The Hermeneutic Study
of Moral Action and Moral Development

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In the past decade radical changes have occurred in our understanding of the character of moral beliefs, precepts, and prescriptions, and how these are or can be justified. Profound changes have also taken place in our view of the nature of scientific inquiry, particularly in the human sciences, and how scientific knowledge claims can be justified. These changes reflect a larger transition between two very different ways of comprehending ourselves and our world: the modern and postmodern epochs. A book such as this can play a role in deciding the direction that psychology takes in this time of transition, through reflection upon the framework we have become accustomed to. An appreciation of the need for such reflection in the sciences of humanity can be seen in the growing frequency of metatheoretical analyses (e.g., Fiske & Shweder, 1986; Stam, Rogers & Gergen, 1987). Such metatheoretical discourse considers how we have come to ask the questions we ask in our consideration of psychological phenomena; the background assumptions we take for granted in our inquiry and what, on the other hand, is overlooked; the persistent problems that hamper our investigations; and the likely results of modifying our course of inquiry.

These are the kinds of question I try to answer in this chapter. My intention is to question central assumptions we have about the way moral values are sanctioned, or warranted, or justified as reasonable. I shall try to show that even positions as generally opposed as are social learning theory and cognitive-developmentalism take it for granted that moral values can only be justified by appeal to some fixed characteristics of human nature, such as the supposedly fixed and universal characteristics of human reasoning. It is further presumed that only a single, universal morality can receive this kind of objective justification, and that if such a justification proves impossible then moral relativism or nihilism is the consequence. My thesis will be that these assumptions about morality and its justification are false, and that they hinder our progress in psychology. They were first adopted in the Enlightenment: the social, political and intellectual project initiated in the 1600s, that created what was until recently an unquestioned way of understanding the world and our place in it: the "modern" view. The Enlightenment involved a project of ethical justification that defined the terms in which morality has been understood and investigated for the past three hundred years.

The first section of this chapter outlines this project of ethical justification. Since assumptions about morality went hand in hand with assumptions about human nature,
reason, the relationship between facts and values, and the character of legitimate scientific knowledge, we must consider these as well. Thus we must pay some attention to classical and medieval ethics, and to the Enlightenment's second project, that of justifying scientific knowledge claims. The argument I shall review will be that the project of ethical justification proved to be an impossible one, not because of any lack of skill or agility on the part of those engaged in it, but because the character of morality, and the role it has traditionally played in human affairs and human conduct, is such that the kind of justification that was sought proves, on reflection, impossible. The very terms in which the Enlightenment's ethical project was framed made its downfall inevitable. I shall consider how various writers, from John Locke to R. M. Hare, tried to realize the ethical project's goals.

Having described the character of the Enlightenment's search for moral justification, and the problems it faced, the second section of the chapter concerns the way that two major approaches to the psychology of moral development -- social learning theory and cognitive-developmentalism -- have accepted the Enlightenment's definition of morality. Each assumes that morality either has an objective foundation, or it has no justification at all. The difference between them is that cognitive-developmentalists claim to have identified such a foundation, while social learning theorists treat morality as having no objective foundation, and so as nothing more than the expression of subjective preferences.

What are the consequences of the failure of the Enlightenment's ethical project? The apparent absence of any objective foundation to ethics has had profound consequences, both intellectual and social. We have been left with a misunderstanding of the kind of being we are, and of the kinds of life we should live. But these consequences are not inevitable ones. In fact, they follow from continued acceptance of the original assumptions that lay behind the Enlightenment project. This being so, we must try to reshape the perspective from which we comprehend morality, and the terms in which we conceive it. When we do this, the outlines of a different kind of ethical justification become apparent, one that does not legitimate a universal moral system, but multiple objective moralities. In the final section I shall briefly consider what is being done along these lines by contemporary philosophers of ethics, in the context of some suggestions about the shape a postmodern approach to psychological inquiry might take, once inappropriate foundational assumptions have finally been relinquished.

The Enlightenment Projects.

The historical period that came to be called the Enlightenment was a time of rebellion against the authority of church and state. Scientific developments, first in astronomy and then in mechanics, were throwing doubt on centuries of teaching. Political uprising and dissent was frequent, despite the repression it was met with. Traditional doctrines and values were subjected to a harsh and unsympathetic scrutiny. In particular, theological modes of inquiry were rejected in favor of an emphasis on empirical science as a model form of inquiry, on the systematic use of reason, and an emphasis on the individual as a valid seeker of knowledge and as the proper focus of the social and political orders. Each of these new views contrasted in key respects with their classical and medieval counterparts. A new view of reason and inquiry was developing, one that pitted empirically informed reason against scholastic speculation, causal explanation against teleological metaphysics, and the natural dignity and capacities of the individual person against a theological hierarchy that placed man higher than beasts but lower than angels.

New Views of Empirical Science. The seventeenth century was a time when people witnessed the achievement of startling and revolutionary successes in novel forms of empirical inquiry. Galileo was one among many who were strikingly successful at
explaining both earthly and celestial phenomena in ways totally at odds with the Catholic Church’s teaching. The Church had been promulgating a view of the universe, based on biblical exegesis and classical Greek texts, that emphasized a fundamental distinction between earthly and celestial phenomena. It also employed teleological kinds of explanation of natural movements, this too taken from classical Greek philosophy.

In Aristotle’s physics all entities on the earth are composed of four fundamental elements: earth, air, fire, and water (Cohen, 1985; Evans, 1964). Each element has a natural place in the sphere beneath the moon: earth at the center, water in a sphere surrounding the earth, air surrounding water, fire as another concentric sphere below the moon. In the absence of external influence each element will return to its natural place. Accordingly, the proportion of the elements in a body determines whether it will be heavy or light, so every object has a natural motion, an intrinsic tendency to move to its natural position. Heavy objects move towards the center of the earth; light objects move upwards. Stones drop to the ground; rain falls to earth; gas bubbles up in a lake; flames leap upwards. In each case the natural motion of a terrestrial body is a straight line. Unnatural or "violent" motions can be imposed on a body by the application of a force, but when the force is removed linear motion reappears. Physics is the systematic study of natural motions; the unnatural motions brought about by efficient causes, by pushes and pulls, are not amenable to scientific explanation. Physics deals only with the natural order of things.

In this classical account there is a second realm too: that of heavenly objects. These are made from a fifth element, the "aether." The natural motion of such objects is circular, so the heavenly bodies move around the earth in circles. The aether is a perfect and unchanging material; the planets, sun and moon are like eternal diamonds. Terrestrial objects and their elements are in contrast corruptible, marked by constant alteration and change.

The classical Greek texts in which this physics was articulated had been lost when the Roman empire collapsed, around the 5th century. In the 12th century they were rediscovered in Arabic translation and retranslated into Latin. The Catholic Church soon incorporated Aristotelian notions into the teaching it had been conducting around biblical exegesis. St. Thomas Aquinas is the most famous systematizer and unifier of these two traditions, the classical and the Christian. Scholastic physics (along with a classical ethics we shall consider shortly) became central to the curriculum of the new European universities. Aristotle's two-spheres model of the universe was adopted and adapted. In the Thomist version the earth is still the center of the universe, surrounded by the spheres of the moon, the sun, and the other planets. In addition, Paradise lies beyond the sphere of the stars, while the circles of Hell lie inside the earth; this portrayal had clearly taken on a symbolic Christian meaning. "The universe of spheres mirrors both man's hope and his fate. Both physically and spiritually man occupies a crucial intermediate position in this universe" (Kuhn, 1957, p. 112).

Many of the elements of Thomist physics were rejected by proponents of the 17th century's new science, most famously the heliocentric model of planetary motion. The Church's claims that earthly and celestial realms contained different kinds of matter, manifested different natural motions, and so were governed by different laws, proved no longer tenable. The new astronomy was able to show, for example, that the earth and the heavens have remarkable similarities. Through his telescope, Galileo saw craters on the moon; it is not a perfect sphere, as both Aristotle's physics and the Thomist account had claimed. Newton was able to show that local and planetary phenomena could be described in terms of the same laws of motion and gravitational attraction. So it was that general laws based on empirical observation, not on metaphysical speculation, became the norm.
The Systematic Use of Reason. Enlightenment philosophers also rejected the view of the character and aims of reason that the Catholic Church had adopted from Aristotle. In the Thomist system, events had final causes that could be identified by means of reason alone, rather than by empirical inquiry. The Enlightenment thinkers disagreed strongly. Reason, they argued, cannot supply genuine knowledge about powers and essences, final causes and the final ends of physical motion. All these are speculative metaphysical notions, neither identifiable through reflection nor accessible to empirical observation. Metaphysical speculation should be swept away for all time. Reason, informed by observation, can only identify proximal causes. Reason is calculative, dealing with matters of fact and with mathematical relations.

With these changes the scope of reason became smaller. Many of our beliefs turn out (in this account) not to be rationally justifiable, but based merely on custom or habit. When we perceive causal relationships, for example, there is really nothing but repetitive associations of successive events (Hume's famous skeptical argument). With the rejection of Scholasticism, reason became more specialized and more powerful, but more limited in its range of application.

Emphasis on the Individual. It is not an exaggeration to say that in the seventeenth century the "individual" was invented ("a new social and cultural artifact" along with the parasol, suggests MacIntyre, 1988, p. 339). For the first time man (woman was still generally excluded) was considered to have an existence and characteristics prior to and separate from particular social roles. The new science itself seemed to be an activity where individuals were making discoveries through their own observation and reasoning, with no reference to tradition or faith. Indeed, what they discovered disclosed prejudice and dogma in centuries of instruction by the Church. A new view of knowledge took roots in this early science, one that placed central emphasis on the power and validity of individual reasoning and observation. For the first time accounts were given of knowledge, of human nature, and of morality that centered on the individual alone, distinct from the context of a culture or tradition, or a superhuman deity. The individual was now considered a legitimate source of knowledge, distinct from and superior to the authority of the church and the monarchy. The individual modern self, so the account went, had been liberated from theological faith and confused teleological thinking into a proper autonomy of reflection and empirical investigation.

Scientific and Moral Justification.

The Enlightenment intellectuals defined for themselves and their successors two projects, one dealing with scientific reason and knowledge of the material world, the second with practical reason and knowledge of the social and moral world. To fully understand the way we now, at the end of the twentieth century, view both science and ethics -- and the relationship between these two -- we need to look closely at the character and history of these projects. In each case the aim was to identify an objective foundation that would justify claims to valid knowledge or values, respectively, without reference to divine ordinance or speculative metaphysics.

The Rational Justification of Scientific Knowledge. The first project called for examination of the method of scientific inquiry and an account of its essential features, in order to characterize the manner of inquiry appropriate to matters of fact. More precisely, the aim was to identify the means by which an individual can achieve valid and justified knowledge of the physical universe and its material objects, and thereby to provide a rational foundation on which to ground scientific knowledge claims. The story of the ultimately unsuccessful efforts to achieve this foundation is beyond the scope of this paper, but a brief overview will help outline the parallels between this project and the second one, and will
provide background to our discussion, later, of alternative interpretations of the proper character of a scientific psychology.

Efforts to provide a rational justification for the new science of individual empirical investigation took the tack of trying to identify an interpretation-free origin to which all kinds of valid scientific knowledge could be traced. Two main candidates were proposed: basic sensory elements or brute facts that could be observed in a manner independent of prior theory (Locke, Hume); and self-evident principles that would frame the content of scientific theories (Descartes, Kant). In our own century the assumption that valid scientific knowledge rests on a twin foundation of objective facts and axiomatic principles motivated the Vienna Circle's logical positivism, and it continues to the present day in "cognitive empiricist" programs (Toulmin's phrase) in psychology. In the positivist account of proper scientific investigation, modern logic provides formal rewriting rules that operate on value-neutral and interpretation-free observation statements. Validity is guaranteed by the consistency and completeness of the logical syntax and the objectivity of the observational data. Unfortunately logic may be neither consistent nor complete (Nagel & Newman, 1958), and it is anyway arbitrary and conventional. And the observations making up the empirical component turn out to be theory-laden and organized by our human technological concerns (Kuhn, 1970).

In cognitive science the digital computer now provides a root metaphor for human action and cognition, one that still reflects the view that knowledge is founded in logic and facts. Bits of information are input, stored, and transformed by algorithmic procedures that implement basic logical operations. Neither data items nor programs involve interpretation. If such a scheme were to successfully model a non-trivial aspect of human functioning this would be strong support for the Enlightenment's epistemology. Present evidence gives no sign that this is likely.

**The Rational Justification of Moral Knowledge.** For the Enlightenment thinkers science and philosophy dealt with moral issues as much as with epistemological ones. The second project called for justification of the forms of practical reasoning that guide action; a justification parallel to that sought for scientific knowledge. The aim was to provide a rational account of the character and status of moral norms and rules, one that would rest no longer on religious authority or claims of a divinely revealed truth, but would reflect the power of the individual's capacity for reasoning.

The Enlightenment philosophers shared a sense of the kind of moral justification they were seeking. It would characterize some key feature or features of human nature, and then lay out the rational considerations that would be universally compelling to a being with such a nature; the precepts of action that one would expect such a being to accept (MacIntyre, 1984). The certification of moral beliefs, claims, values and injunctions was to take the form of principles binding because they were rationally inescapable, given the nature of our constitution. The central elements to the task were, then, a view of reason, an account of human nature, and an understanding of the moral precepts that were to be justified.

There was surprising agreement about the content of the morality to be justified. All the contributors to the project (Kierkegaard, Kant, Diderot, Hume, Smith and the rest) considered that the precepts constituting genuine morality involved marriage and the family, promise-keeping and justice, respect for life and property. All these were taken over uncritically from a shared Christian past. So the **content** of their various ethical theories remained an unquestioned conservative individualism, despite the disparate ways of justifying it (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 47). The radical aspect of the project lay not in its content, but in seeking a rational, rather than theological, certification for the moral order. But in
order to abandon theological justification, there was a move away from reference to the ends of action and of human life, just as teleological accounts of natural phenomena were rejected as speculative and unscientific. Although the Enlightenment moral scheme retained much of the content of Thomist ethics, it excluded the teleological structure that had been appropriated from Aristotle. This proved to be anything but a minor modification. The teleological features of classical ethics were not a chance matter; they reveal the social and educational role ethics played in classical Greek times.

**Classical Ethics.** Aristotle held that "Every craft and every inquiry, and similarly every action and project, seems to aim at some good; hence the good has been well defined as that at which everything aims"1. Just as he described objects as having a natural place which they sought out in their motion, so he described men as having final ends that they endeavored to achieve through their action. In this his account reflected the social reality of his time. The Greek city states were small, close-knit communities within which there was consensus about the character and purpose of social roles such as citizen, warrior, philosopher, and slave. Accordingly, Aristotle's ethics is a teleological one: a man is virtuous when he adequately fulfills the requirements of the role into which he was born. For the flute player, playing tunefully is the final end; for the shoemaker, it is making shoes that are strong and comfortable. For the warrior it is fearlessness in battle; for the slave, obedience to the master. And man, too, has a final end, a telos. 'Man' is what we would now call a functional concept: he is a being with an essential nature and an essential purpose or function. What is uniquely human, distinguishing man from the animals, is "logos." Logos has generally been translated as "reason" (though we shall see that another translation may be more appropriate). The right and appropriate exercise of logos leads man to the proper end towards which, as human being, he is directed (and from this, we should note, woman was excluded, along with the slave and the barbarian).

Just as Aristotle's description of objects moving to their natural resting places seems a puzzling kind of physics to anyone accustomed to modern mechanics, until recently his ethics has also seemed an anachronism. Thomas Kuhn has described his struggle to comprehend the apparent absurdities in Aristotle's accounts of the behavior of bodies, and his sudden realization that Aristotle's subject "was change-of-quality in general, including both the fall of a stone and the growth of a child to adulthood" (Kuhn, 1977, p. xi). The primary ontological entities were not material bodies, but the elements and other "qualities which, when imposed on some portion of omnipresent neutral matter, constituted an individual body or substance. Position... was... a quality in Aristotle's physics, and a body that changed its position therefore remained the same body only in the problematic sense that the child is the individual it becomes" (p. xii). In the same way, Aristotle's ethics has a focus unlike that of most contemporary ethical inquiries. Aristotle's teleological account of human life was directly tied to the hierarchical structure and roles of the Greek polis. Classical ethics was not a detached, theoretical kind of inquiry; it was the discipline that enabled a person to know how to become what they could, and should, be; to fulfill their place in the polis. Ethics had political import; it showed how to correct, improve and educate the citizens. Central to Aristotle's ethics was the notion of "virtue"; something that has until recently seemed an antiquated moral concept. Virtues like courage, temperance, liberality, magnificence, pride, good temper, truthfulness, ready wit, friendliness, modesty, and righteous indignation are states of character that make a man good, and make him do his own work well (Aristotle, 1980, p. 37).

At the same time, natural virtue and virtue in the strict sense are distinct, and it is here that the developmental and educational function of ethics appears. Children may have the natural disposition for moral qualities, but without logos their expression can be "evidently hurtful" (p. 157). Moral precepts are needed to encourage the virtues and discourage the
vices, to order and educate the desires and emotions, and to cultivate appropriate habits of action. "...[I]t is not possible to be good in the strict sense without practical wisdom, or practically wise without moral virtue" (p. 158). Practical wisdom involves knowledge of the generally accepted rules of morality and an intelligent understanding of their reasons. A moral education, guided by the authority of just law, is essential: "...it is difficult to get from youth up a right training for virtue if one has not been brought up under right laws; for to live temperately and hardly is not pleasant to most people, especially when they are young. For this reason their nurture and occupations should be fixed by law; for they will not be painful when they have become customary" (p. 271). The good life made no sense out of the setting of society and its laws. "...[I]f (as we have said) the man who is to be good must be well trained and habituated, and go on to spend his time in worthy occupations and neither willingly nor unwillingly do bad actions, and if this can be brought about if men live in accordance with a sort of reason and right order, provided this has force... the law has compulsive power, while it is at the same time a rule proceeding from a sort of practical wisdom and reason" (p. 272).

This ethical scheme had three interconnecting elements: a view of human nature in its natural, untutored form, with its natural virtues and its faculties and passions; an understanding of the right moral precepts and laws; and a view of the moral end: the `states of character' that characterize a good man. The latter comprises the human telos. As Kuhn discovered, change, including the moral changes required in "the growth of a child to adulthood" were the central subject in Aristotle's philosophy.

Medieval Christianity changed the details but retained the basic structure of Aristotelian ethics: an account of human nature, an understanding of the precepts of rational ethics, and an ethical-developmental telos. Divinely ordained law was tacked onto the ethical precepts, and Aristotle's list of virtues was elaborated to include Christian virtues such as faith, hope and charity. Conceptions of the telos varied, but the assumption of a proper end to human life was maintained. Aristotle's accounts of virtue and of the human telos were reinterpreted in terms of Christian `natural law': there are norms of human nature as such, but they reflect Adam's original sin, and we are far from realizing human nature as it ought to be. Later in the Middle Ages the view of the telos altered again; uniquely Christian notions of revelation and salvation were introduced. For Aquinas, for example, the end of human action and the point of moral rules was to achieve goods, to obtain what satisfies our desire. But this was not simple eudaemonism, for "God is good," so that good action aimed to a unity with god. The achievement of human nature as it ought to be was postponed to an after-life.

The understanding of morality changed radically with the Enlightenment. The "philosophes" (Gay, 1977) had rejected the teleological component of classical physics on the grounds that it was metaphysical and unscientific. In a parallel fashion they considered classical teleological accounts of human nature to be flawed and unscientific. Just as they considered an appeal to the natural ends of physical motion idle speculation so, when it came to human activity, they maintained that while human reasoning could identify the means appropriate to a certain course of practical action, it had nothing to say about the ends towards which action--or life--should be directed. What they failed to see was that this rejection of a human telos undermined the classical purpose and function of ethics. What remained of the three-part scheme of Aristotelian ethics was a view of untutored human nature and a set of moral injunctions which had been stripped of their teleological context. The moral injunctions, both classical and Christian, far from being logically derivable from facts about human nature, had been designed, as we have seen, to bring about changes in that nature. Far from being dictates all humans could be expected to find rationally compelling, they were prescriptions likely to run counter to human impulses. "The injunctions of morality, thus understood, are likely to be ones that human nature, thus
understood, has strong tendencies to disobey" (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 55). The Enlightenment modifications to Thomist ethics were of such a kind that the task of demonstrating how moral injunctions could rationally appeal to human nature was from the outset an impossible one. Nonetheless, such a demonstration was seen as central to the project the Enlightenment philosophers undertook. Unwittingly, they initiated ethics' decline from a discipline of practical and educational consequence to one of merely abstract, theoretical academic interest.

And so, just like its sister project for a foundational justification of scientific knowledge, the project of ethical justification ran into insurmountable problems. A succession of brilliant moral philosophers struggled to achieve its goals. Increasingly they complained of the impossibility of their task; more and more they argued explicitly that a rational justification of morality is just not possible. But although they came to appreciate that their task was an impossible one, they drew the wrong conclusions. Instead of questioning the wisdom of an appeal to an objective rational foundation to justify moral precepts, one that rested on facts about a fixed human nature, they concluded that no reasonable ethical justification was possible. With growing frequency they interpreted morality as rooted instead in whim, preference, or subjective value.

It should perhaps be remarked that the concerns that found their expression in the Enlightenment projects were noble ones. The political aim to create a new kind of social order where individuals could improve themselves and participate equally has undoubtedly been powerful and important. But with the benefits of hindsight, as inheritors of the two projects' conceptual and social progeny, we can appreciate difficulties that the torch-bearers of each project failed to anticipate.

The Moral Project's Unraveling.

It is fruitful to sketch out the sequence of efforts. In After Virtue, MacIntyre (1984) discusses the ethics of Hume, Kant, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Ayer in some detail. Here I shall give brief portraits of these writers, and add my own sketches of Locke and Hare, in order to give a flavor of changing attitudes towards ethical justification. These two philosophers stand at the start and end, respectively, of the Enlightenment project; they also provide empiricist and rationalist, respectively, kinds of ethical justification. Their work and its difficulties throw light on contemporary efforts to understand morality as rooted in facts about human nature or essential and universal features of social organization, on the one hand, or in universal structures or tendencies in cognition and reasoning, on the other. From the start the Enlightenment came in two flavors. They differed only in the grounding they believed reason has (or needs), and in the nature and source of the evidence upon which reasoning operates. On the one hand were those with empiricist leanings, including Locke, Hume, Comte, Carnap, Neurath and Popper, who believed that the foundation for scientific knowledge was to be found in fundamental elements of sense perception, and the foundation for morality in fundamental facts of human nature. On the other hand were those of rationalist inclination, among them Descartes, Kant, Chomsky and Piaget, who saw logical reasoning and reflection as the way to achieve a foundation for systematic inquiry. Both empiricism and rationalism are "rationalist" in the broader sense that characterized the Enlightenment: a belief in the power and necessity of reasoning by the autonomous individual. And both were "anti-rationalist" in the sense that they held to a narrow and specific view of reason as calculative and mathematical, and opposed this to what they saw as the undisciplined conjectures of scholastic, theological reasoning (Gay, 1977). As they interpreted Aristotle, man is the rational animal, not a creation in God's image. "Logos" was interpreted as critical reasoning.
John Locke. Locke (1690/1975) began his philosophical work with the conviction, typical of the early Enlightenment, that there was a relationship between the epistemological question of how knowledge is possible, and the ethical question of how we should act and try to live. But he was unable to link the two in the way he wished, and he came to view his own theory of practical reason as a failure. His unsuccessful efforts are, of course, what we are most interested in here. Locke's aim was to show that a rational understanding of man's place in nature requires men to live like Christians. Unfortunately, he showed instead that such an understanding doesn't require any specific kind of life. Robbed, as of course it soon was, of its religious elements, his analysis sowed the seeds of utilitarianism.

Locke gave an account of knowledge that tied it closely to perception. Ideas in the mind are the consequence of the causal influence of bodies in the world, or of the mind's reflection on its own operation. Knowledge is the perception of the "connexion and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our Ideas" (Locke, 1690, p. ??525). Locke maintained that men do not have innate moral or religious ideas, nor (disagreeing with Descartes) do they have innate knowledge of maxims of reason. In fact we are subject to desires and passions that constantly lead us away from virtuous action. "Principles of Action indeed there are lodged in Men's Appetites, but these are so far from being innate Moral Principles, that if they were left to their own full swing, they would carry Men to the over-turning of all Morality" (Locke, 1690/1975, p. 75). But at the same time Locke believed that men's appetites could be tamed through the demonstration that there is a valid standard for human conduct independent of what is found attractive. Such a standard could become apparent to each of us through the diligent and careful use of our reason.

At first Locke hoped that a "natural law," decreed by God's will, could be grasped through reason. Morality, he claimed, is a science as much open to demonstration as is mathematics. Although our moral ideas, like all other ideas, derive from sense experience, "morality is capable of demonstration, as well as mathematics" (Locke, 1690/1975, p. ??). Moral propositions can be apprehended as certain truths merely by examination of their terms, and the ideas thereby expressed. They can be grasped perfectly, and the natural law is discernible as a sequence of relations between these ideas. The key moral terms are "good," that which causes pleasure or decreases pain, and "evil," that which causes pain or diminishes pleasure. Moral good is the conformity of our actions to a law, the sanctions of which are rewards of pleasure and punishments of pain. Laws include divine law, civil law, and tacitly agreed-upon conventions. A just law is one that appeals properly to our natural feelings of pleasure and pain. A moral action is one that conforms with such a law. Notice how good and evil each involve at root an appeal to individual sensation.

In order to try to provide the demonstration he sought, Locke painted a hypothetical state of nature where men live with their families in an established social order. But they have no impartial arbiter to turn to when there are disputes, and there is a strong tendency for conflicts to escalate, and wars to be declared. A social contract is needed; one that creates an authority that will protect men's natural rights, especially rights to own property, at least that property which the individual's labor has created. It is, in Locke's view, labor that establishes an individual's right to own property in a world given to humankind in common by God. Land, postulates Locke, is unlimited and property does not change hands. "In the beginning all the world was America," (Locke, ????, Sec T on Govern, sec 5) but fortunately by the seventeenth century it had been much improved through human labor. From this starting point Locke derived notions of the social contract and natural rights. Although he did to his own satisfaction provide a rational justification of natural rights to property, at least so far as ones labour entitled one, in general the demonstration of natural law proved illusive. Locke came to abandon the hope that such arguments would have any real influence on how most men choose in practice to behave.
He fell back on a second approach. Men's appetites and natural tendencies to behave in an non-virtuous manner might still, he believed, be rationally curbed by a recognition that God would punish such behavior after death. Locke believed he had already shown that the existence of God could be established through reason, by abstraction and generalization:

"[H]aving, from what we experiment in ourselves, got the ideas of existence and duration, of knowledge and power, of pleasure and happiness, and of several other qualities and powers which it is better to have than to be without; when we would frame an idea the most suitable we can to the Supreme Being, we enlarge every one of these with our idea of infinity; and so, putting them together, make our complex idea of God" (Locke, 1690/1975, p. ??).

Now he set out to prove that the existence and the fairness of divine punishment could also be shown by forms of reasoning available to any individual. Unfortunately he was unable to find a convincing argument for the reality of a punitive God and, instead, he became obliged to argue in favor of revelation. Faith, he wrote towards the end of his life, is a form of trust, not counter to reason but instead beyond reason's scope.

Locke's account combined, then, the following elements: a Christian set of moral virtues and vices; an account of a human nature whose impulses were to wrong-doing, viewed from the Christian perspective; an aim to identify a rational basis for virtuous action, one that the individual could discover without dictates from authority, secular or religious. Justification of morality is no longer theological, but still only a God could prop up this ethical system, and so Locke's efforts centered on finding rational demonstrations of God's law and vengeance. Whether or not MacIntyre is correct in arguing that this project was bound to fail, Locke was certainly well aware of the failure of his own efforts. He came to believe that genuine knowledge of morality, in the sense of certain truths achieved by means of reasoning, was unreachable. If he was correct in this belief, the Enlightenment project of rational ethical justification was an impossible one.

David Hume. For Hume (1738/1978) the features of human nature relevant to a rational justification of moral precepts were characteristics not of human reasoning but of the passions. Hume argued strongly that passion, not reason, is what moves us to act. Since the whole point and purpose of moral judgments is to guide our action, if this guidance cannot be provided by reason but only by the passions, it followed that "Morality, therefore, is more properly felt than judg'd of" (1978, p. 470). Pleasure and pain, not reason, arouse action. We act not because we know something is the case, as a result of reasoning about "relations of ideas" or from observing "matters of fact," but because of the prospect of the pleasant or painful consequences of what is, or may become, the case. Similarly, the sense of virtue or vice is a feeling of satisfaction, not a judgment of objective properties of an appraised act. When we observe an act of vice, that vice lies not in the immoral action: there can be found only passions, motives, volitions and thoughts. It lies, instead, in an onlooker's "sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, towards this action" (1978, p. 469).

Hume's justification for morality was a utilitarian one. We are constituted so as to have certain desires and needs, and these are served by obeying moral rules. These moral rules are explained and justified by their connection to fundamental human passions, not by reference to reason. (This is an argument that moves from "is" to "ought", as MacIntyre points out!) Fortunately "there is no such passion in human minds as the love of mankind, merely as such, independent of personal qualities, of services, or of relation to ourself" (1978, p. 481) and this passion provides the motive for just action.
Hume's discomfort with attempts to base moral injunctions on statements of fact found expression in a famous passage where he denounces what came to be called the naturalistic fallacy:

"In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remark'd, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surpriz'd to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, is, and is not, I meet with no proposition that is not concerned with an ought, or an ought not. This change is imperceptible; but is, however, of the last consequence.... [A] reason should be given, for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it.... [T]his small attention wou'd subvert all the vulgar systems of morality, and let us see, that the distinction between vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relations of objects, nor is perceiv'd by reason" (1978, p. 469).

In a sense Hume was correct in seeing no basis for a justification of moral rules in statements of logic or fact. Not because the naturalistic fallacy, moving from Is to Ought, is a timeless property of logical analysis, but because in the eighteenth century there was no longer any way of getting an Ought from an Is. In Aristotle's time such a move had been quite justified, but when Hume wrote, moral Oughts were no longer backed by reasons of this kind. Reason, as it had become construed in the Enlightenment, could not correct human passions in the way that Aristotle considered logos to do. Both reason and morality had been stripped of their connection with a culture or tradition. The citizen was now the "individual," with a fixed nature, with natural rights. Such a citizen did not need moral education in order to play a proper part in society. Indeed, the possibility that the passions could be educated or corrected went unconsidered by Hume or his contemporaries (and continues to be ignored by most modern psychologists, for that matter). The passions were held to be natural and fixed. "A passion is an original existence" (p. 415) for which truth and reason are irrelevant matters. "Tis impossible, therefore, that this passion can be oppos'd by, or be contradictory to truth and reason; since this opposition consists in the disagreement of ideas, consider'd as copies, with those objects, which they represent" (p. 415).

We shall return later to the relationship between Is and Ought, between fact and value, between science and ethics. For now the main point is that Hume grounded morality in the passions and desires of a fixed, natural human nature, independent of society and tradition, independent of reason or experience.

**Immanuel Kant.** Kant (1787/1965) rejected Hume's argument for rooting morality in desire and the passions, and instead saw formal logical necessity as the underpinning of moral action. For Kant the key feature of human nature was "the universal and categorical character of certain rules of reason." Only this could be the basis for a moral both universal and obligatory.

Despite Kant's belief in natural structures of reason that provide the framework of all experience, like his empiricist counterparts he considered reason unable to provide knowledge of essential natures or teleological features to the universe. At the same time, he was aware that morality without reference to the proper ends of human action and human life was somewhat hollow, and so he analyzed the "presuppositions of pure practical reason" to provide a teleological framework. His contemporaries saw this as an arbitrary addition.
Soren Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard (18??/1968) regarded both the "aesthetic" (Humean) and the "ethical" (Kantian) accounts of morality as equally valid alternative ways of life; two among four that he described. Each of them has its own source of obligation and authority: desire and pleasure in the Aesthetic sphere; rational planning in the Ethical; absorption in the moment in Religiousness A; a paradigmatic project or person in Religiousness B. We must actively choose one of these spheres, Kierkegaard argued, in order to feel its authority, but there can be no reason for the choice we make, for the choice itself determines what is to count as a reason: aesthetic pleasure or ethical obligation. Kierkegaard had abandoned as impossible the effort to justify morality by appeal to rational principles, but it can be seen that he still accepted the terms of the Enlightenment's ethical project. If no single moral system can be justified in a binding way, then all are equally valid. We must make an existential choice among them; the particular way of life we choose then becomes binding for us.

Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche's work has been seen as a culmination of the Enlightenment's project for moral philosophy. Like Kierkegaard, Nietzsche found inadequacies in both the empiricist attempts by Locke and Hume and the rationalist attempts by Kant and others to provide a systematic justification of morality. But unlike Kant, Nietzsche concluded that we should reject all systems of moral justification; they are merely corrupt expressions of personal preference and the will to power. For Nietzsche the failure of the project had left us with nihilism our only option; a situation where:

"the highest values lose their value, the answers to the why and wherefore lose their binding and shaping force.... What one does and where one belongs, what one values, one goes along with all of this in a self-stupefying routine. There is culture and cultural tendencies, there is the church and society. Some individuals might cling to them in personal honesty and remain satisfied, but from all of this as a totality nothing any longer arises, no criteria and creative impulses any longer come from it, everything just continues to be carried on. Inner devastation and lostness increase beyond measure. What belongs underneath rises to the top. What is merely smart invention claims to be clever work. Lack of reflection is taken for power of action, and science gives the appearance of being essential cognition" (Heidegger, 1985, p. 22-23).

All efforts to provide a justification of moral injunctions in the form of an interpretation-free foundation had failed, judged Nietzsche. We can only conclude that there is no justification for the moral beliefs that we hold valid. Facing up to this disturbing fact, we must acknowledge that there are no genuine values, no valid ethical imperatives. Traditional values and beliefs must be rejected as unfounded, in an attitude of nihilism.

A. J. Ayer. An ethical philosophy known as emotivism was proposed in the early decades of this century by philosophers of a positivist persuasion. Ayer (1946) argued that moral values are simply personal preferences; that scientific and systematic inquiry deals with a realm of facts from which these values, along with those of aesthetics, are distinct; that moral action amounts to nothing more than an attempt to maximize our pleasures through the pursuit of immediate gratifications. Positivists shared with Nietzsche a jaundiced and skeptical opinion of the extent to which ethics can claim to have rational credentials.

MacIntyre gives a certain priority, albeit a distinctly ironic one, to Ayer's ethical philosophy of emotivism. MacIntyre proposes that emotivism, although intended as a general theory of the meaning of moral utterances, is instead an accurate theory of their current use. What is said in moral disagreements makes apparent claims to objective ethical standards, but if one looks at the use to which these moral phrases are actually put, they
function merely to express personal opinions. MacIntyre argues that emotivism is the 
culmination, and at the same time a demonstration of the failure, of the Enlightenment's 
ethical project. We shall return to this claim shortly.

R. M. Hare. Emotivism was a controversial ethical philosophy and didn't last long, 
but the "analytical philosophy" that succeeded it had, as MacIntyre points out, significant 
areas of overlap. Take for instance Hare's influential analysis of "the language of morals"; 
my second more detailed summary.

Hare (1952/1964) saw moral judgments as linked not, as emotivists claimed, to the 
simple expression of preferences, but to imperatives, especially commands. As such they 
are not statements of desire, or, for that matter, statements ("indicatives") of any other kind. 
"A statement... cannot answer a question of the form `What shall I do?'; only a command 
can do this" (p. 46). Hare defended this analysis on two fronts: against those who saw 
imperatives as formally meaningless, and those who saw him reducing morality to rhetoric 
and persuasion. Although they don't satisfy the positivist verification criterion of meaning 
(that "the meaning of an expression consists in the means of judging its truth value"), 
imperatives are not meaningless. They just "do not express statements in the sense defined 
by the criterion" (p. 8). Furthermore commands, although they differ from statements, 
resemble them in that they consist in telling someone something, not in merely seeking to 
influence him. (If this seems unconvincing, consider that for Hare a typical command was 
"Shut the door, please"; one which, if I may be permitted to say so, is a singularly British 
kind of command, deferential to the point of becoming ineffectual.)

Hare examined the view that imperatives are derived from purely factual grounds, 
such as statements about human nature. He concluded that such a grounding is impossible. 
His main argument was that one of the rules that govern inference among imperatives states 
"No imperative conclusion can be validly drawn from a set of premises which does not 
contain at least one imperative" (p. 28). Rather than attempting to justify this rule on logical 
grounds, Hare instead appealed to a variety of authorities: Hume of course, along with Ayer, 
Popper, G. E. Moore, Socrates and Aristotle. This "logical rule," if accepted, as Hare did, 
implies of course that "no moral judgment can be a pure statement of fact" (p. 29); a moral 
decision or principle cannot be derived from purely empirical considerations.

Having ruled out one of the two kinds of foundation considered acceptable within 
the terms of the Enlightenment ethical project, Hare considered next whether a Cartesian 
grounding for morality might be found instead; one in which moral judgments could be 
shown to be derived from a self-evident first principle. Here again his answer was a 
negative one. His reasoning ran, in part, as follows. Assuming that the function of general 
moral principles is to regulate our conduct, that "a piece of genuinely evaluative moral 
reasoning must have as its end-product an imperative of the form "Do so-and-so" then "its 
principles must be of such a kind that we can deduce some particular imperatives from them 
in conjunction with factual minor premises." But such principles cannot have the desired 
Cartesian property of being self-evident, for at least two reasons. First, if self-evidence 
means being intuitively obvious, we all know that most moral imperatives are not self-
evident. Yet we cannot suppose that our moral principles are more obvious than the 
imperatives we derive from them. Second, if the principles' self-evidence stems from their 
being analytic statements (true by definition), the principles must be content-free. But if 
they have no content, they cannot tell us to do one thing rather than another. Hare 
concluded that "a Cartesian procedure, either in science or in morals, is doomed from the 
very start" (p. 38).

In other words, Hare had provided "reasons for holding that no moral system whose 
principles were regarded as purely factual could fulfill its function of regulating our
conduct," and also "that no moral system which claims to be based on principles that are self-evident can fulfill this function either" (p. 44). To his own satisfaction, he had ruled out the possibility of grounding morality in either value-neutral empirical facts or in axiomatic principles. As he remarked with reference to his emotivist colleagues, "it is not surprising that the first effect of modern logical researches was to make some philosophers despair of morals as a rational activity" (p. 45).

What, then, can a philosophical analysis of moral judgments accomplish? For Hare, ethics is "the logical study of the language of morals." He limited his investigation accordingly to the internal relations of moral language; specifically the entailment relationship among principles of action, and among imperatives, including moral imperatives. He contended that "commands, because they, like statements, are essentially intended for answering questions asked by rational agents, are governed by logical rules just as statements are. And this means that moral judgments may also be so governed" (p. 16). For instance, both imperatives and indicatives have entailment relations; the law of the excluded middle can be applied to both; self-contradictions are possible; both employ logical connectives (`if,' `and,' `or' etc.); and the sentential calculus can be applied to both (p. 26). "Provided that we either find out what the rules are, or lay down what they are to be, we can study the logic of imperative sentences with as much assurance as that of indicatives" (p. 27).

This is all very well so far as it goes, but can no kind of justification be provided for our moral principles and decisions? Hare's answer was that moral principles and imperatives are based in a "way of life" which cannot in practice be spelled out, and even if it could such an account would not be rationally compelling to a skeptical inquirer.

"A complete justification of a decision would consist of a complete account of its effects, together with a complete account of the principles which it observed.... Thus, if pressed to justify a decision completely, we have to give a complete specification of the way of life of which it is a past. This complete specification it is impossible in practice to give" (p. 69).

And if someone:

"goes on asking `But why should I live like that?' then there is no further answer to give him, because we have already, ex hypothesi, said everything that could be included in this further answer... We can only ask him to make up his own mind which way he ought to live; for in the end everything rests upon such a decision of principle. He has to decide whether to accept that way of life or not; if he accepts it, then we can proceed to justify the decisions that are based upon it; if he does not accept it, then let him accept some other, and try to live by it" (p. 69).

Notice several things. First, Hare clearly considered the Enlightenment effort to provide a rational justification for moral judgments and decisions unrealizable. Neither a purely factual basis nor self-evident principles can provide such a justification. Moral judgments and imperatives are, he said, based instead in a "way of life" which cannot be spelled out fully and which cannot provide rationally compelling grounds to a sceptical inquirer. Such a sceptic must freely choose ("a choice unconstrained by criteria" says MacIntyre, 1984, p. 20) the way of life that seems most appropriate; only then is he or she provided with a basis for inference among moral imperatives.

It is clear that when Hare wrote of a "way of life" he had in mind a realm of moral principles that may be embodied in a social and ethical tradition into which we are born, but which we can also deliberately and freely accept or reject. This interpretation accords with
his description of the way morality changes when social and material conditions alter, as they had in post-war Britain. Principles accepted in the past no longer "provide a suitable equipment" (p. 75) and as a consequence new principles will be advocated, eventually some will be chosen, and they will prove adventitious or disastrous. So "there will be some changes; some of the principles advocated by the rebels will have been adopted. That is how morality progresses--or retrogresses" (p. 74). In the meantime most people act opportunistically, holding to no root principles. Hare, like the other philosophers we have considered, was a moral conservative, but one who had been confronted by radical shifts in moral attitude. "The moral principles of Aristotle resemble those of Aeschylus more than they differ from them, and we ourselves shall perhaps come back to something recognizably like the morality of our grandfathers" (p. 74). Hare was describing a time when moral codes had changed rapidly, so that it became apparent that their content was not dictated in any final, fixed manner. It is not surprising that Hare would conclude that if a rational justification is to be found, it must be sought not in the content, but in the form of moral judgments (in his analysis their imperative form). Hence the direction of his inquiry: towards the inferential logic of imperatives. A "decision of principle" determines the content of morality for an individual or group, but since this basis can shift as conditions change, Hare believed that it was not amenable to philosophical analysis.

Psychology and the Failure of the Enlightenment Projects.

The psychological study of moral phenomena has lessons to learn from an examination of each of the Enlightenment's two projects. The first is an appreciation that many of our research programs still adopt unthinkingly the terms in which these projects were conceived. While they share the terms, they differ in their understanding of where the projects have left us. On the one hand are conceptions of moral action and moral development that not only accept the Enlightenment perspective, they assume that the moral project has been successfully completed. Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental study of moral development is one of these. On the other hand are those programs that tacitly acknowledge the project's failure, but themselves fail to see that this means we must rethink our understanding of reason, not conclude that morality is entirely a matter of opinion and that everything is relative. Social learning theory is one of these. It is left to the reader to judge what stand other views on moral development, including those presented in this book, take on the success or failure of the Enlightenment's project of ethical justification.

Kohlberg's Cognitive-Developmental Theory.

Kohlberg's account of morality has elements very similar to those found in accounts by Locke, Hume and other moral philosophers engaged in the ethical project. The first element is a largely-unquestioned content to morality, this time in the form of universal moral principles. The second is a view of a universal human nature, this time the Piagetian one of an individual who constructs cognitive structures through interaction with the environment, through universal psychological processes of assimilation and accommodation. And the third common element is the effort to link these two by means of a rational justification.

Kohlberg claimed that there is wide, perhaps universal, agreement on the content of moral principles. He described empirical evidence that "there is a universal set of moral principles held by people in various cultures, Stage 6" (p. 127) and furthermore "these principles, I argue, would logically and consistently be held by all people in all societies." Even "the more generalized and consistently held content `principles' of conventional morality [i.e., stages 3 and 4] are also universal" (p. 128). Those principles characteristic of Stages 5 or 6 are prudence and respect for authority, society, or people (Stage 5 only); welfare of others; justice; and benevolence (Stage 6 only) (p. 174).
As Harré points out, cognitive-developmentalism adopts the morality and politics of individualism. Piaget and Kohlberg presented democratic individualism as though it was a universal empirical truth, an objective statement of the ends of human nature. "Piaget assumes that his own Cartesian logicism is the highest form of human cognition. In similar vein, Kohlberg builds on the assumption that North American colonial democracy is the most advanced form of human association" (Harré, 1984 p. 231). Harré's conclusion is one I am happy to endorse: "This suggests taking morally relevant discourse as a text in need of interpretative analysis rather than something for which a literal reading is always available through some supposed shared commonsense understanding" (Harré, p. 232).

It might seem that Kohlberg's account of human 'nature' differed significantly from most versions of the Enlightenment project. Isn't there a telos involved, an end to human development, just the kind of thing Locke and Hume were determined to avoid? Kohlberg wrote, after all, of the need to move 'From Is to Ought'. This is true, but the end is one that an Enlightenment philosopher would be happy to sanction. The individual becomes a scientist-philosopher; objective, able to consider all factors in their various combinations in a value-neutral manner. He becomes principled, constructing and applying universal and logical ethical principles. The end of development is the autonomous individual that the Enlightenment philosophers invented, and that they claimed we have been all along. The autonomous individual, a seventeenth century social fiction that had been proclaimed an objective fact about human nature, a construction that has become a social reality of dubious merit in contemporary culture, one that is diagnosed as a uniquely modern malaise (Durkheim's state of anomie, for instance) becomes in Kohlberg's stage model the highest form of morality, an inevitable ethical development. "Ethical principles' are the end point of sequential 'natural' development in social functioning and thinking" (Kohlberg, 1971/1981, p. 106). Moral development has here all the inevitability of a syllogism. There is a "logical order among the stages" (p. 137); each implies the previous stage but not the succeeding one. "Movement in moral thought is usually irreversibly forward in direction" (p. 137). Education is unnecessary for construction of formal operational intelligence (Piaget claimed not to be able to understand the 'American question'); nor is ethical instruction or guidance needed for an individual to reach Stage 6. This is a technological teleology, not an Aristotelian one.

To the extent that Kohlberg claimed to have given a clear account of stages of moral development, he claimed also to have provided a rational justification of ethics. Kohlberg's description of what is accomplished in moral development is exactly what the Enlightenment ethical thinkers were trying to create: a moral system that is binding for every individual, but that makes no reference to external authorities and is independent of the individual's personal situation and interests. "With each stage, the obligation to preserve human life becomes more categorical, more independent of the aims of the actor, of the commands or opinions of others" (Kohlberg, 1971/1981, p. 171). How are the universal principles and the constructivist nature brought together? By the individual himself (sic). A major impetus for an individual's transition from one moral stage to the next is a rational recognition of the inadequacies of the current stage. A search for cognitive consistency drives development, and the cognitive consistency of a moral system is essentially a rational justification of that system. Kohlberg acknowledged that "my psychological theory as to why moral development is upward and sequential is broadly the same as my philosophical justification for claiming that a higher stage is more adequate or more moral than a lower stage" (p. 131, original emphasis). And what makes the higher stages better? The criteria of structural adequacy in the cognitive-developmental scheme of things are formal ones: increased differentiation and integration. But morality is "an autonomous domain, with its own criteria of adequacy or rationality," although these are parallel to the cognitive criteria. A moral reason has formal characteristics of "impersonality, ideality, universalizability,
preemptiveness and so on" (p. 170). In other words, a fully adequate moral judgment is binding for all. The individual who reaches Stage 6 has finally constructed what the Enlightenment thinkers were trying to find: a morality that is "universal, inclusive, consistent, and grounded on objective, impersonal, or ideal grounds" (p. 170).

Social Learning Theory.

If Kohlberg assumed that the Enlightenment project of ethical justification was successful, and proposed that it is recapitulated anew by every individual, social learning theorists assume that the project has failed, and that all moral values and beliefs are relative. Moral action can only be studied as a matter of empirical fact, and moral development is, in truly eudaimonist fashion, a matter of avoiding negative consequences and seeking pleasurable ones.

Social learning theory had its beginnings in twentieth century positivism, which itself expressed the stark reality the failed projects seemed to have revealed: reason is logic; facts are neutral data; values are mere preference and opinion. Once values had become considered subjective and ungrounded, ethical relativism was inevitable. And since in this view moral judgments simply express preferences, moral development has no rational direction beyond the arbitrary norms of one's social group. People can reinforce any kind of behavior they wish. Kurtines, Alvarez & Azmitia (this volume) cite Liebert (1984): "Evaluation invariably involves preference, and preference is invariably relative." Liebert, like Hare (1952/1964), sees no possibility for rational evaluation in moral judgment. The pursuit of self-interest, for the social learning theorist as for Nietzsche, is all that remains, and such a pursuit results in the development of cunning, not principle.

Towards a Postmodern Psychology of Morality

If it is to genuinely move beyond false foundational assumptions, the psychological study of moral phenomena must allow itself to be affected in a double way by the failure to identify objective, interpretation-free foundations upon which to ground scientific and moral knowledge. A science of moral phenomena must rethink both its status as science and the character of its domain of inquiry. Neither of these two is quite what we have assumed it to be. Thomas Kuhn and others have given us a new sense of what science is, free from a foundational metaphysics. They have reinterpreted science in postmodern terms. Scientific research turns out to involve paradigms of inquiry outside which no interpretation of phenomena can take place. But the science of psychology presents special interpretive problems. Those parts of psychology that involve the study of human phenomena will never become "normal science" in Kuhn's (1970) sense, and so their practitioners must stay constantly aware of the role that perspectives and concerns play in constituting the entities being studied. A science that cannot appeal to the apparently interpretation-free data that a paradigm provides to its scientific practitioners must instead explicitly recognize and come to terms with the unavoidable part that interpretation plays in even the identification of what counts as evidence. A postmodern psychology must have a central hermeneutic component (Packer & Addison, 1989).

A variety of candidates have been proposed for a non-positivist psychology: humanistic, phenomenological, constructionist, narrative. One way to assess these psychologies is to consider to what extent the Enlightenment framework still holds sway. Does the search continue for a foundation underlying knowledge claims? Or is it assumed instead that no rational justification is possible and that anything goes, that all interpretations are equal, and that selection among competing explanatory accounts is arbitrary?

The interpretive or hermeneutic approach I have outlined elsewhere (Packer, 1985) attempts a radical break with the Enlightenment projects for science and morality. Its
domain of inquiry is not an external realm of objective phenomena, nor an internal cognitive realm of mental structures, but everyday practical activity. The source of knowledge is not taken to be interpretation-free facts about the world, observed with detachment, nor cognitive principles self-evident to reflection. Inquiry has its starting place in our human understanding of each other; although this is always a partial, perspectival and incomplete kind of understanding. Furthermore, this understanding is inevitably "projective": we comprehend new phenomena in terms of our practical engagement in the world. We understand the new not in terms of what we already know, but in terms of who we already are. The possible shapes of our understanding are, at least initially, those into which we have been thrown by our history and culture. Interpretive investigation entails a recognition that a projective framework is always at work, but that with effort it can be extended and altered, to bring fresh understanding.

The kind of explanation sought in hermeneutic inquiry is not a theory made up of general laws that reflect statistically significant regularities among events, nor is it a rational reconstruction of some portion of a decontextualized cognitive competence. It is instead a narrative account, an interpretation, that articulates and lays out our practical understanding of a phenomenon, organized by the concerns of a particular practical engagement, a task that psychological activity seeks to further and move forward. Interpretive inquiry focuses on human activity, situated in context, and the products of activity, including institutions, histories, and texts. Human understanding traffics in "thick concepts" (Williams, 1985) that meld fact and value; an explanatory account of human action, finding its starting place in understanding, aims to articulate these concepts to a practical end.

This then, in brief, is one account of the kind of science psychology can become. What, now, is the appropriate way to approach and understand the phenomena of morality? A hermeneutic approach to moral phenomena introduces changes in both the emphasis and practice of research into morality. First, we must study moral action embedded in the context of social practices. The sources of moral development lie not within the individual (in the mind, or in human nature) or even in the socializing parent-child dyad, but in the social practices that individuals act within. Tradition and culture perpetuate themselves in these practices, but they are also shaped by contemporary material circumstances. Second, moral reasoning is not usually a matter of applying moral principles, analogous to solving math or logical problems: it takes the shape of deliberation about concrete moral issues. Third, if researchers can never be detached onlookers, the relationship between researcher and people studied needs to be reexamined. Let us consider each of these three in more detail, together with some examples of interpretive research that has broken fresh ground in each area.

The Practical Grounds of Morality.
Moral acts are not objects that can be simply coded or measured; they must be interpreted. An act may be foolishness or heroism, cowardice or caution, depending on the setting against which it is placed and on the circumstances of both agent and researcher. Oliver North has been described as destroyer of the Constitution, and as heroic defender of democracy. The U. S. Airforce's recent shooting down of two Libyan fighters was equally subject to contrasting interpretations. The ambiguity of each of these events has been striking. In what moral category should we place them? It seems that the psychologist's task is to try to understand the various ways in which such acts are read. Different social practices set up their own facts; each provides an interpretive framework within which acts of right and wrong show up. As psychologists we shouldn't study these moral facts alone; we must study their framework, and their relation to it. At the same time, the ontological framework we work in, as scientists, shapes what we study: there is a doubly projective structure here.
From the hermeneutic perspective, the sources of morality which the individual can lay claim to lie not internal to that individual, as potential cognitive constructions, nor external to the individual as social norms that must be internalized, with the encouragement of authoritarian carrots and sticks. These sources, shall we say, precede and surround the individual, as social practices which she can participate in, and as possibilities that she can make her own. It is by becoming engaged in particular activities that children acquire and change their self-conceptions, their goals, and their understanding of behavior and action. Moral cognition is not general, decontextualized and disembodied; moral thinking and moral development are practical accomplishments inherently linked with the particularities of routine, everyday experience. Engagement in everyday practical activity structures and gives meaning to thought, including thought about moral issues. Practices can be local to a particular institutional setting, or as broad as a cultural tradition. Institutions and the practices they embody provide the context for moral development. Families, work-places, and schools all embody ways of acting that require study in their own right.

For instance, Packer and Mergendoller (1989) studied classroom practices that had been set up in a novel elementary school curriculum. This study was an effort to look at the details of the social interchanges children engaged in with each other and with adults, and their interpretations of these interchanges, in a classroom setting. Teachers in several elementary schools in Utah used an instructional approach known as Workshop Way; we examined how the curriculum worked on a daily basis, by observing classes in grades 1, 2 and 5 in two of the schools, and interviewing in some depth three teachers and perhaps one third of their students. Interviews with the students took place on three occasions, in the Fall, Winter and Spring of one school year.

Social practices in this case were local ones. A Workshop comprising up to twenty tasks, in fixed order, was the major academic work that students attempted each day, with the number and complexity of the tasks increasing with grade. Each task was taught at the start of the school year, and their labels and instructions were pinned up on a "task board" on the wall. Each afternoon after the children had left the teacher changed the content of each task for the next day. In this way they ensured that it was not the teacher who "bosses" the children, but the task board. Emphasis was placed on the pleasure of working and getting work done rather than on correct answers. Students worked at their own pace, moving independently about the classroom and interacting freely with peers, but they had to maintain a reasonable noise level and not stop working altogether. We came to see that teachers interacted with their students to draw them into a set of practical social activities in the classroom. These activities reflected valued forms of social interaction and engagement, and included helping others and seeking help from them, being tolerant of others' faults and errors, taking academic and social risks, and working industriously. Each of these activities encompassed both an immediate practical aim and at the same time a developmental telos. First, each involved an end or purpose that was socially and personally meritorious or virtuous; for instance providing another child with assistance in a Workshop task. Second, each activity was designed to help the children develop a "skill" that entailed conduct or concern that one would consider virtuous, for instance sincere interest over others' learning and academic progress in class.

Next, we saw that the teachers worked so that they were not the `reason' the children were doing these things; instead the teachers used a common interpretive framework that ascribed responsibility for the practices to the students in a way that emphasized their effectiveness, their initiative, and their worth as individuals. But children differed in the extent to which they took up this perspective on their own agency, and in the extent to which they accepted the classroom activities as legitimate and meaningful. As a consequence they
differed in the manner in which they engaged in the activities, and they differed in the kinds of account they gave of them.

In short, the teachers' organization of the social and instructional structure of their classes, and the detailed character of their interaction with students, accomplished three goals. First, the students became engaged in the academic and social activities of the classroom. Second, many of the children began to adopt a new way of understanding and talking about their ability, their own successes and failures, and their own academic and personal worth. Third, at least some of them began to discover an intrinsic value in these classroom activities, coming to understand them as legitimate and holding themselves responsible for carrying on the activities.

Notice that in this study we interviewed children not about hypothetical moral dilemmas but about their daily participation in classroom activities, and about what they understood to be the meaning and purposes of these activities. We were then able to draw conclusions about the manner in which they engaged in the activities, in particular whether they considered them legitimate or not.

What other kinds of study of morality in practice would be of interest? The practices in the Workshop Way classes were designed to be coherent and consistent, but this is of course not always the case. MacIntyre has proposed that modes of thought and practice in contemporary society have become fragmented and ineffective. This is a claim worthy of empirical study. MacIntyre's argument is that the Enlightenment project has led not just to a philosophical dead end, it is also responsible for social, political and psychological difficulties that face us now. We live in a culture shaped by social and political changes initiated by the Enlightenment and, as both MacIntyre and Heidegger view it, these radical changes have led us to anomic and alienation. Our society embodies at the practical level the same oppositions that have hopelessly tangled ethical philosophy. Psychologists have tended to assume a moral homogeneity; if in actuality the moral injunctions of Western society are splintered and contradictory, we need to become sensitive to this in our empirical investigation. We can hardly expect moral development to be continuous and sequential if the practices which ground it are fragmented and contradictory.

Take the debates over abortion. Adherents to the "pro-choice" and "pro-life" positions are each satisfied that they have made the correct moral judgment, but there seems to be no basis for a reasoned debate between the two positions. Each makes assumptions that the other doesn't share, and conversation degenerates rapidly into name-calling and mud-slinging. We have all witnessed the paradoxical outcome: proponents of a moral position that advocates universal rights to life throw fire-bombs at the offices of those they disagree with. The failure of rational persuasion leaves violence the only apparent option. A study of dialogues between these positions would be valuable, and would advance both theory and practice.

MacIntyre (1988) suggests that the Enlightenment's liberal individualism, intended to supplant tradition, has ironically become a tradition itself, a tradition of interminable debates over principles of rationality. Our lives have become split into compartmentalized spheres, each with its own kinds of goods, and its own kind of evaluation (cf. Berger, Berger & Kellner, 1973). We are expected to be mobile selves, able to slip quickly from one sphere to the next -- from private to public life, from being a consumer of goods to producing them -- all the while keeping our attitudes compartmentalized. These attitudes themselves have been reduced to the status of subjective opinion, matters of personal preference about which we may be polled and interviewed, but which we are not expected to be able to defend rationally, simply because no one can say what a reasoned justification of preferences might be.
It is hard not to agree with MacIntyre's claim that emotivism has become characteristic of our society. The night before election day, November 8, 1988, the MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour interviewed people around the country about Bush and Dukakis, asking them who they preferred, how each man appealed to them. Political issues were scarcely mentioned; the interviewer took for granted that the only basis for choice between the candidates was personal preference. Voting has become the mere summing of individuals' preferences around the country; substantive debate among candidates has been reduced to strategies such as "sound-bites" selected to have the greatest impact on public opinion. In televised commentary following the debates between the two presidential candidates, evaluation of their positions was conducted almost entirely in terms of style and image, with no attention paid to the quality of argument about issues confronting the country. We were told, approvingly, that Bush used the word "values" six times in his opening remarks but that he did not appear as relaxed as in his address to the Republican convention. We seek, presumably, a candidate whose demeanor and vocabulary, whose rhetoric, can beguile us, rather than one whose policies convince us. As citizens, we are expected to choose between rival political ideologies on grounds that seem aesthetic rather than rational. Politicians appeal not to our capacity for reason, but to our presumed tendency to maximize our pleasures through the pursuit of immediate gratifications.

"The defense of rival moral and political standpoints is interpreted within the liberal order as the expression of preferences by those individuals who engage in such defenses.... The culture of individualism transforms expressions of opinion into what its political and moral theory had already said they were" (MacIntyre, 1988, p. 343).

Research employing an interpretive approach to these and other phenomena of modern political practices would be of interest to a psychology of morality.

Heidegger, too, considers modern society distorted in its practices. His analysis centers on what he calls the "truth of Being": "the way a historical people settles into an understanding of the world, of the gods, and of themselves.... The constellation of arts, science, and political arrangements within which they live out their lives" (Caputo, 1987, p. 236). It is "the historical mode of Being-in-the-world to which each of us is assigned by the movement of Being itself, and the demands which each historical existence puts upon us" (p. 246). This is a level more fundamental than that of ethical analysis; it is the level that moral philosophy presupposes and rests upon. Our current way of living is dominated by the persistent, acquiescent effort to manipulate and control. We have come to think nothing of, as Francis Bacon put it, torturing mother earth, twisting the lion's tail. Human existence provides the raw material for bioengineering, social control, and behavioral manipulation. In Heidegger's terms (Heidegger, 1965) we have by and large fallen into an inauthentic mode of being, where we view ourselves in terms more applicable to the objects we deal with (computers are central today). The view that we are ourselves objects with fixed 'natural' properties is one manifestation of this.

But ethical relativism, the yuppie pursuit of personal gain, and interminable emotivist moral debates are not inevitable consequences of the failure to locate an objective ethical foundation. They seem inescapable only to those who still unwittingly share the assumptions that launched the Enlightenment projects. Once we escape the supposition that justification of an ethical position must take the form of an objective foundation, then other possibilities reveal themselves. Reconsidering the perspective from which we understand morality and the terms in which we conceive it exposes a way of moving beyond objectivism and relativism (Bernstein, 1983). Reason, viewed in Enlightenment terms, has not provided the ethical and scientific justification that was desired, but it does not follow--counter
Nietzsche and Feyerabend—that these two areas are irrational; that anything goes. It makes better sense to conclude that our modern interpretation of reason, shaped over the past three hundred years, is faulty. In the same way, morality has not dissolved because the Enlightenment effort to identify objective ethical principles has failed; it remains possible that moral prescriptions can have quite a different kind of justification. We can appeal to the rationality that every tradition contains within itself. And with this in view, we can fruitfully study the circumstances in which people resist relativism, and those in which they fall prey to it.

My point in this section has been that at the level of practices morality in our culture is currently problematic. The lack of consensus over fundamental issues of individual rights and political obligation (to name but two areas of frequent debate) is understandable in the light of the history of efforts at moral justification, but it is disturbing nonetheless. Because psychologists have viewed the development of morality as a logical rather than a social phenomenon, they have constructed an idealized progression through universal stages. It is time to examine the moral development of children in diverse settings, with different moral practices. We should expect to find that as morality develops it is often confused and contradictory; that our culture presents young adults with unique moral conflicts and problems, which they may or may not resolve. One would expect this to be particularly the case for groups, such as women and minorities, faced with particularly conflicting practices and roles. An interpretive psychology can usefully seek to determine the loci of these problems, and the ways in which people interact when moral incommensurability strikes and reasoned argument proves impossible. To what extent and in what kinds of setting do people recognize this incommensurability, and how do they respond?

Current material circumstances.
I have suggested that the moral concerns and standards people develop are grounded in, and justified by, social practices. These practices have been shaped by history and tradition, but also by the contingencies of our everyday reality. Everyday reality is experienced as objective, yet we can become reflectively aware that it is contingent and changing. An example of the way morality reflects changing circumstances can be found in the number of calls recently for a morality of tolerance. Mikail Gorbachev spoke at the United Nations of a need for tolerance:

Insert excerpt from Gorbachev speech:

Surely this speech was motivated not by timeless human values or principles, but by the contingent yet very pressing reality of what has become a small planet. At this point in our history tolerance has become an imperative. But a morality of tolerance is not prescriptive in the sense of telling us directly what we ought to do. Rather, it is a perspective from which to view things; one that will show up moral facts of a certain kind. (I'm deliberately connecting fact and value here.) Tolerance shows up differences between people and nations not as threats, but as valid differences we can learn from. Nor is it binding in all situations; we don't tolerate the intolerable. So a morality of tolerance provides a framework within which the major wrongdoing will be an intolerable act, such as terrorism.

Postmodern or Antimodern Ethics?
Heidegger and MacIntyre reject the postmodern pessimism that inadvertently perpetuates the Enlightenment's assumptions when it rails over an 'inevitable' relativism. But they are hardly cheery themselves. Their accounts have an eschatological tone: they talk of a decline so profound that our only hope is salvation. We cannot help ourselves; we
must hanker for some kind of mystical return of the past; a rediscovery of lingering remnants of the classical world view; the uncovering of a basic way of being human. Until then the best we can do is retreat into small communities of like-minded people where "the moral life could be sustained so that both morality and civility might survive the coming ages of barbarism and darkness" (1984, p. 263). Their joint stand can be said to be one of antimodernity, and in this they fail to appreciate the positive implications in their own work. A variety of approaches to a postmodern ethics being explored just now, and I want to mention four of these. It is striking that each of these four calls for an ethics of tolerance.

In what he dubs a "radical hermeneutics," John Caputo (1987) argues against an entirely negative assessment of the Enlightenment. He intends to "undo" Heidegger's eschatological ethics because he has "doubts about [the] primordial epochs and new dawns" (p. 237) that this kind of ethics makes reference to. Caputo sees Heidegger's attack on metaphysical ethics as fully justified, but he turns the attack back upon Heidegger's own notion of a primordial ethos. Ethical action, he suggests, will have neither of these groundings. Our action is always facing "the flux": the open-endedness and mystery of our existence.

"Action today takes its point of departure not from fixed points of reference and steady principles (as in a metaphysical ethics) and not from the nomos issued by a primordial ethos (as in eschatological ethics) but precisely from the dissemination of principles and primordial epochs. It is precisely from the breakdown of standpoints and resting points of all sorts that we begin to act. If radical hermeneutics wants to expose us to the flux, then I want to show that this does not therefore leave us in the lurch. On the contrary, I will argue that this in fact liberates action--from subjugation to metaphysical principles on the one hand and eschatological dreaming on the other hand" (238).

Caputo proposes that we have to learn how to get along in the concrete particulars of everyday life without the guardrails of metaphysics. We do not have the knowledge that Hare, for instance, argued we must have in order to make a moral decision: the "facts of the case"; more or less full knowledge of "what we should in fact be doing if we did one or other of the alternatives open to us" (Hare, p. 56). Caputo's line of reasoning applies both to everyday morality and to psychological inquiry. In our postmodern epoch both science and ethics "remain operating, but without metaphysical certification" (p. 239). Nonetheless, the fact that we live in a world where interaction, and hence conflict, is common between peoples of radically different cultural traditions means that incommensurability in moral discourse has become a daily event. And the new options that technological innovation has made possible--sustaining life; preventing conception, etc.--have introduced novel moral dilemmas which, since they are at home in no tradition, we seem to have no reasoned basis for settling. Caputo (1987, p. 211) argues that "where worlds founder" we lose the practical rationality that a tradition provides. He presents a case for a morality of compassion and tolerance.

A second example of moving beyond a single universal morality without embracing utter relativism is provided by the work of David Wong (1984). Wong defends a certain kind of relativism, arguing that in particular no final selection is possible between virtue-based and rights-based moralities. An inadequate understanding of language, he suggests, has flawed previous relativist moral analyses. Hare's account of moral injunctions as pseudo-imperatives allows, Wong notes, a moral relativism where irresolvable disagreements occur between people adopting divergent universal principles. But Hare's analysis cannot explain why we experience moral imperatives ("Do not kill") as true or false, where we don't say this of ordinary imperatives ("Shut the door"). To correct problems such as this Wong undertakes an analysis of the truth conditions of moral statements. He concludes that alternative moralities with different truth conditions can
coexist, especially moralities where claims are based on need and on entitlement. Where MacIntyre saw virtue-based and need-based moralities in inevitable conflict, involving competing moral languages between which there can be no translation, Wong sees them as peacefully coexisting.

"Human beings have needs to resolve internal conflicts between requirements and to resolve interpersonal conflicts of interest. Morality is a social creation that evolves in response to these needs. There are constraints on what a morality could be like and still serve those needs. These constraints are derived from the physical environment, from human nature, and from standards of rationality, but they are not enough to eliminate all but one morality as meeting those needs. Moral relativity is an indication of the plasticity of human nature, of the power of ways of life to determine what constitutes a satisfactory resolution of the conflicts morality is intended to resolve" (p. 175).

Wong bases an argument on this position for a morality of tolerance and nonintervention. Where Kohlberg, among others, argued that relativistic tolerance involved a confusion of metaethics (relativism) and normative ethics (advocating values) Wong claims that a valid justification can be given.

Jeffrey Stout (1988) presumes, like Wong, that the absence of a universal moral law, and the "spectre of moral diversity," does not imply utter moral relativism. The plurality of moral language reflects, he suggests, a division of labor, the plurality of social practices, not a confusion and lack of coherence. But Stout considers that Wong fails to explain why we experience intractable moral debates. Wong's argument is that there are true moral statements within a moral system; that moral statements are indexical, and moral facts relational. But why, asks Stout, do people fail to be aware of this indexicality, and treat their own morality as universal? Furthermore, while Wong's criteria do exclude some moral systems as unethical, they leave too many others still in the running; one, for example, that permits abuse of outcastes.

Stout proposes a position at the center of a spectrum of relativism. Countering MacIntyre he presents a more balanced account of contemporary liberal society; it permits practices to flourish even as, as MacIntyre emphasized, it tends to "undermine the moral conditions needed to achieve goods internal to... practices" (p. 289). In Stout's view even liberal political institutions can express a telos, and so can ground diverse moral languages.

"The languages of morals in our discourse are many, and they have remarkably diverse historical origins, but they do not float in free air, and their name is not chaos. They are embedded in specific social practices and institutions -- religious, political, artistic, scientific, athletic, economic, and so on. We need many different moral concepts because there are many different linguistic threads woven into any fabric of practices and institutions as rich as ours. It is a motley: not a building in need of new foundations but a coat of many colors, one constantly in need of mending and patching, sometimes even recutting and restyling" (p. 291-292).

Strikingly, Stout concludes from his analysis, just like Wong and Caputo, that our contemporary society "justifies a kind of tolerance" (p. 292). In the Enlightenment ethical project the content of morality preceded attempts at analysis and justification. I argued earlier that concrete social circumstances call for a morality of tolerance; these philosophers appear to understand one of their tasks now as that of analyzing and justifying that call. In this respect modern ethical philosophers resemble their Enlightenment counterparts, though I suspect the former are the more likely to acknowledge that this is the character of their work.
I have suggested that we need to understand the history of the philosophies of morality and of scientific inquiry if we are to avoid retreading false paths. Too often we take for granted the assumptions that reason is logical, that fact and value are quite distinct, and that a morality is justified only when it has been linked to some objective foundation, in logical necessity or in facts of human nature.

There are not, and need not be, a single universally binding set of moral injunctions, but rather coexisting moral systems, each justified by its traditions and institutions.

**Moral Reasoning.**

I suggested earlier that moral reasoning is not a matter of applying moral principles, analogous to the way we usually think of solving math or logical problems, but that it involves deliberation about concrete moral issues. If moral reasoning is not algorithmic, calculative cognition, then the way in which we study it will need to be altered. But first, how did this interpretation come to get taken seriously? How did such a limited and distorted interpretation of the character of human reasoning arise?

The Enlightenment suffered from a characteristic malaise: the tendency to give priority to a detached, contemplative examination of phenomena (the "present-at-hand" mode of engagement) and to diminish the importance of involved, concerned engagement in practical activities (the "ready-to-hand" mode). (Cf. Dreyfus, in press, and Packer, 1985 for discussion of modes of engagement.) Those involved in the Enlightenment understood themselves to be liberating the individual from the power of external, often corrupt, authority, through an appreciation of man's intrinsic essential nature and an appeal to the uniquely human capacity for reason. But reason was viewed as something crucially different from Aristotle's *logos*. By the time of the project's collapse in the early decades of this century reason had become narrowly construed as logical thinking, and was contrasted with blind emotion, subjective preference, and personal opinion. In other words, any form of reasoning that was not logical had to be faulty and subjective. Heidegger argued that the view that calculative reason is the essence of human being is a profound misinterpretation. Furthermore, this "thinking" by individual selves was a *construction* of the Enlightenment, not a preexisting natural process or law, which had finally been liberated:

"The shattering of the sole dominance of the church in legislating knowledge and action is understood as a liberation of man to himself. But what man is as himself, wherein his being a self should consist is determined only in his liberation and by the definitely oriented history of this liberation. Human "thinking," which here means the forming powers of man, becomes the fundamental law of things themselves" (Heidegger, 1965, p. 31).

Changes in the way reason was viewed were parallel in the scientific and moral projects. The new science seemed to involve an attitude of value-neutrality that was best achieved through withdrawal from everyday concerns. Scientific observation appeared to involve only recording material objects' real properties. Everyday perception became interpreted the same way, as passive gaping; as a mechanical impinging of sensory input whereby the "primary qualities" of bodies (position, form) caused "ideas" in the mind. Scientific reasoning was interpreted as logical deduction from axiomatic principles. A mathematical criterion was applied to thinking: an ultimate and absolutely certain foundation must be found; in the form of knowledge that would be unquestionable; either inductive logic (comparing and contrasting simple, irreducible ideas, for Locke) or deductive logic (as in Descartes's efforts to identify an indubitable starting place from which to reconstruct all valid knowledge). Soon everyday judgment was considered this way too. Thinking had
become dominant over Being: "this thinking understands itself as the court of judgment over Being" (Heidegger, 1965, p. 32).

The elevation of calculative, deductive reasoning to the central component of inquiry in both science and philosophy went hand in hand with the denial, already described, of any essential human telos. A telos expresses a shared sense of the proper ends of human action, one that stems from the communal practices and consensual values that make up a tradition. Once tradition became suspect, knowledge claims apparently independent of any tradition seemed the superior ones. And in the social and historical circumstances when tradition became questioned there was in any case an absence of consensus about the proper ends to human action. Rational justification of moral choices in a way that made no reference to apparently contingent social and cultural particularities was considered a desirable alternative to the appeal to a tradition that was now one among many, and that seemed repressive and sterile.

Cares and concerns were now understood not as teloi intrinsic to human action, but as subjective, personal matters that could not ground an ethical philosophy, and that should be avoided in any scientific and philosophical investigation. Concerned practical engagement was judged secondary and inferior and the teloi of practical projects were shrugged off in the search for genuine objective knowledge. The goals of practice were now seen as subjective individual preferences, tied only to the desire for pleasure. Action was now considered a realm where the passions are at play, where we are at their whim. Human growth -- moral development -- would come only in so far as we were able to cultivate detached reason, and we this is best accomplished if we can rid ourselves of passions, of concerns and involvements.

The priority of detached reason over concerned engagement can be seen clearly in Hume's ethics, even in the way Hume placed emphasis on the way that reason is subordinate to the "passions." Hume's ethics, like his epistemology, was a product of the present-at-hand orientation. A dualist opposition of reason and emotion, and of mind and world, was taken for granted. Action was considered essentially mechanical, not intentional, and the passions mental states linked mechanically to action. With this picture Hume was confident he could apply Newtonian forms of explanation to psychological phenomena. At root, human life was just the search for pleasure and avoidance of pain; there was no goal to life beyond the pleasant accumulation of wealth. When individual human judgment was not the result of calculative reasoning, it was just a matter of taste and opinion.

The same considerations led 20th century thinkers -- including Kohlberg -- to focus their analysis on the form of moral judgments, not their content. This decision reflected the way that reason had been by design reduced, especially by Whitehead and Russell (1910), to an analytic, content-free logic. We have come to take for granted their notion that logical rules are tautologies; that they provide a way of restating and combining propositions (or imperatives) without changing their truth values. Yet with this final move reason was reduced to empty symbol-shuffling. At the same time empirical statements were considered objective reports of observed states of affairs; and human perception had become passive gaping. If both reason and perception were interpretation-free, they must be free of any evaluative component. It was against the background of an assumed sharp distinction between fact and value that Hare (1952/1964) could argue that a moral judgment can be divided into a portion that makes a statement about facts (the "phrastic" component, pointing something out), and a portion that expresses an imperative (the "neustic" component, recording assent or dissent). Hare rewrote the non-moral imperative "Shut the door!" as "Your shutting the door in the immediate future, please." The moral judgment "You should not kill" would be similarly rewritten "Your not taking another's life, please."
Once the fact-value distinction had been accepted the analytical philosopher could happily examine the logical properties of each domain separately.

It might be objected that unless reason is a matter of deduction and calculation, it is nothing but caprice. How can ethical analysis be conducted without universal moral principles? How can a person reason about a moral dilemma without invoking logical analysis? In actuality an approach to the study and judgment of ethical issues that makes no use of general principles had been at work for centuries before the Enlightenment changed the rules of the game. Casuistry is an approach to moral decision-making that makes the case, a particular moral dilemma described concretely, the basis for an ethical analysis, rather than a moral theory of general moral principles.

Jonsen and Toulmin (1988) examine the history of casuistry and consider its contemporary relevance. They propose that casuistry has much in its favor as an approach to ethical judgment. Moral reasoning, they propose, involves:

"accumulating many, parallel, complementary considerations, which have to do with the current circumstances of the human individuals and communities involved and lend strength to our conclusions, not like links in a chain but like strands to a rope or roots to a tree. Meanwhile on a more general level, a "cumulative" view of practical moral reasoning goes naturally with the rejection of "axiomatic" theories of moral philosophy in favor of a more complex and pragmatic view of ethical theory" (p. 293-294).

This is an account in which the individual makes a moral judgment not by appeal to ethical principles, but by considering the particular character of the circumstances, and attending to what has been done in situations that appear similar:

"The agent faced with the decision must make a specific choice about a particular action. The detailed circumstances of the action may be unique and unrepeatable; in considering its morality the decider will look for opinions about other actions in situations as similar as possible to his own. These opinions may carry a certain `probability,' based on the reputation of their author and the intrinsic argument, but the final decision how to act must rest not on a probability but on the moral certitude of the informed conscience" (p. 334).

Jonsen and Toulmin resemble other postmodernists in seeing moral injunctions embedded in a tradition and forms of social life that express and embody forms of human care, concern, and interrelationship.

"all reflective moral traditions keep it in mind that the kernel of moral wisdom consists, not in a hard-line commitment to principles which we accept without qualification, but in understanding the human needs and relations that are nurtured by a life of reflexive moral action" (p. 342-343).

How might our research benefit from these insights? Carol Gilligan and her colleagues have been conducting work that is cognizant of these complexities. They have developed a way of reading the text of an interview about a real-life moral conflict in such a way as to identify "voice-relevant" aspects of a person's narrative. The account given of a case provides the material for study of moral reasoning. Their open-ended clinical interviews yield complex narratives that "reflect situational, personal, and cultural factors, including issues of language, perspective, and the relationship between the reader's and the narrator's language and perspective" (Brown, Tappan, Gilligan, Miller, & Argyris, 1989). They approach an interviewee's description of a moral conflict as a text to be read, not coded; a text in which different voices can be discerned, reflecting alternative moral
orientations. Orientations of care and justice arise from and call attention to the fact that human relationships, both public and private, involve issues of both equality and attachment.

The narrative character of moral conflicts does not appear only when a `story' is told to the researcher; the initial comprehension of the acts involved in a moral conflict has a narrative organization (MacIntyre, 1984; Mishler, 1986; Sarbin, 1986). When people reflect upon and describe a conflict they employ narrative strategies that convey the choice of moral orientation and the orchestration of moral voices. Narrative organization plays an intrinsic part in determining what count as the facts of the case and the kinds of concern and obligation that are pertinent.

In research such as this an actual occasion of conflict becomes the topic of inquiry. It is not assumed that the facts of this case are self-evident, and that the researcher's task is to trace the application of moral principles to these facts. Rather, the perspective from which the person understands, interprets, and describes the conflict is the first order of business. The way the moral problem is constructed, the terms in which it is presented, the moral concerns that are voiced or silenced, are all taken to be manifestations of reasoning, and worthy of detailed study.

Research along these lines could move in a number of directions. Moral reasoning, understood this way, could be investigated with conflicts of differing kinds, in a range of social and cultural settings, with people of different ages and varying social backgrounds. The voices of care and justice could be further articulated and other voices could be sought, for instance the voice of openness or acceptance that is suggested by de Rivera's work (de Rivera, 1977). Such work will find guidance in recent interpretive reconceptualizations of the conduct and analysis of interviews (e.g., Mishler, 1986; Honey, 1987; Kvale, 1983; 1986).

The Relationship between Researcher and Research Participants

The third area where the hermeneutic perspective calls for changes in our research into morality is that of the character of the relationship a researcher forges with the people whose moral action and reasoning are studied. We can no longer take it for granted that science deals with facts, ethics with values, and that the two inhabit distinct realms. When the Enlightenment began, morality and science were viewed as linked; systematic reasoning was to provide a foundational grounding for each of them, and each had a claim to rationality. The rational basis of science was to give it greater legitimacy than the ideological claims of theology. Scientific reasoning was to replace theological accounts of the universe with rationally grounded observation and experimentation, just as it was to replace theological doctrines of sin and redemption with a rational ethics. Scientific inquiry was seen to have intrinsic worth; the progress that science would bring was considered almost inevitable. But as the Enlightenment projects played themselves out it came to seem that a rational grounding was possible only if science was value-neutral; if it dealt only with statements of fact, and withdrew from matters of value. Ethics (and philosophy in general) became a distinct discipline; scientific inquiry, if it was to avoid the naturalistic fallacy, had to be unbiased and impartial.

Such an interpretation of science ignores and suppresses the concerned engagement that provides the background against which entities show up. If we can no longer ignore the part played by perspective and involvement, particularly in the human sciences, and if the optimistic coupling of science and "progress" no longer seems appropriate, what more accurate perception might we adopt? The two suggestions I wish to pursue here are that we should, as psychologists, first adopt an involved, participatory kind of relationship with the
people we study and then, second, engage in bringing about appropriate change in those
people's activities. Only some degree of participation in the practices of those studied can
provide the background understanding needed to ensure that the researcher's interpretations
are not arbitrary. Furthermore, interpretation is motivated by breakdown in practice (Packer,
1985), and the evaluation of an interpretive account is best considered in terms of its power
to resolve such a breakdown (Packer & Addison, 1989). In everyday life, interpretation
attempts to bring about changes in practice; interpretation in psychological research can
fruitfully have the same aim. In such a picture, interpretive inquiry is at its best when it
becomes participatory or emancipatory research (cf. Hall, 1979, 1981; Lather, 1986; and
e.g., Farrell, Peguero, Lindsey & White, 1989). This will obviously involve taking a stand
on matters of value.

One example must suffice. Selman, Schultz, Caplan and Schantz (1989) combined
the roles of researcher and involved participant in their study of the relations of two
adolescent boys in Pair Therapy. Their goal was to examine the therapeutic impact of Pair
Therapy by delineating aspects of the ongoing social interactions among the three
participants -- therapist and children -- thereby illuminating the developments in
construction of a relationship between the two children. Selman et al. broadened their
analytic focus beyond the interactions between the boys so as to acknowledge and include
the therapist's crucial role. The research provided guidance to the therapist (certainly for
future work, and probably during his work with the two boys studied) by explicating
therapeutic practice, and it provided a language for communicating this practice to others.
Therapeutic expertise ensured that the research was grounded in a practical understanding
of the boys' problems and of their progress during their time together.

Conclusion

The central question addressed in this chapter has been, What kind of inquiry is the
psychological study of morality? Enlightenment philosophers such as Hume and Locke
saw themselves as scientists of the mind, applying Newton's methods, even his laws
(association of ideas paralleling the attraction of bodies, for instance), to mental phenomena,
to human experience. This psychology began with the assumption that there is an objective
human nature and set out to plumb it. At the same time psychology was conceived as
playing a part in the project of ethical justification and political theorizing. Man's nature
implied the recognition of certain natural political rights. And the natural character of
reason and perception were appealed to as defining the epistemological character of the
scientific method.

In the centuries since then, science and ethics gradually parted, and the justificatory
projects foundered. Brute facts about human nature and self-evident principles of logic
have proved unable to bear the epistemological weight placed upon them. In the absence of
the foundations that nature and logic were to provide, what role does a postmodern
psychology play? It can no longer claim to proceed by the detached, objective description
of natural phenomena; we have lost our innocence. In this chapter I have suggested that
moral prescriptions are the products of forms of social life, which require study in their own
right; that research into people's concrete, practical ways of dealing with particular moral
cases should take priority over research on formal ratiocination; and that the researcher
needs to adopt an involved stance, one that is directed towards answering the concerns that
stem from participation in practical activities.
Notes:

1 This is MacIntyre's (1966, p. 57) translation of the passage, which reads more clearly than D. Ross's classic translation: "Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim" (Aristotle, 1980, p. 1)

2 In regard to this project, the author wishes to acknowledge the support of the Office of Education Research and Improvement, Department of Education, under OERI Contract 400-86-0009 to the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, San Francisco, California. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of OERI and no official endorsement by the Office of Education Research and Improvement or the Department of Education should be inferred. Thanks are also due to the teachers and principals of Bountiful and Knowlton Elementary Schools, Bonnie Middleton of the Davis County School District, Utah. The name "Workshop Way" is copyrighted and owned by The Workshop Way, Inc.


Hall, B. L. (1979). Knowledge as a commodity and participatory research. Prospects, 9, 393-408.


A shorter version of this paper appeared as "Toward a postmodern psychology of moral action and moral development," (Packer, 1989), in W. Kurtines, M. Azmitia, & J. Gewirtz (Eds.), The role of values in psychology and human development, (pp. 30-59). New York: Wiley.