or outside the house. Very few exclusionary practices were observed.

There were strict sets of rules for the house, but they were difficult to enforce because there was very little staff members could do past taking away allowance, taking away privileges and attempting to restrict movement. One staff member described a situation in which one of the adolescent's decided that she was going to go out for the evening. The staff told her that she couldn't go, threatened, and tried to block the door. The adolescent simply went around the staff person, and as he said, "there wasn't a damn thing I could do about it". The adolescent returned the next day and is still living at the house. In another situation, an adolescent who had been part of the interview process disappeared before the final interview. When a staff member was questioned, she just said with a sigh that, "he had gone over the wall". She went on to say that he did this periodically when he felt he needed some freedom, but that he would be back sooner or later. When asked if there would be any repercussions she just shrugged

her shoulders and said, "he don't care". The rules of the house that did not infringe on the rights on any other house members meant very little to these adolescents, and both staff and house members seemed to understand that.

The adolescents themselves were placed in the homes as a form of temporary housing in a time of crisis. The adolescents were not questioned about their backgrounds as part of the process, but a few volunteered the information during the interview sessions. One adolescent had a stepfather who had been dealing drugs and a mother who may or may not have been part of the business. The stepfather had been arrested and this adolescent was in the house while the mother cleaned herself up and attempted to get her life back together. Another adolescent had a mother who had been dealing drugs, although she didn't mention whether the mother was in jail or not. A third adolescent claimed that her neighborhood had become too dangerous and her mother wanted her out. They felt that the foster group home was the best environment. A fourth adolescent claimed that his life at home had simply become too tense, and he needed to be away so that things could cool down; he seemed to blame himself for the trouble as much as he blamed the rest of his family.

One thing that was obvious from tangential discussions with a majority of the adolescents was that they missed their families and wanted to return to them as soon as

possible. Many of the adolescents saw the other members of the house as part of their interim, surrogate family. They saw protection of the group of people they lived with as an important function, and they expected protection in return. While the staff members did say there were frequent fights between different house members, they also said that there was a good deal of caring. The adolescents saw their lives in terms of the needs of their counterparts.

The justification for this group were, on the whole, based more on the mid-size group systems than either of the other two settings. (The inner-city youth center justifications were centered on the smaller systems while the suburban private school justifications were centered, for the most part on the larger macro-system type group.)⁵ The justifications to the micro-system dilemmas were less focused on individual relationships and more focused on a larger circle of influence that included family systems. These individuals did not spend as much time focusing on the needs of the other individual in the dilemma. Some were worried about the fact that they made a commitment. a

⁵There is a caveat to this. The urban youth center and the private school did have a different set of dilemmas. This was especially apparent in the first dilemma which brought family systems into the equation in the form of the aunt for the urban group home, and in the third dilemma which brought the military into the equation during a time of patriotic fervor for the youth center and private school. In spite of this the differences are pronounced enough to assume that the ecological surroundings did have a basic effect on the way the individuals in each setting justified their answers to the dilemmas.

promise to their friend and that commitment was something that could not or should not be broken. Others were worried about what result their actions would have in terms of the safety of their other family members. Members of the group home seemed to feel it was important that the single individual does nothing to hurt the family system; that others on who they depend, or to whom they feel an obligation are protected. This type of obligation to the larger group is expressed in the following justification:

I'm gonna tell her mother she's on drugs.

(Why?)

Because she's stealing, and she, uhm is making it bad for everybody else. And she's my cousin.

(Why is that important?)

Because that's my cousin and I care about her, and, she's shooting up. That's wrong.

(Why?)

Cause it's not good for her, it's not good for her. It's bad. And then she making it bad for everybody else cause she stealing. And even if she don't take, you know, a lot of drugs, she's still stealing. That's (). People might need the money.

(Why is all this important?)

Because her mother use...her mother is worried about her. And, you know, why would, you know, why would her mother even suspect. I mean she stole from (), not

her mother. So, mother know the way it is, you know, her mother had her though, she should get the right to know what's going down. That's why I'd tell her.

(Why does the mother have the right to know?)

Cause that's her daughter, she had her, and she's worried about her. That's why.

The obligation to protect the members of the group that dominate your living space was even more apparent in the justifications for the meso-system dilemmas. It was here that neighborhood, the people that you live with, share your life with, were of paramount importance. Most justifications centered on the preservation of the surrounding group just as at the homes many of the adolescents wanted to protect the members of what was a supposedly transient group.

The group expanded to the meso-system for the last dilemma. But the adolescents still centered their justifications on people with whom they came into contact, taking a semi-personal approach to the problem rather than either an individualistic or societal approach. They took the perspective of other people they knew involved with drugs and/or people they knew who were functioning at the border line economically and included them in their justification scheme.

Returning to the game metaphor the foster group establishes a certain moral system to those who become

residents. The individual who enters care has been removed from his/her family unit and neighborhood system. They are required to endure their entire social existence in a strange place with strange people. This is not done gradually, but immediately. The new foster home member is forced to establish ties with the other individuals in the home simply through the fact that they are part of a single group and they are where they are because of similar circumstances. The community that is the house becomes primary for these individuals. They are worried about protecting others who are in their particular circumstance; because of the transient nature of their relationships the option of focusing attention on a single individual becomes dangerous. The enclosed nature of their community, and the fact that for the time they are there they really only have each other makes focusing attention on a larger, non-present society more difficult.

The fact that all the residents had been in the home at least six months made it difficult to gauge the progression of moral decision making in terms of group. An individual who enters one of the houses might come to realize, through an understanding of the needs of the other in the house, the need to base all reasoning on community. The speed with which this might occur would probably be faster in this setting than in the other two settings because of the totality of the situation for these adolescents. The

adolescents themselves were not going back and forth between many different social settings, attempting to balance one against the other. Their lives were dominated by the setting of the foster home.

The single opportunity available to look at this type of ecological effect of the foster home environment was with a participant who was about to be re-integrated with his family. The second interview took place on the day before he was to leave the house. He was excited and happy about leaving, and seemed to have placed himself off from, or been placed off from, the rest of the house members. He seemed less enthusiastic about his house-mates, and less protective of them. This might be reflected in the following justifications for the dilemmas presented that day, such as the following justification for the second dilemma:

I would, would help them.

(Why?)

Because, no matter how good the street are around us, I mean no matter how good the, uhm, streets, ya, how good it is on our block, the other blocks are getting torn apart.

(Why is that important?)

Well, it's important that drugs be stopped in the, in the, in all neighborhoods besides mine. I mean drugs should be stopped in my neighborhood also, cause they said that, uhm, drugs is gonna be, that said that drugs

is, uhm, in other neighborhoods around mine.

(Violence in other neighborhoods.)

Right, violence in other neighborhoods around mine.

Which have to do with drugs, right? So, with our, since my neighborhood is right and good I still have still have to help the cops equally because of the, of the surrounding neighborhoods, outside of mine.

(Why is it important to help those surrounding neighborhoods?)

Because those are, they're innocent people getting shot, shot too. Doing for drugs. Drugs is not the answer, it's not the answer to, uhm, for killing people. Cause if you, it's not right, that's all I can say.

The move from dependence on the smaller micro-structure, which might be similar to what was portrayed by the participants in setting one, may quickly turn to the larger, more community oriented meso-structure. These adolescents are forced to confront the fact that they no longer have the support and/or the protection of a family system. An ability to take the perspective of the others in the situation leads the individuals to realize that individual relationships are transient and the only thing they have to depend on is the immediate community. There is also the realization that the moral proclamations and rules of the larger society are not as important and/or as

worthwhile, as the minions of that society claim. The adolescent realizes that not only is he there because the larger society failed him/her, but all the other members of the community are there for the same reason. The mores of the larger society is not reflected in the lives of these adolescents, and there is nothing that these young people feel they have to protect in the larger social systems. This was reflected in their attitudes towards culturally instituted punishments, such as jail, which they saw less as a social sanction and more as an annoyance (e.g., you get caught, you serve your time and then you get back to life). It was also reflected in the imposed rules of the group homes which the adolescents seemed to feel existed only if they chose to let them exist; and they only chose to let them exist when the rules benefitted them. The focus of their entire lives in the group home structure was their community.

The Suburban Private School

The third setting was a non-residential, suburban private school in one of the richest counties in the United States. The school was on a very large wooded setting and included all grades kindergarten through twelve. It is important to give a detailed description of the campus to emphasize the disparity between this setting and the two previous settings. The entrance of the school is off of a secondary county road, and it would be easy to miss if you

did not know exactly where it was. There is a long driveway leading up to the main campus. A pool, a number of ball fields, and a lake with a number of water fowl are all visible from the driveway. The driveway is full of signs warning drivers to be careful of children and bumps to slow down car speed.

The main high school building is actually an extremely large, Victorian house. The building is within a circle consisting of a gym/cafeteria, a library, an arts center, along some other small buildings comprising the rest of the school. The high school building is dominated by a large central room with over-stuffed furniture and a fireplace where students are encouraged to come and spend their free time. There is a central bulletin board with information about issues of the day and other scholarship items. There are also signs everywhere concerning school activities such as yearbook and fiction magazines. The classes are extremely small, ranging between twelve and nineteen, and the students get a great deal of individualized attention.

The teachers are encouraged to raise issues concerning ethical and moral behavior with their students during the course of lessons, and at least one of the teachers came from an ethical culture school. The teachers, for the most part, dressed extremely well, with the many of the male teachers wearing ties and the female teachers wearing skirts or dresses. There was a common kitchen where teachers could

have coffee and/or lunch; and while there was some academic distance between teachers and students at the school, the students felt free enough to enter the space when they felt it was necessary. Even the headmaster played touch football with the students on one of the first nice spring days of the year. The headmaster also urged the students to feel that the school was their community and was something they should care about. At one general assembly he talked about an open school day when other adolescents would come and observe their school; he encouraged them to dress well and put the best possible face that they could on their community.

The students came, for the most part, from upper-middle class or upper class families. The tuition was around \$10,000 a year and there were no scholarships. One teacher even complained about the lack of minority representation, saying that the school was trying to do something about obtaining some scholarship money from outside sources. The students at the school were mostly white and well dressed. They were far more concerned than the participants from the other two groups with doing well and giving the right answers. Some of the students were visibly upset when they left feeling that they had not given the right answer and wondering what the right answer was. When they were told that there was no right answer they did not seem to believe it. A couple of teachers said that this was normal, that

the students were always very concerned with achieving the highest possible score on whatever they were doing and it was often difficult to convince them that things existed on which the score did not matter. The students in this setting also tended to agonize over their answers, to think a long time before starting their answer, and to speak slowly and work out what they were going to say carefully. None of the students seemed to react at all emotionally to the scenarios (as did happen in the other two settings). The students were also extremely interested in what the research was about, some constantly asking questions about every aspect of the method.

The participants from this setting seemed to concentrate more on the macro-system for their answers than those from the other two settings. They were very concerned with laws, regulations, and what was good for the country in general. The notion of the illegality of an action was often brought up as either part of a justification, or as a point of reference in a justification. The notions of the common good and social contract also ran through their justifications, and students would sometimes tell me that they had discussed a similar situation in their classroom, and their teacher had brought up certain ideas. It was difficult to separate their answers as what they thought from their answers as what they thought were the correct answers.

The macro-system may have dominated much of the justifications from this setting for two different, but related reasons. One reason is that this is what the students at this school were taught was the correct way to decide this type of dilemma, by reverting to the idea of social contract. The students were extremely anxious to present the correct answer and to please the interviewer. The students may then have reverted to the macro-system group for justification because they thought that was what they should do. The following is a possible example of just such a situation:

I would help.

(Why?)

Because uhm, especially since, ah, even if there, there's hope in the neighborhood now, I know that it's only gonna be temporary and especially since he's in the () of the younger kids, I don't, young, my kids may, or my relative or my friends kids may be, some of those kids that I don't, that's, if they're young, that's the only idea they're gonna have of what, of what life is like, and that's, and later then that's just going to be the only life that there is. People will, like they'll have a warped sense of what things should be like. I mean even though the older people might, might know this is bad, but, it's, it's keeping everything stable, the kids aren't gonna know that,

and, and eventually it's not gonna be stable anymore.

(Why is that important?)

It's important for the future. I mean the present's also but...

(Why is it important for the future?)

Why is it important to me? Cause, cause I don't, I mean if, it's just important that, that even if, if the situation on the surface seems to be good it's important to have morals because it's, I mean it's not always gonna, gonna be good and....

(Why?)

I mean everything will deteriorate if you don't. It's cause then you don't, I mean, once you start making up exceptions for what's right or wrong based on how the situation is right at that moment, then, then everything starts to fall out of place.

(Why is that important?)

Cause that's holds everything, that what holds our life together, that we have an idea of what, what we think is right and what's wrong.

(Why is that important?)

Well obviously it's important, uhm what do you mean why? I mean....

This is somewhat counter-balanced by the second reason, which is that the macro-system is the group you would expect

students from this background to choose as part of their justification. The progression of moral decision making processes in this instance is based on an upper-middle class sense of right and wrong, moral and immoral. As the individual begins to recognize the perspective of the other in society s/he also begins to realize that their way of life is dependent on the larger social contract. Even though family is of obvious importance to these individuals they realize that the position of their family in the social structure is part of a tenuous web of social relationships which could break down if those relationships are not enforced. Even though community is stressed on the school campus by the headmaster and many of the teachers the students seem to understand that this community is simply a training ground for the part they are being prepared to play in the larger societal structure. They seem to believe that relationships they come into contact with are part of a larger, abstract notion of societal relationships. Rather than limiting the boundaries, the ecological surroundings of these individuals expand the boundaries of social interaction. They depend on the rules of the larger society to maintain their lifestyles.

The marble game metaphor works in much the same way for this population that many theorists and researchers envisioned when they first started to apply to Piagetian framework to the problem of moral development. A greater

understanding of the circumstances and the part that other individuals plays in these circumstances leads to a greater understanding of the rules of the larger society.

The findings in exploring these three settings were presented in terms of boundaries created by the ecologies of the individuals. A boundary represents an attempt to establish horizons for the participants of the three settings in terms of the stated object; the different types of group levels that were the focus within each of the three settings. It is important to point out that a broader group level does not represent a broader horizon, merely a different horizon. That is that the ability to focus on the macro-system in a justification does not necessarily signify the ability to focus on the micro-system. A metaphor would illustrate the point: a nuclear physicist and a mechanic represent two types of intellectual horizons. The mechanic sees things in terms of the way a mechanic sees them and a nuclear physicist sees things in terms of the way a nuclear physicist sees them. The nuclear physicist's horizon is not superior to the mechanic's, simply different. If an individual had engine trouble s/he would probably prefer a mechanic's perspective on the situation over a physicist's perspective.

The ability to at least partially recognize the fact that these three different settings afford their participants three different types of horizons in terms of

the object allows for an expanded interpretation of the object. That is that moral codes within settings are created through a dialectical process between ecology and individual. That it is the variation in ecological surroundings which create the variation in moral codes. That it is social circumstance which set the agenda for the development of specific moral codes, and the agenda for these moral codes can be changed through a change in the social circumstances. Individuals are not born amoral or immoral (except for those with actual neurological impairment), but develop a morality that fulfills their need within their history.

The participants from the inner city youth center were often forced to limit their horizons to the immediate because that was all they could trust. The horizons in the foster homes were created by the transient nature of the current relationships and the need to establish ties with the community. The social standing of the members of the private school made it imperative that the individuals think in term of the larger social structure. The justifications each of the participants used was somehow connected to their current lives and histories.

This expanded object was established through the use of Kockelmans' five cannons. The first cannon, the autonomy of the subject was established through the posing of the object (i.e. object of study). The quantitative and qualitative

data presented in the two prior chapters allowed investigation of the three settings with at least a minimum of arbitrary pre-judgments. The second canon, the need to find the more human element in the data came from the separation of the three settings of historical overview, environmental settings and individual actions. The settings were no longer just settings, but settings which contained human-beings who took action. The third canon was, at least, dealt with in a partial manner. There was a good deal of observation of each of the settings and interviews were conducted with those who were closely involved in the lives of the participants (e.g., teachers, center workers, child-care workers). The fourth canon was of course the use of the hermeneutic circle. A true use of the circle would have involved re-investigating the subject in terms of the newly expanded object. Unfortunately there comes a time in any investigation when resources and patience wear thin. The fifth canon of inter-subjectivity was maintained through both the establishing of the object and the fact that the interpretation never really left the Piagetian paradigm that has run as a leitmotif through this entire work.

Chapter VI. Discussion

The research presented in this study makes three points of varying quality. The first is that actual moral judgments are based on contingent circumstances. This is apparent from the changes in the quality of a significant amount of responses when different moral situations were presented to the individuals involved in the study. The ontological measurements, in which all three populations were the same, showed that ontological development in terms of reason, as evidenced in recognition of the part the "other" plays in the group, may be universal. In other words all individuals develop the same recognition through reason that reality (in whatever guise) is a necessary aspect of life. They also develop, through reason, the notion that other individuals must have come to the same conclusion.

Results also showed that contingent morality is based, at least in part, on affiliation with some social group. While the quantitative findings were not as strong as in the prior conclusions, the degree to which the ecological group played a part in the development of moral justifications were evident in the individual answers.

The last conclusion follows from the three just mentioned, and that is that morality in the abstract is

something in which the individual mind believes, but morality in actuality is something created by social groups for the purposes of social groups in specific situations. The chapter using a hermeneutic method was an effort to explore this point.

There were two basic issues raised by the data presented in this study. The first was that particular moral judgments are the result of particular circumstances. Analysis of the justifications offered by the participants from the three different participant settings presented a picture of individuals changing the way they approached a moral problem when the ecological context of the particular problem shifted. If the individual is dealing with a problem that involves just the family then s/he makes one type of decision; when dealing with a problem that involves a different type of ecological landscape, such as community or society s/he might make another type of decision. The evidence suggested here suggests that individual moral decisions are dependent on contingent circumstances. The caveat here though is that the actual perspective taking ability of the individuals involved in this study did not seem to change when they changed ecological landscapes. There then might be two important aspects of the moral decision making process and the resultant judgment: the ability to make a moral decision and the way in which the decision is made. At its most basic level this represents

the inter-relationship of the how and why of the decision making process. The how is the result of a determination of what is good (based on the real or perceived needs of the other), and the why is contingent to what is right in that particular circumstance.

The second issue raised by this study is more complex. That is that contingent circumstance is not only the result of a particular dilemma, but also of the more broad based socio-historical background of the individual involved. What is contingently right is not only determined by the way in which the individual confronts the immediate situation, but it also is the consequence of how the background "prepares" the individual to confront that dilemma. The qualitative data and analysis and the hermeneutic interpretation of the data attempted to show how a single background could affect the way in which individuals approach three different types of moral situations. The individuals from the youth center tended to concentrate on the needs of individuals with whom they maintained a close relationship because the social history of their particular setting. Individuals making decisions in relation to that background may have felt that could only trust a small circle of individuals. The individuals from the urban group homes were making decisions that were the result of a very different socio-historical background and it seemed to show up in their answers. They depended far more on an immediate

community orientation for survival and they therefore gave justifications that were more concerned with the needs of the immediate community. The individuals from the private school setting made their decisions in the context of a third type of socio-historical background, one that depended heavily on the order imposed by the larger society through laws and customs, and their justifications reflected that.

What is good is still determined by the same perspective taking abilities, but what is right may be the result of both the particular circumstance and the type of affiliations the individual develop as the result of personal history and social circumstance.

While the research presented opens these two large issues along with a number of ancillary questions, the theoretical assumptions involved leave behind a number of gaping holes. The following discussion is an attempt to both detail a theoretical framework outlined by this research and to sharpen the reasoning behind this framework. In so doing an attempt is made to deal with what might be some of the more relevant criticisms to this position.

Morality, as an individual attribute, emanates from a dialectical tension between the ideal of an absolute right and the contingent situation that occurs at a particular point in time. This tension, best exemplified in Hegel's Phenomonology of Mind (1910) pervades, and some might say haunts, a great deal of the psychological research

concerning moral judgments, moral decision making, and moral development. The best way to deal with this tension, and the hypocrisy Hegel claims accompanies it, is to divide the study of morality into three separate, but inter-related, sub-categories. There is the morality that is the sole result of human reason; the morality of the absolute right. There is contingent morality based more on affiliation than any individual decision-making process. And there is the much rarer individual decision making process that leads to moral individual moral action; actions that are judged as immoral action by the society at large. All three sub-categories find their similarities in the individual's ontological progression to the recognition of the "other" in society and the notion of mutual cooperation.

What is Good, What is Right

At least one dominant branch in psychological research into moral development has used the Kantian (1949) (or neo-Kantian) conception of justice as a starting point for inquiry. That there is a prescriptive justice that is universalizable through a categorical imperative. The Kantian theme is itself part of a progression that began with the Aristotelian (1984) conception of justice. Justice is achieved when you treat people as they deserved to be treated. This merit is not arbitrary but determined by the degree of excellence the individual achieves in his/her life in certain social activities. These activities are also not

arbitrary, but ordered hierarchically in terms of achieving the best possible life. The best possible life is achieved by individuals banning together as a polis (cooperative society). This occurs because it is an individual's natural desire to be part of a polis. Aristotle believed that there was an objective criterion for achieving the best possible polis, and individuals would realize it if they allowed themselves to defer to reason. This means that reason would allow the individuals in a polis to differentiate an excellent shoe maker from a mediocre shoe maker, just as reason would allow the individual to differentiate between a leader of the polis and a second level functionary within the polis. What is moral is what is good (i.e., the acquisition of the best possible life), and what is good shall be self-evident through reason, and therefore must be universalizable.

Aristotle raises two points about morality that run as dual threads through much of Western theory and research. In his thesis good and right are the same thing and obvious to all those willing to apply reason to the immediate situation. The second is that morality is based on the notion of the polis, of individuals working together in mutual cooperation to create better lives for themselves and those around them.

Kant makes the same natural connection between what is good and what is right, and the same claim that this

connection should be self-evident to human-beings. Except Kant is critical of the use of pure reason in making this connection. To supplement reason he situates morality as a categorical imperative. This imperative is neither the sole result of reason and/or experience; it is recognized by the individual through a certain intuition.

Kohlberg, and his colleagues, fall somewhere in-between the Aristotelian ideal and the Kantian imperative in their creation of a scale to measure the moral development of individuals. Morality is the result of a natural human desire for good; this good coincides with what is right, whether it be a matter of reason or intuition. Each individual will recognize what is right as a universal right that will lead to the good life. Kohlberg takes the polis and expands it to the general human community making what is good and what is right a universal imperative. He wanted to establish the developmental process that allowed an individual to reach the stage where s/he could perceive a unlimited polis in which social cooperation was seen as the absolute right in terms of action. (It was obvious to Kohlberg that this was something the individual ascended to over a period of time.)

To plot this development Kohlberg used Piaget's (1932/1965) theory of the individual's movement from heteronomy to autonomy in the moral sphere as his base. Kohlberg may have made a slight philosophical miscalculation

in the application of the theory that eventually caused problems in his own research program. He wanted to use both the notion of a universalizable justice system as envisioned by Kant. It is the Kantian imperative, with the notion of respect for other people, that forms the basis of his non-ontological, or deontic, justice system. At the same time Kohlberg wanted to use the Piagetian model for ontological development based on the individual's ability to progressively improve in the use of pure reason. This would mean that Kohlberg was making a claim for the categorical imperative of justice to be the result of pure reasoning abilities. This is a position that Kant himself criticized in The Critique of Pure Reason (1958). Pure reason leads to a system that creates a greater number of general principles which incorporate a larger corpus of phenomena, while at the same time create a greater number of categories into which these phenomena can be divided. This critique is all the more relevant because it offers a fair criticism of Kohlberg's developed theory. If Kohlberg decided to abandon pure reason for intuition then he has trouble maintaining his alliance with Piaget. This difficulty manifested itself in Kohlberg's contention that the last stage of moral development, recognizing the unlimited social cooperative, was not the result of a teleological progression towards the good life (1981). His use of a Piagetian development of reason for the prior stages makes this argument difficult to

follow. How does an individual progress to a deontological stage? He seems to be abandoning based assumptions of mechanism and motivation and fall back on a version of Kantian intuition to incorporate a justice system that he feel must be at the apex of human moral development.

Hegel critiques this notion of the development of individual morality through reason and/or intuition. He takes as a given that individuals use reason to develop an absolute justice based on duty and social cooperation. The mind determines not only the need, but the wherewithal, for a system of absolute justice. But this absolute justice does not have a true concrete existence. All justice that occurs in the concrete is contingent on individual circumstance. There is a split between what is right and what is good. "Right" is the result of reason and something the mind would like to believe is the true morality. "Good" is the consequence of individual circumstance that exists in actuality. These two moralities, one based on a notion of absolute right that exists only within the mind and one based on historical circumstance, are in dialectical opposition to each other. The mind is in a constant state of hypocrisy concerning morality; it believes that there is this prescriptive universal behavior that will benefit all societies while at the same time realizing that any actual moral behavior is influenced by contingent circumstances.

This tension dominates much of Kohlberg's work. He

tries to overcome the inherent hypocrisy by claiming that there is both a normative and a universal aspect to morality: individual decision-making incorporated both these factors into a defined moral position. There are limitations to this position. An example given by Kohlberg and his colleagues (1983) in an answer to Gilligan's critique is a case in point. A thirty-one year old woman sees her divorce as part of a personal decision-making process; she sees a decision about the moral ramifications of child abuse as more abstract and generalized in terms of what one ought to do. Kohlberg admits that both decision-making processes emanate from the same starting point in terms of moral responsibility. His argument is that the woman sees the child abuse case, and the need to protect the welfare of the child, as impartial and universalizable (i.e., right and good). The woman sees the divorce decision as purely personal and based on individual circumstance (i.e., contingently good). In spite of the split Kohlberg and colleagues see both processes as existing along a single continuum (as a result of emanating from the same source). Kohlberg describes the individual only as feeling that there must be a universalizable, impartial right. A Hegelian argument would claim that this separation between right and contingent is a case of dissemblance on the part of the individual. The separation along a single continuum is a case of dissemblance on the part of the larger theory. The

major difference between the two cases is that one existed in actuality and one did not. The woman knows that she will never face the conflict of variables outside of a historical context, yet in spite of this she claims that she is able to determine an absolute right in terms of the abstract problem. This "right" exists in reason, but it does not exist in actuality. To place these two decisions along a continuum obscures the fact that the only difference between them is that one is abstract while the other is based on contingent circumstances.

Turiel (1974, 1983) takes a different tact, attempting to make a Humian split between moral behaviors, which are akin to Hegel's reasoned rights, and conventional behaviors which are historically contingent. Moral right exists as an absolute, realized by reason but verified by intuition. The contingent is represented by Hume's conventional (1975), separate from the moral in that it is developed by the individual societies for particular reasons. If Turiel is attempting to claim that his "moral", as well as his "conventional", exists in actuality and is used to determine behavior he must make the argument that moral prescriptive behaviors exist in a universalizable form and are separate from conventions. This is something Hume attempted to avoid by reducing moral to the single aspect of sympathy and leaving the door open for inter-play between the universalizable and the conventional. It is almost

impossible to claim a universal code exists, especially if one applies a falsificationist method of proof to this assertion. For instance one might make the argument that murder is immoral; but it is not immoral in war, or on a more individual basis in nineteenth century France when a man catches his wife in bed with another man. There is probably an exception, based on historical circumstance, for any moral absolute.

There is the assertion that the individual mind recognizes an absolute right in terms of moral behavior. It is difficult to argue with this assertion philosophically or psychologically. This recognition of a moral right is based on a progressive reasoning process (from ego-centric to knowledge of a generalized other or polis). This absolute morality though is only available to the individual on an abstract level; it is a general idea of how one should go about life rather than a set of specific behaviors. While the individual may attribute a changing set of behaviors to the idea of absolute morality, it has little to do with the creation of that set of behaviors. What is more, the mind understands this because it recognizes that moral behavior is constantly changing with circumstance. Despite this recognition the individual refuses to dispense with the notion of absolute morality, insisting that it exists, and attaching contingent moral behaviors to it. But because what the individual views as moral behavior is contingent,

the individual may find him/herself attaching the notion of universal right and wrong to different types of moral behaviors over a period of time. To reaffirm Hegel's contention on human morality, the individual is in a state of constant hypocrisy.

Contingently Good and Relative Morality

The notion that there are "right" actions, universal prescriptive behaviors that are moral, exists as an idea in the human mind but nowhere else. If what is good exists in actuality then what is good is separate from what is right and is contingent. Two ideas often associated with the contingently good as defining morality are utilitarianism and relativism. Piaget (1932/1965) saw morality as both and neither. Morality was relative in content, but universal in the development of the reason, or logic, that led to the adaptation of that version of content.

The contingently good as moral was championed by Hume. For Hume morality was something developed by society for the members of that society. According to Hume morality could not be determined by reason alone, although he did feel reason played a part. Instead he believed that morality stemmed from a combination of reason and sentiment (or passion)⁶. Certain actions are considered virtuous by

⁶There is the possibility that in currently dialogue affect could be substituted for passion.

others because they raise feelings of pleasure within the individuals (and certain actions are considered vices if they arouse pain). These ideas of pleasure and pain are based on what the majority of people in a society desire at a given point in time. In order to know what morality is in an given situation an individual must know all circumstances of an action. From this comes Hume's famous argument on the fallacy of what "is" becoming a generalized "ought". What "is" moral in a society is based on what the individuals in that society deem virtuous (i.e., arousing feelings of pleasure) at that time. This "is" does not give the moral (or any other) theorist the opportunity to determine what an individual "ought" to do in a more generalized sense. Hume's general theme is utilitarian, claiming that it is the society's needs which determine the virtuousness or viciousness of particular actions; but because a society's first duty is to perpetuate itself, many of the actions will transfer across societies.

The utilitarian good is a normative good based on the needs of the society and the passions that they arouse in the individuals of the polis. For Hume these passions do not exist as the sole purveyor of morality; the individual must realize s/he is part of a polis and that realization can only come from a progressive understanding of the individual in regard to his relationship to the other. This is what allows the contingently good to escape relativism;

while the actual virtue is dependent on environmental circumstances, the need to see things in terms of virtuousness of viciousness is universal. Hume's recognition of the universal can be seen in his separation of the natural virtues from the artificial or conventional virtues. While artificial virtues are based on the needs of the society, the natural virtues, which it can be argued lead directly into the artificial virtues, and based on the universal notion of sympathy.

There are some theorists who have focused on the passion aspect of the utilitarian equation; this has led them to the notion that morality is non-rational and relative. Shweder (1980, 1982), starting from a base established by the moral philosopher MacIntyre (1986), has been a leading exponent of relative moralities. MacIntyre (1982) posits that morality has no true rational basis; it is the result of the individual's tradition and can only be understood in that context. Shweder uses the example of the Moslem and the Hindu on the Indian sub-continent to explore this point from the psychological perspective. Each believes in the absolute right of their belief system. Shweder points out that these moral outlooks, like all others, often seem arbitrary to an individual from another culture or tradition; the Moslem and the Hindu are convinced that they are following the moral path and cannot understand how the other considers his/her position moral. The natural

extension is that what is considered morally right by any society, including those that use the traditional Western liberalism, might (or would) seem arbitrary to somebody from outside the culture.

Shweder's point is well taken from a psychological stand point; it is probably impossible to reconcile what is contingently good with any overt universal rationality. An individual sees good, qua moral, as the result of environmental circumstances, not at the result of some rational thought processes. Shweder and his colleagues see morality as being at the consequence of passions, inspiring historically based virtues. The fact that the virtues are based in tradition however does not necessarily mean that morality itself is relative. This point of view fails to take into account important connections between the moral perspectives. Despite radically different content both the Hindu and the Moslem reach the same conclusion, that their moral content is right in the absolute sense, suggesting that there is some universal process that is bringing about these contents. There is also the fact that the developed Hindu and the developed Moslem follow the moral rules of their society not because of an arbitrary decision making process, but because they wish to preserve and enhance their social cooperative. On the surface the different moral codes seem subjective, but on a deeper level they function on the same principles for the same reasons. This argument

is reinforced by MacIntyre's (1988) belief that while moral theorists are prisoners of their own tradition, moral theory is not relative. MacIntyre and Kohlberg then are two sides of the same coin. MacIntyre's thesis rests on individual traditions and their normative moral outcomes, but wishes to avoid relativism. Kohlberg's thesis rests on a universal development of morality, but he wishes to avoid the notion of value-neutral.

While Shweder pushes the notion of contingently good towards a non-rational relativistic model of morality, Gilligan (1977) seem to be pushing towards an alternative universal. One example of this is Gilligan's thesis that females develop a contingent definition for good based on the fact that they are females (ethic of caring), and males develop one based on that fact that they are males (abstract justice systems). The reasons for the different concepts of good are based in particular societal orientations, but there is something in the gender itself, and the way that society deals with the two genders, that pre-supposes specifically different types of moral development for females and males. Gilligan seems to be saying that there is a universal development of morality in human-beings, but society guides this development in certain directions. Societal pressures are so ingrained and absolute in terms of gender, the general content development is pre-determined along gender lines. In spite of Gilligan's distaste for

Kohlberg's rational justices system, she too must either admit to a rationally developed aspect to her ethic of care or posit her theory as nativist in nature with the development "hard-wired."

Gilligan's relationship with the morally "right" is ambiguous. She seems to take exception with Kohlberg for considering his portrayal of abstract justice systems as morally right while at the same time presenting the ethic of care and responsibility as somehow developmentally superior (and implicitly morally right). This point, while subtle in her earlier theorizing, becomes explicit in some of her work with Murphy (1980). They claim that adults actually go through a regression in terms of Kohlbergian moral reasoning during later development and become more contextually relative in terms of what they consider good qua moral. An ethic of responsibility based on contextual relativism is more developed, more right. Gilligan finds herself caught in the same dialectical web as Kohlberg, re-affirming Hegel's thesis that it is unavoidable.

Kohlberg and colleagues (1983) recognize Gilligan's basic point and counter that Kohlberg's rational justice system and Gilligan's ethic of care and/or responsibility actually fall along the same moral continuum. Both justice systems are the result of the same rationally based universal development. As argued, Gilligan would probably have to agree with Kohlberg on that point to avoid charges

of nativism. But Kohlberg and colleagues hedge their bets by saying that they only exist along the same continuum. His argument that there is one form of morality that is impartial and universalizable co-existing with a second type which is dependent on special obligations ignores his own admission that moral theory is not a value neutral endeavor. The fact that members of a society consider one type of morality as "right" is a value-laden decision based in hypocrisy. Kohlberg does not go far enough in allying his system with Gilligan's; they are not two types along a continuum, they are two manifestations of the same thing (i.e., a rationally developed system of virtues based on the needs of the polis).

What is contingently good is dependent on particular context. However, the fact that this morality in actuality is dependent on context does not relegate it to relativism. Males and females, Hindus and Moslems, people from Western and people from non-Western traditions all reach end points canalized by their cultural milieus, but not pre-determined (or driven) by culture. What emerges is an ontologically driven system, that is rational in nature, which both guides the individual towards adapting contingently good as prescriptive moral behavior and causes the individual to see these same contingent goods as universalizable. The question that remains is how the rational system interacts with socio-historical systems to create such seemingly

diverse moralities out of a common process.

The Rule of "Glaine"

Piaget and Habermas offer similar explanations for how process interacts with prior product to create current morality. Both were concerned with describing the way individuals come to develop the morality of the polis through internal development; they were not concerned, or felt they could not be concerned with what Kohlberg called the deontic (non-ontological) aspects of morality.

The first part of Piaget's The Moral Development of the Child shows particular concern with how ontological development leads to recognition of the polis, or the group. To Piaget morality is nothing more than a set of rules created to fulfill the need of the polis (which Piaget translates into peer group) and maximize its benefit to the majority of its members. This is illustrated by some of Piaget's descriptions of the rules of children concerning marble games. Particularly interesting is his example of the use of the word "glaine". A player who had legitimately won all the marbles from his peer over the course of a game should, as a point of honor but not as a rule, offer up the necessary marbles so that the members of the group can continue play. If the child agrees there is no friction and the group continues in its purpose. If the child refuses to

share his⁷ winnings with the others all that a member of the group needs to do is say the word "glaine" and all the members of the group can pounce upon the winner and clean his pockets of the marbles to share among themselves. Piaget calls this rule a legitimized piracy, a "retributive justice approved by the general conscience..." (pg. 19, 1932/1965).

In this one short episode Piaget establishes rule systems as arbitrary (compare this rule system to those propounded by Kant or Hume), contingent (the rule only exists because the context of the group is the marble game), and dependent on the immediate needs of the polis (the group's function is to continue play of the game and the rule is specifically designed for that purpose).

In spite of establishing these aspects of actual morality Piaget shows little concern with why this particular rule system was established within the group: the why is dealt with through the recognition of the theories of Durkheim and Bovet. Piaget is more concerned with how these rule systems come to be accepted by the individuals within the group. While the rules might be developed by a group for the benefit of that group, this does not mean there is no change in the way the individual deals with these rules from one age group to another, or even from one generation to another. Piaget feels the

⁷All of Piaget's subjects in this study were male.

individual moves from a position of heteronomy to a position of autonomy in terms of the rule-creating group. This movement is based on reason, because it is reason which forces the individual to see him/herself as part of a universal (it is not clear whether Piaget meant universal as entire universe or the universe of an encompassing group).

The recognition of the self as part of an encompassing group, a polis, that must cooperate to develop becomes a necessity for the reasonable individual. Piaget expanded this notion of necessity in a later work (1987): the individual comes to see certain aspects of necessary through a rational exploration of that which is immediately present. The movement from varying sets of possibilities to one necessity in a given situation is imperative to escape a situation of continuous disequilibrium. An application of Piaget's theory of necessity to the current discussion on morality would assume the individual develops from a pseudo-necessity of accepting the rule system imposed by the societal structure, to the possibility of recognizing that there is both a self and an other in any rule system, and to the true necessity of participating in a cooperative social structure. This movement is reflected in Piaget's notion of development from heteronomy to autonomy. The individual moves from direction of activity by an outside force to the direction of activity by the self; a self which realizes that it is necessary, for the self to get the maximum

benefit, to cooperate with other members of the group in the form of obedience to its rule structure. Piaget points to Bovet's realization that a rule-creating group needs at least two individuals interacting. Piaget's recognition of this premise reinforces the idea that a rule forming group can be formed in almost any situation and be any size.

Habermas' writings on moral development, seen in the larger context of his social critiques, reflects Piaget's attitudes and pushes to new levels the general thesis concerning the individual's relationship to the group. He sees a developmental progression in terms of speech acts that is similar to the movement from heteronomy to autonomy. But while Piaget was a genetic epistemologist, concerned with how knowledge developed in the individual, Habermas is a social critic reflecting on a communicative competence that already exists in social settings. Habermas offers a theory of reflective explication rather than theoretical explanation and this allows him greater latitude in connecting his ideas to the larger social situation.

Habermas (1979, 1983) seems to have two agendas in his explication in moral development as part of social communication: to align his theory of speech acts with a moral development paradigm (Kohlberg's Piagetian model) and to develop a context for his larger theory of depth-hermeneutics. The speech act must fulfill both the intentions of the speaker and the intention of the social

group in terms of truth. To do this the individual develops speech acts which progressively come to reflect the normative truths of the social group while retaining the integrity of the individual. The individual starts with incomplete interaction, which is akin to a heteronomous individual seeing social behavioral expectations as a pseudo-necessity . The individual moves to a stage of complete communicative interaction in which his/her speech acts take into account the needs of both the self and the other. The individual recognizes the need to adhere to the norms of society, which is akin to the autonomous individual seeing mutual cooperation as a necessity. The third level actually goes past Piaget in that it is concerned with the individual's relationship to self, to other, and how that is acted out in the group setting. At the level of communicative competence and discourse the individual is not only autonomous, but recognizes the distinction between heteronomy and autonomy.

Habermas' thesis extends the moral development paradigm by the way in which his writings on moral development fit into his larger program of communicative competence in social traditions. Habermas sees social traditions from a hermeneutic perspective; that you can only understand the individual in terms of the social communicative competence that has been built by that tradition over its history. He dispenses with Gadamer's (1975) more romantic notion that

traditions are somehow self-correcting and over time each society will develop its own form of true communication. Instead he believes that things can go wrong, that communication among individuals in a social tradition can become distorted, and there is no way for the individual in that tradition to know that it is distorted. Communications then become pseudo-communications built on a false consensus. It is here that Habermas' third level is important for moral development. It is not enough for an individual to simply be autonomous, because s/he might still be involved in a distorted conversation. The individual must have knowledge of the absolute difference between autonomy and heteronomy so that s/he knows if s/he is truly autonomous or is an autonomous being trapped within a heteronomous social system. Habermas suggested adding a seventh stage to Kohlberg's paradigm: a stage at which the individual can critically examine the normative truths of his/her tradition discursively. This allows the individual to act as psychoanalyst for his/her own society and root out pseudo-communications. Without this level there is no way for the individual to know whether s/he is dealing in societal truth or in a false consensus, in spite of his/her position of autonomy.

Habermas establishes the social group as the creator of any (moral) discourse. Speech acts affords the individual an entry point into this moral discourse. The level of

communicative competence determines the entry point. The individual can either enter as a being directed by the group or as a being participating in the group. In both instances the individual's moral discourse is a consequence of the group and the "conversation" that the society has built up over the period of its existence. The development of communicative competence is ontological for two reasons. First, it transfers across traditions and a sense of autonomy always comes after heteronomy. Second, communicative competence is moving towards a telos in which the individual is able to critique the conversation s/he is part of as a member of the social group. This critique is the only thing that saves the individual from becoming hopelessly lost in a pathological tradition.

For Piaget it was rules. For Habermas it is the unromanticized version of Gadamer's "conversation that we are." For both morality is something that is either imposed by a group or shared by a group. It is not an individual endeavor. The group can determine any moral rules that it feels will promote its existence. If a group's purpose is to keep playing marbles it can establish a moral code which will insure that there is always a supply of marbles. Morality can become distorted. A faction of a group or a charismatic leader can garble communication to the point where it becomes pseudo-communication. Individuals are trapped by their tradition; traditions which have become

prisoner to a series of pseudo-communications. They believe that these pseudo-communications actually represent a true consensus that will bring about the good of the group. This underlines the power the group has in forming the morality of the individual. The part the individual play in this equation is to participate as a viable member of the polis. The individual however never fully accepts this role because the same reason which allows him/her to be part of a polis forces him/her to search for universal moral rules that are "right". The individual's moral codes, along with the individual's belief in which moral codes are universalizable, are determined by which social group the individual affiliates him/herself with in a particular instance.

Towards a theory of moral affiliation

A theory of moral affiliation would deal with the way an individual's morality is determined by the social group s/he wishes to enter into at a given point in time. The choice of social group is a combination of the history of the group, the social history of the individual, and the ontological development of the individual. It is based on the premise that the individual is not making individual moral decisions, s/he is only making decisions about which group to choose in that given situation and will follow the moral codes that have been established by the group. This

can easily be taken as deterministic in that the individual's moral decisions are always based on a pre-existing social tradition into which s/he enters. This idea of determinism is combatted by the fact that any individual can be subject to any number of traditions at any given time. A member of Piaget's marble game has the choice of affiliating himself with the other peers involved in playing that game, finding another player and establishing his own version of the game, or ignoring the smaller peer instigated traditions in favor of the rules of the larger society. Each choice affords certain benefits and causes certain consequences. The first choice allows the child to participate fully in the game, but forces him to adjust to a set of legitimate rules that might be alien to him. The second choice allows him to have greater control over a rule system with limited historical precedence, but it also limits the number of marbles he can win and maybe the length of time he can spend playing the game. The third choice maintains a transferable rule system that he might feel more comfortable with, but he risks not being allowed to participate fully in the current game and being ostracized from his immediate peer group.

The basic issue is what groups the individual is susceptible to, from either a heteronomous stand point or an autonomous stand point, at any given point in time. From a broad perspective the individual is susceptible to any group

s/he feels will fulfill his/her own needs while also fulfilling the needs of the other members of the group. The individual has any number of groups that s/he can gain entry into at any given time and these groups can be entered from any stand point up to the most advanced ontogenetic level the individual has achieved.

A theory of moral affiliation needs to know why an individual decides to choose a particular group, and how that individual then integrates his/her own history with the ongoing tradition of that group. While Vygotsky (1988) did not directly write about moral development, he did have some interesting insights into the way groups pulled individuals into the conceptual systems that served as the foundations for their traditions. The individual interacts with society at one of three general levels of thought; syncretically, or in terms of unconnected ideas, complexively, or in terms of concrete associations between ideas, and conceptually, or in terms of abstract connections between ideas. A social group develops along similar lines, from the syncretic to the complexive to the conceptual. The more developed traditions have a series of complexes/concepts which they use to pull the individual forward in their thought systems. Vygotsky's theoretical framework becomes relevant to moral affiliation at the point of contact between the history of the individual and the socio-historical traditions of the group at different points in time.

An individual who is at the syncretic level in the development of thinking is at the heteronomous level, or level of incomplete communication, in terms of moral development. At this level the individual has no system s/he is more likely to become attached to because of pre-existing connections between ideas: on the contrary, the syncretic individual is open to almost any moral system. El'Konin (1977), in describing why children develop certain concepts, felt that the individual would follow whatever social group was dominant in the child's life at the time. He believed that the dominant group was relatively stable across a number of interactions. The argument made here is that in terms of rules systems dominant groups are actually quite fluid, especially for the syncretic child. A child who wants to play marbles is going to be dominated more by the peers who form the game than by the parents that were left behind. The individual has no true affiliation at this level, the social groups are inter-changeable and the individual is unable to make connections between the rule systems of one group and those of another.

It is at the level of complexive thinking that the individual begins to actually show signs of some type of stable moral affiliation. The individual realizes that s/he is in a social cooperative that exists for the needs of the individuals within that cooperative. At the same time each of the social groups with which the individual is

interacting are slowly trying to pull the thinking of that individual forward within the traditions of that group. The individual then is being indoctrinated into the concrete connection between moral ideas in a tradition. These concrete connections are the result of participation with the specific group and might seem opaque to an outsider.

The greater the number of dominant social groups the individual deals with, the more fluid the individual's affiliations from one situation to another. For example, an individual from a more sheltered and/or rigid environment such as a secluded village or religious community, communities that eschew the notion of further sub-categorization, will have a less fluid set of complexes. A person raised in a strict religious community (e.g., Hasidic, Shiite Moslem) will choose to affiliate him/herself with that community across a wide range of situations. That is because the individual's moral complexes were developed under strict control, and would therefore coincide with the complexes of the particular community that maintained the control. An individual from a more dynamic environment, in which sub-cultures are more acceptable, will be susceptible to many more dominant groups. The typical urbanite interacts with any number of groups in any number of situations over a short period of time. This type of individual might develop one set of complexes based on the needs of one dominant group for one situation and a second

set of complexes, based on the needs of another group, for another situation. Moral affiliation then becomes a dynamic system in which there are matches between the complexes an individual has developed over his/her lifetime with the complexes a social group has developed as part of its tradition. An individual might choose the moral rule system of a generalized society in one instance, the rule system of a more delimited community in a second instance, the rule system of a certain peer group in a third instance, and a rule system that evolves through a single relationship in a fourth instance.

The final level of development is conceptual thought. This level of thinking allows the individual to break free from the concrete connections between the ideas of society and view them in abstract terms. This ability to view ideas from an abstract perspective allows the individual to move these concrete ideas into new realms, allowing the social group to progress. This conceptual level of thinking is somewhat analogous to Habermas' notion of complete interaction and discourse. The individual not only sees that moral ideas exist as a result of mutual cooperation among member of the group, but also recognizes that these ideas belong to the group, are part of it, rather than the group being part of the set of ideas. At this point morality might take two directions. The first is to extend these ideas to better suit the needs of the group. The

second is to somehow rebel against what the individual determines are distorted concepts which in reality are circumventing the needs of the group. The former is a developed form of moral affiliation; the individual is affiliating him/herself with the group to such a degree that s/he becomes part of the power within the group, actively moving the tradition in a group supported direction. The latter may be the only situation where the individual actually makes a moral decision. But s/he can only make that moral decision by making what, to the group, is an immoral decision.

When an individual makes a conscious decision about the moral code of the group with which s/he is affiliated it is an individual moral decision. In making this decision there is a moral judgment that somehow runs contrary to the developed tradition of the group. The only way to actualize this decision is to decide that this code is not beneficial for the group and devise a reaction to the current code.

Foucault (1983) claimed that ethical standards change through history because ethical systems are "dangerous." While critics have claimed that Foucault never defined what dangerous really meant (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983) it might add to the current discussion. Foucault might have been alluding the notion that individuals feel some natural discomfort with prescriptive behavior despite their acquiescence. The point was made earlier in this paper that

the human mind understands that these prescriptive behaviors are contingent. This would allow an individual who question him/herself on the veracity of the current communication to accept that the (distorted) communication is not natural and that circumstances have and will guide it. The sense of danger comes together with the notion that ethical systems are not absolute to lead the individual to make the moral decision to commit immoral acts. The same affiliation which led the individual to accept the moral code of the social group will lead him/her to attempt and "renorm" it.

Conclusion

The focus of this paper has been the way in which individuals develop their moral codes. One argument proposed by the psychological community has been that human-beings develop their moral codes parallel to a development of reason, with reason acting as catalyst. The question of "Kantian" style intuitions remains ambiguous in these argument. The reason allows the individual to develop a recognition of the "other" as part of a social cooperative, and the necessity of participating in this social cooperative for mutual benefit. The intuition, if it is required, allows the individual to realize that there is an absolute set of rules, better than all others, under which social cooperatives can attain maximum benefit for themselves and the individuals involved. A second argument

posed by the psychological community is that reason is either not the most important aspect, or has little to do with, the development of moral codes. These theorists argue that moral codes are ultimately contingent and based on specific traditions.

This paper proposes the Hegelian argument that this absolute morality is a mirage; a mirage to which the mind clings because reason forces it to do so. All morality is contingent on current circumstance. At the same time the fact that this mirage exists for all means that there is a universal in the structure of moral development if not the content. All individuals are reasonable individuals, but reasonable to different ends. The contingent is not the result of the individual surveying the situation and making a moral judgment taking all factors into account. The same rationality that forces the individual to cling to this notion of an absolute right causes him/her to recognize the needs of a mutually cooperative group and affiliate him/herself with it. This is where "morality", as it is most commonly defined, emanates from. The individual will adapt the codes of whatever group s/he affiliates with at the moment.

If the above paradigm is correct then the salient question for theory and research concerning moral development is how and why these affiliations take place. This paper attempts to outline in broad strokes the base for

such a theoretical framework. Clearly, the work has only just begun.

APPENDIX

Moral Dilemma I, Personal, Crack-Cocaine

You have a friend who you have known all your life. When you were young you played together and when you got older you partied together. One day you notice that this friend is not acting normally. You ask the friend if something is the matter, but the friend just shrugs you off and says that nothing is going on. Later you find out your friend has been smoking crack on a semi-regular basis. When you ask your friend about it s/he says its no big deal, didn't tell you cause didn't think you'd understand, and brushes you off on the subject without saying anything more about it. You don't mention it again, but you notice the behavior of your friend is getting more and more erratic as time goes on. Late one night the friend comes banging at your door. The friend has a crazed look in the eyes, and asks you for money, telling you s/he needs it badly, as badly as s/he has ever needed anything from you since you've known each other. The friend says that this can't be explained, you just have to trust him/her, and that this is the biggest favor s/he has ever asked from you as a friend. What do you do?

Moral Dilemma II, Community, Crack-Cocaine

You have been living in your neighborhood your entire life. Things have always been difficult and there has never been enough money around, but in the last few years things have gotten really bad. It seems like everybody is in a bad way, that the children don't have enough to eat, that the buildings and houses are starting to crumble and the landlords don't give a damn. You know that there are a lot of families on the block that are really hurting and it seems like everybody has reached a dead end. A kid who used to live in the neighborhood comes back one day. He has become a fairly big time crack dealer and he sets up shop in the neighborhood. He promises that there will be no violence in the neighborhood and everybody will be taken care of as long as he is protected. True to his word, he keeps violence out of the neighborhood, but there is an increase in the amount of violence just outside of the neighborhood. And all of a sudden everybody has a lot of money, people have enough food to eat, and the houses are starting to get repaired. There is a new sense of hopefulness in the neighborhood, and people are starting to talk about how life is worth living again. The crack dealer starts recruiting some of the younger kids from the streets to work with him. He pays them good money and tells the parents that when they are old enough he will help them get through college. The crack dealer becomes more and more

powerful in the neighborhood and nobody dares say a word against him. One day you are approached by the police. They say that this guy has been responsible for twenty murders and is one of the worst dealers in the city. They ask you if you will help in catching him. What is your answer to them?

Moral Dilemma III, Societal, Crack-Cocaine

Things have been getting bad in the United States since the crack epidemic hit. You notice on the evening news that parts of the country are starting to look like a war zone. And even though you have not really been effected that much, from what everybody is saying the United States is beginning to have trouble maintaining itself under the pressure. Some of the drug dealers have announced an all out war against the politicians of the United States in much the same way that the Columbian drug lords have been waging a war against the judges and the politicians down in Columbia. Three judges and a Congressman have already been killed, and two attempts have been made on the president's life. Your life, at the moment is fairly smooth, going along well and you are getting where you want to go. Yet every night you read about and see on the television news the total devastation of the cities, and the casualty list is multiplying. The president comes on television and calls for a national emergency. He says that he wants to reinstate the draft to

fight a real war on the streets of the United States. He feels, and most politicians agree with him, that the only way to deal with the drug war is to create a new army in the United States, so that soldiers can patrol the streets and battle the "drug armies" from street corner to street corner. You realized the you are definitely going to have to serve in this new army to fight the drug war if the draft is re-instated. How do you react to what the president has to say? What would you do if you were drafted to fight in this drug war? Why?

Moral Dilemma IA, Personal, Heroin

There is a cousin who is about your age and who you have known all your life. When you were young you used to play together and pull pranks together and play jokes on the other members of the family together: it was always the two of you against the rest of the world. You even made a pact at one time that you would never betray each other, and would always remain loyal, no matter what happened. As time went on you started spending less time with your cousin, but you still felt very close to this person.

Then you heard that this cousin's behavior has started to change slightly. She seemed to be paying attention less, often acted like she was in another world; and she started to always wear sunglasses no matter where she was. Your cousin's wardrobe also changed, she was always wearing long

sleeved shirts. Strange things also started happening inside the family, with different family members claiming that money was missing from their wallets. Then one evening, at a family get together, you see this cousin almost falling all over herself. Her mother comes to you and asks you to please find out what his happening with her daughter.

You decide to find out what is happening so you go out on the street and find out what is happening. The people you talk to say that your cousin has been "shooting up" heroin, but that she seems to have it under control and there probably isn't anything to worry about. The next time that you see your cousin you tell her what you know and ask to see her arms. She shows you her needle marks and tells you that she has been "mainlining" for over a year now, but things are going fine and she is about as happy as she's ever been. She admits that she's been taking the money but claims that she never takes any more than anybody can afford and promises that she never even thought about stealing from you, because she considers you her closest family member. She asks that you not tell anybody about what has been going on, and reminds you of the loyalty pact you made when you were younger. What do you tell her mother?

Moral Dilemma IIA, Community, Heroin

You have been living in the same neighborhood all your life. You are very close to the people there, and everybody knows everybody else and watches out for everybody else. Over the last few years some of the basements in your neighborhood have developed into "shooting galleries" where people come to buy and "shoot up" heroin. Dealing drugs is becoming more prevalent and begins to affect the neighborhood more and more. Some of the people in the neighborhood call a community meeting to try and deal with what they now consider a problem. They first ask the police to come in and clean up the neighborhood, and they do come in for a week and create a lot of noise and scare away all the dealers and the addicts, but then the police leave and the dealers and addicts come back and things are even worse. The streets are becoming more and more dangerous and some of the older people are being harassed and robbed. When the people in the neighborhood complain about it the police say that there is only so much manpower, and only so much that they can do. The community group then gets together and decides that they are going to take matters into their own hands. They organize their own neighborhood look out squads and start carrying guns. But things quickly get worse. There are gun battles on the streets, and a child is killed in the cross-fire. It is not safe to go out on the street anymore. The community group has a meeting with the dealers

and in desperation offers to work together with them. They will accept the "shooting galleries" as legitimate places of business and even serve as look outs for them in exchange for peace and the assurance that nobody from the neighborhood will be hurt. The heroin dealers agree and the streets become safe again. It goes back to the way it was before the heroin dealers ever came, with businesses starting to prosper again and children being able to play on the streets. But you are told that there has been a noticeable increase in crime in some of the surrounding areas. The police, after complaints from other neighborhoods want to raid the "shooting galleries", promising they will get rid of them once and for all. The community group does not want to go back to the way it was and votes not to cooperate with the police. The police come to you, claiming that something must be done or a lot of innocent people will get hurt. They ask you if you will secretly help them. What do you do?

Moral Dilemma IIIA, Societal, Heroin

The problems with intravenous drug use, or "shooting up" has been getting worse and worse in the United States. Not only has this create a whole new class of addicts, but it has also increased the AIDS population: intravenous drug users are by far the fast growing population of AIDS victims in the United States. You notice more people around with

needle marks on their arms and there have been more muggings and robberies for drug money. It has been proven that drug treatment centers can really lower the amount of people who are dependent on heroin and other intravenous drugs. This will help many of the people out on the streets now and also probably lower the amount of AIDS victims in the future. Everybody wants more of these drug treatment centers, but none of the politicians want to raise taxes, believing that it would be bad for their careers. They finally decide to put a tax to support these treatment centers to a vote. The tax is what is called a value added tax, in which five percent is added to everything that you buy, including food and rent. You're family is on a tight budget and five percent would be a real burden for you, and probably keep you from buying many of the things you want in life. But you have also been told that if this tax does not pass the politicians will not propose a new tax and there will be no new drug treatment centers, and the heroin problem will definitely get worse. How do you vote on this issue?

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