Beyond Formalism and Altruism: The Prospects for Moral Personality

ROBERT L. CAMPBELL

Clemson University

AND

JOHN CHAMBERS CHRISTOPHER

Health and Human Development, Montana State University

Previously, we argued that moral development research has for too long been reliant on the moral philosophy of Immanuel Kant. The Kantian legacy forces improper restrictions on the moral domain, fails to acknowledge mature but non-Kantian moral conceptions such as eudaimonism, and isolates moral development from the development of the self. Now we respond to critical commentary from advocates of post-Kantian formalism (Helwig, Turiel, & Nucci, 1996) and post-Kantian altruism (Eisenberg, 1996). Helwig et al. deny the validity of eudaimonism as a moral perspective while asserting that it has been incorporated wholesale into a post-Kantian moral synthesis. We refute each of the arguments they present. Even if their objections to eudaimonism are completely correct, they have still not explained how anyone might develop a eudaimonistic moral conception. Eisenberg questions our definitions of altruistic and prosocial behavior; we defend them on their own terms, while showing how they are largely in accord with Eisenberg's own practice, and that of other "prosocial development" researchers. We conclude that moral personality is a legitimate object of study (despite efforts by Helwig et al. to push it out of the scientific arena) and discuss the challenges posed by taking moral personality seriously. © 1996 Academic Press, Inc.

In our target article in this issue (Campbell & Christopher, 1996), we argued that the study of moral development has for too long been dependent on assumptions derived from the philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1785/1959, 1797/1991). Kant denied that morality could be self-regarding or concerned with the good life. He drove a wedge between the universal, categorical, impersonal duties laid down by the noumenal self and the goals, values, "inclinations," or "counsels of prudence" belonging to the phenomenal self.

Our commentators do not challenge our analysis of Kant's philosophy. They do question its relevance to their own research programs. We maintained that formalism, the post-Kantian approach that seeks to generate moral norms con-

108

cerning rights, welfare, and justice by passing nonmoral personal desires through a logical or dialogical filter, is prevalent in contemporary academic moral philosophy (Gewirth, 1984; Habermas, 1990; Rawls, 1971) and in the developmental theories of Kohlberg (1981) and Turiel (1983). We took formalist conceptions to task for defining the moral domain so narrowly as to exclude considerations that many people regard as moral and for denying the possibility of mature moral reasoning based on non-Kantian ways of thinking.

The other post-Kantian conception that prevails in moral development research is the altruistic one (e.g., Eisenberg, 1986). Altruism, we contended, takes its cue from Kant's (1797/1991) belief that acting for the good of others can be moral, whereas acting for one's own good cannot. We criticized research on "prosocial" development for a series of biases and confusions regarding behavior that is intended to promote the good of others. A stark example is Eisenberg's scheme (Eisenberg-Berg, 1979) for rating judgments about altruistic acts, in which reasons for helping can attain any level of moral maturity, but reasons for not helping are stuck at the most immature level.

We concluded that neither the formalist nor the altruist variants of Kantianism can provide an adequate understanding of moral development. We proposed a significant broadening of the moral domain to include self-regarding and other non-Kantian considerations. We advocated a focus on moral personality or character as what develops, rather than moral reasoning construed narrowly as a "social-cognitive competence." We suggested that the moral philosophy of human flourishing, or eudaimonism, as represented in the works of Aristotle (ca, 325 BC/1941) and contemporary Aristotelians, could guide psychological inquiry in more productive directions.

Analyses of philosophical presuppositions can go awry and are apt to be resisted even when on target. Kantian presuppositions about morality have become part of our culture; they can be readily absorbed, from multiple and varied sources, without ever studying Kant's own writings. So it is no surprise that the formalists, represented by Charles Helwig, Elliot Turiel, and Larry Nucci (1996), and the altruists, represented by Nancy Eisenberg (1996), have found a great deal to fault in our critique.

In the space allotted for this reply, a point-by-point response to our commentators is impossible. And however our inclinations might tempt us, a blow-by-blow reaction to commentaries of such length would surely try the patience of our readers. What worries us is the genuine and profound issues of substance raised by our commentators that we simply cannot address here.

There is a major divide between the conception of the self, and of self-interest, that animates eudaimonism and the conception that has predominated in Western philosophy since the 17th century. All we can do is alert our readers that there is a difference between Aristotle's conception of self-interest and the conceptions to be found in Hobbes (1651/1968), Hume (1751/1957), and Kant, as well as

most other "modern" moral thinkers; we cannot explicate these differences in any detail.

It is not just conceptions of the self that divide us from our commentators. The vision of scientific research that motivates our criticisms is so unfamiliar to them that they diagnose symptoms of "a deep ambivalence about research" (Helwig et al., 1996), an attitude "not only bewildering, [but] belittling to the research endeavor" (Eisenberg, 1996). At the risk of reducing complex philosophical issues to sound bites, let us say that our commentators appear to regard science as primarily a matter of data collection and analysis and the scientific community as an assemblage of small working groups or factions, each tending its local data sets. In this vision of "mainstream social science" (Bernstein, 1985), theoretical and ontological concerns are strictly subordinated to empirical ones. It is conceded nowadays that ontological claims, such as assertions about the nature of self-interest or the boundaries of the moral domain, are unavoidable in the scientific undertaking. But according to this vision ontological claims cannot be evaluated, criticized, or refuted by rational argument; they are objects of commitment that stand or fall with the overall empirical success of the research program to which they belong (a position classically enunciated by Lakatos, 1978). The "mainstream social science" vision has been thoroughly critiqued by many authors, including ourselves, and we cannot even begin to reproduce the arguments here (Bickhard, 1992; Campbell & Bickhard, 1986; Laudan, 1977; Suppe, 1977; Hooker, 1995). Suffice it to say that in our view ontological claims are absolutely vital to the conduct of psychology—and eminently criticizable by rational argument.[1]

What space does permit is a threefold reply. First, we will analyze Helwig et al.'s attacks on eudaimonism as a moral conception and provide a rebuttal to them. Second, we will respond to Eisenberg's questions about our treatment of "prosocial" and altruistic behavior. In the final section we will reflect on prospects and challenges that lie ahead for a character-based approach to moral development.

MISAPPREHENSIONS OF EUDAIMONISM

In a dispute between parties who disagree about the nature of self-interest and the proper conduct of science, there is some danger of misunderstanding. Realistically, we did not expect our commentators to show much sympathy for eudaimonism. But we were not prepared for their sheer lack of familiarity with this conception of morality. Eudaimonism has had prominent defenders, beginning with one of the leading philosophers of all time (Aristotle, 325 BC/1941). It has played a significant role in the history of Western culture. It is a major

---

[1] A far more comprehensive reply to Eisenberg and to Helwig et al. can be obtained from either author.

presence in clinical psychology (Maslow, 1968; Branden, 1994). It has even managed to survive in the world of academic philosophy.

No one could mount a responsible critique of Kant's moral doctrines without studying his own writings and those of his major contemporary exponents. A credible response to eudaimonism requires the same level of scholarly effort. Yet neither commentary alludes to much in the way of eudaimonistic literature. While Eisenberg mostly refrains from criticizing eudaimonism, Helwig, Turiel, and Nucci are ambivalent toward it; they cannot decide whether to dismiss it or co-opt it.

Dismissing Eudaimonism

Helwig et al. make four arguments in favor of dismissal. First, they contend that eudaimonism, because it treats morality as self-regarding, grants human beings license to take advantage of others and do them harm. Such an argument presupposes a gulf between self and other and a fundamental opposition between other people's interests and one's own. Helwig et al.'s objection makes perfect sense from a Hobbesian point of view. For Hobbes (1651/1968), the self is not regulated by reasoned concern about the kind of life it is going to live; it is driven by its passions. Its passions lead it to grab power, glory, and possessions at the expense of other selves. Morality, for Hobbes, comes down to taming the ego so it will behave in other-regarding ways. Likewise for Kant and his followers. For Kant, of course, the taming is to be accomplished less by external coercion than by a special part of the self. The phenomenal self comes equipped with a noumenal self to remind it of its duties and keep it in line.

For Helwig et al. it is as plain as day that the ego needs taming. Yet eudaimonists, from Aristotle onward, have always rejected this assumption. Aristotle said of the person who "act[s] justly, temperately, or in accordance with any of the other virtues" that "such a man would seem more than the other [i.e., the one who grabs honors and chases after bodily pleasures] a lover of self" (1941, p. 1168b). Not a single argument is forthcoming in Helwig et al.'s lengthy commentary as to why a Hobbesian or Kantian conception of the self is to be preferred to an Aristotelian one.

Second, Helwig et al. follow Kohlberg (1981) in rejecting the eudaimonistic conception of the good as a jumbled "bag of virtues" without a coherent rationale to tie them together. But philosophers like Aristotle (ca. 325 BC/1941) and Rand (1964) have sought to ground the virtues as necessary means toward, or integral parts of, the good life for a human being. To sustain the "bag of virtues" charge, Helwig, Turiel, and Nucci would have to examine these efforts and show why they must fail.

Third, they contend that morality cannot be defined in terms of conceptions of the good, because such conceptions are inevitably relative to individuals, cultures, or historical periods. Therefore, they say, the moral domain must be defined in terms of something that is not subjective or relative, namely, the im-

personal, categorical imperatives of a post-Kantian theory of political justice. Helwig, Turiel, and Nucci believe that the good is subjective and relative because people often disagree about what is good for them; by the same token, they believe that justice and rights are not subjective and relative because everyone does agree about what is just.

Neither part of this argument will stand. For a Hobbesian self, what is good is whatever it happens to want at the time. Eudaimonists (Den Uyl, 1991) have always distinguished between the "apparent good" (what you desire right now) and the "real good" (what is actually conducive to your human flourishing). It requires a serious application of your powers of reasoning to discern what is really good for you; it is possible to be mistaken or irrational about it.

From a eudaimonic perspective, justice enjoys no special privileges; you can also be wrong about what is just. Moreover, as we took some pains to show in our target article, Helwig et al.'s assertion that everyone agrees on the principles of "morality," narrowly construed as referring only to rights, justice, and welfare, is plainly incompatible with the empirical evidence.

The final argument in favor of dismissal is that the virtues in the eudaimonist's bag cannot "be universalized without recourse to a metaphysics" (Helwig et al., 1996). Of course they cannot (Aristotle, ca. 325 BC/1941; Rand, 1964; Rasmussen & Den Uyl, 1991; Veatch, 1971). Claims about human nature, about the self, or about personality are all metaphysical and inescapable (Taylor, 1989). Although ontological concerns are customarily downgraded in psychology, we cannot imagine how Helwig et al. could expel them altogether. If they were to go so far, they would have to abandon their own research program, because their Piagetian structuralism is "unscientific" by positivist standards (Bickhard, Cooper, & Mace, 1985)

Co-opting Eudaimonism

In favor of co-optation, Helwig et al. argue that Aristotle believed in the primacy of justice, just like Kohlberg! They ignore most of the *Nicomachean Ethics,* and their interpretation of Aristotle's discussion of justice in Book V is distinctly unreliable. For instance, they cite Aristotle's discussion of the view that justice is "the whole of virtue"—without informing the reader that *one paragraph* beyond the quoted passage (ca. 325 BC /1941, p. 1130a), he rejected it in favor of his own view that justice is one virtue among many. Helwig et al. were probably inspired by Kohlberg, Levine, and Hewer (1983), who assert that "in reality our current position about justice is perhaps as close to that of Aristotle as it is to that of Plato" (p. 18). Kohlberg et al. take this position because they think justice was the only other-regarding virtue in Aristotle, and only other-regarding virtues qualify as moral rather than being "norms of an ideal of the good life for a single rational individual" (p. 19). But Aristotle believed that justice was a *self-regarding* virtue. He did not subscribe to the post-Kantian claim that moral rules must be other-regarding, whereas ideals of the good life are self-regarding

and therefore nonmoral. Indeed, it is hard to imagine a more fundamental misreading of his work (Irwin, 1995).

Helwig, Turiel, and Nucci go on to argue that substantial portions of eudaimonism have been absorbed and *aufgehoben* into the systems of the leading post-Kantians, such as Gewirth, Rawls, and Habermas.

Careful reading of these post-Kantians shows otherwise. Gewirth (1984) flatly rejects Aristotle's moral philosophy, because he regards conceptions of human nature as subjective and relative (see Rasmussen and Den Uyl, 1991, for a rebuttal).

Habermas (1990) admits that serious difficulties arise in trying to apply universalizable categorical imperatives to specific situations. The problem arises for Habermas, however, because his strong commitment to Kantianism in the moral sphere clashes with his equally strong commitment to historical context-specificity that derives from Hegel, Marx, and hermeneutics. Eudaimonists get no comfort from his statement that "Going beyond Kant, discourse ethics extends the deontological concept of justice by including in it those structural aspects of the good life that can be distinguished from the concrete totality of specific forms of life" (Habermas, 1990, p. 203). Eudaimonists are curious to know how Habermas aims to separate the structure of the good life from its content—he never says how this would be done.

What is clear is that Habermas emphatically rejects any eudaimonistic solution to his problem. He insists that morality must be other-regarding. He denounces attempts to ground morality in a conception of human nature as "metaphysical." He will not tolerate "a separate and distinct faculty of *prudence* or judgment that would tend to undercut the universalistic claim of justificatory reason because it is tied to the parochial context of some hermeneutic starting point" (p. 206). What he wants is "*impartial* application, which is not a prudent but a moral point of view" (p. 207). Prudence and morality are antithetical for Habermas, just as they were for Kant.

Alone among the three philosophers under discussion, Rawls (1971) shows a modicum of interest in eudaimonism. But he allows considerations about the good to play only a vestigial role within his system. His "Aristotelian principle," which "states that other things equal human beings enjoy the exercise of their realized capacities (their innate or trained abilities), and that this enjoyment increases the more the capacity is realized, or the greater its complexity" (p. 414) is not a moral principle, just a fact of "empirical psychology." Prior to the decisions that the participants make in the "original position," there is room only for a "thin theory of the good," a laundry list of "primary social goods" that no one can help wanting.

The "thin theory" is much too thin to be of any value to a eudaimonist. It says nothing about the way anyone might make use of the "primary social goods." It does not include a single virtue! Yet Rawls will not allow it to be thickened until his theory of justice has been cemented into place. "In justice as fairness the

concept of right is prior to that of the good. In contrast with teleological theories, something is good only if it fits into ways of life consistent with the principles of right already on hand" (p. 396). And as we might expect from a theorist who puts the right before the good, Rawls leaves no doubt about his primary indebtedness to Kant: "The principles of justice are . . . categorical imperatives in Kant's sense" (p. 253).

How Could Eudaimonistic Thinking Develop?

Helwig et al. have not made a dent in eudaimonism. Their arguments against this approach to ethics are readily countered; in no way did Aristotle ever subscribe to the "primacy of justice"; the post-Kantian philosophers on whom they rely have not absorbed any of the major tenets of eudaimonism.

But let us suppose that post-Kantian theories are every bit as right as Helwig et al. believe and eudaimonist theories are every bit as wrong. It is still the task of moral development theory to explain how people who hold any mature moral position come to hold it. How is it, then, that some people come to take the direction of their own lives, or the full use of their talents, or the balance among competing goods, or productivity, or honesty with themselves to be *moral* issues? Helwig et al. provide no explanation in their commentary or in any of their published works.

"PROSOCIAL" DEVELOPMENT REVISITED

Our target article issued a sweeping indictment of research on "prosocial" behavior and its development. The four counts against "prosocial" researchers were: (1) defining morality in terms of Kantian duty; (2) equating acts that actually benefit others with altruistically motivated acts; (3) overlooking social processes in which the "selfish" and "greedy" behavior of individual actors benefits others; (4) passing over the common uses of altruism to legitimate coercion and compulsion.

Eisenberg (1996) objects to all four charges. On the first charge, we have to say that she is right. She points out that her theory is not strictly based on Kantian conceptions. She acknowledges *two* main classes of motives for prosocial or altruistic behavior: duty and sympathy (Eisenberg, 1986). Kant could not accept sympathy as a moral motive—it is a feeling and it is neither impersonal nor impartial in its operations. We stand corrected. Eisenberg's position is not strictly Kantian; it also draws to a significant degree on the philosophers of the moral sentiment school, specifically Hume (1751/1957) and Smith (1759/1982).

Our second charge was that altruistic acts are not necessarily prosocial in their effects, nor are acts that benefit others necessarily altruistic in motivation. Eisenberg (1996) responds that our definitions of *prosocial* and *altruistic* are incorrect and do not reflect standard usage within the field.

We defined prosocial behavior as behavior that is actually beneficial for human societies and altruistic behavior as behavior that involves self-sacrifice.

Eisenberg prefers to define altruism as "voluntary behavior that is intended to benefit another and is not motivated by the expectation of external reward." By contrast, she defines prosocial behavior as behavior that is narrowly intended to benefit another, whatever its broader motive might be.

What is Altruistic?

How you define altruism is, more than anything else, a function of the way you think of the self and of self-interest. If your interests terminate at your epidermal layer, then virtually anything you do for friends and loved ones, let alone marginal acquaintances or strangers, qualifies as altruistic behavior. Colby and Damon (1992) classify even trivially "prosocial" acts as altruistic: "A mother vigilantly holds her child's hand while crossing the street, a teacher cuts short her lunch break to assist a struggling student, a person tells a painful truth to a friend" (p. 302). Eisenberg's *stated* definition would require her to agree with Colby and Damon. Her *de facto* definition of altruism is far stricter than theirs—and close to ours.

From the eudaimonic standpoint, acts of caring, kindness, benevolence, and charity, not to mention justice, are not necessarily altruistic; many, if not most, can be rooted in ideals of the good life for each individual.[2] On this issue, eudaimonists actually agree with those on the opposite side of the fence who rigoristically exclude self-regarding motives—those, like Kant himself, who want no trace of personal "inclination" to sully actions in accord with duty, or those, like Auguste Comte (inventor of the term "altruism"), who want no trace of concern for one's own good to sully actions done for the good of others. For the rigorists, unlike Hume or Smith, acts of caring, benevolence, or justice cannot be given the moral stamp of approval until they pass inspection and are certified not to harbor even trace levels of self-interest.

Altruism becomes painfully real for the eudaimonist at the point where carrying out some duty, or acting out of sympathy, requires one to give up important values of one's own. Altruism becomes painfully real for the post-Kantian rigorist at precisely the same point. That is why we defined altruism in terms of self-sacrifice; that is why we thought "prosocial" developmentalists ought to do the same.

Although it is not an ideal formulation, for discussion we will use Eisenberg's (1996) definition of self-sacrifice as "involving significant costs to the self." Eisenberg asserts that "just because I have studied reasoning about prosocial acts that involve some cost to the self does not mean that I view *only* such acts as altruistic." We are not so sure. From her standpoint (Eisenberg, 1986, p. 101),

---

[2] From a eudaimonistic point of view, an act done out of sympathy would not qualify as altruistic unless the feeling of sympathy overrode one's rational judgment about how to make the best sort of life for oneself.

low-cost "prosocial" acts, especially those done out of habit or in compliant response to a request, probably lack altruistic motives.

In her extensive research program on "prosocial moral reasoning," Eisenberg has chosen dilemmas, like that of Bob and the crippled children, in which the kind, charitable, or helpful act will come at a high cost to the actor. Bob is not in a "life and death situation" (Eisenberg, 1996). But forfeiting a path of achievement that matters a good deal to Bob, one for which he may be well suited, strikes us as a high cost. It is not a sufficient rejoinder that "the cost to the actor was likely to be less than the gain for the other person." Does the gain to the other person *automatically* outweigh the cost to the actor? We note, too, that Eisenberg's dilemmas were designed to exclude caring for the other person as a consideration. Eisenberg's restrictions (high cost to the actor, and only strangers in need) fit a rigoristic definition of altruistic behavior that seems at odds with her stated definition.

What is Prosocial?

A conception of altruism is necessary for the study of moral development. But we continue to question whether the term "prosocial" has any utility, because it confuses intent with results. Eisenberg prefers a generic, mildly intent-based use of the term "prosocial," to signify acts that are intended to help another person, but may be done in expectation of external reward. She argues that a results-based definition is not used by researchers. Historical evidence suggests otherwise: Hartshorne, May, and Shuttleworth (1930) referred to behavior with socially desirable results as "prosocial" and behavior with socially undesirable results as "antisocial"—and they wanted it known that "self-forgetful service" is "prosocial."

The term "prosocial" is evidently framed in opposition to "antisocial." Such an antithesis invites inferences about benefit and harm to society. Even worse, it promotes bipolar rhetoric about human motives and their consequences. Eisenberg (1996) may be willing to acknowledge the existence of activity that benefits others without being done for other-regarding reasons—for instance, trying to satisfy your customers so your business will make a profit.

But other prosocial researchers have put forward category systems that exclude the very possibility of such activity. For Staub (1984), the human condition can be reduced to one binary opposition after another: "prosocial" versus "antisocial" behavior (p. 241), "behavior that benefits others" versus "behavior that harms others" (p. 242), "kindness or cruelty" (p. 242), "seeing the world as a place where aggressive behaviors are common and natural or as a place where helpful conduct is common and natural" (p. 257). He leaves us with no basic choices except making the benefit of others our overriding goal or inflicting deliberate harm on others.

There has been a steady decline in Eisenberg's reliance on such bipolar rhetoric since her early writings. But the burden remains on her and other "prosocial"

development researchers to explain why the term should be used at all. What is wrong with simply referring to acts of kindness or helping or charity? Why confer on them a label that seems designed to confuse intent with benefits and to polarize human motives into self-sacrificing and other-sacrificing?

Involuntary Altruism?

Eisenberg responds to our fourth charge by reassuring us that "prosocial" developmentalists are interested only in voluntary cooperation and voluntary assistance. Such a commitment to voluntarism gains credibility, however, when it is backed by careful and responsible evaluations of political systems and cultural practices.

Eisenberg (1996) now says that "a black and white view of socialization in target societies would hinder our understanding of socialization processes." Is any interpretation other than a "black and white view" even possible, when the single dimension on which cultures are evaluated ranges from "prosocial conduct" to "egoistic and selfish qualities" (Mussen & Eisenberg-Berg, 1977, p. 47)?

We do not accept Eisenberg's (1996) declaration that under the Soviet system there was no connection between the "elements that an observer would view as having positive consequences, and elements that might be perceived as having negative consequences." Was not denouncing other children to the authorities (admittedly, a negative element) considered an important way of advancing "the needs and welfare of the collective" (supposedly, a positive element) and inculcated as a virtue *for exactly that reason?*

We must conclude, then, that all of our charges against "prosocial" development research still stand, except the first one—altruistic behavior can be motivated by sympathy as well as duty. In either case, however, Eisenberg regards altruistic behavior as morally obligatory and supposes that every morally mature individual will think the same way.

Could It Be Moral Not to Help?

We argued that Eisenberg's coding scheme for scoring moral reasoning on "prosocial" dilemmas is fatally biased because it does not allow for a morally principled refusal to behave altruistically. Eisenberg (1996) insists otherwise. On this matter, we stand by our statements in the target article. Except on the rare occasions when the duty to help conflicts with other duties, Eisenberg (1986) believes that only "nonmoral" personal motives lead people not to perform altruistic acts. Eisenberg fails to recognize a decision not to help as a moral decision. It *is* a moral decision—whether or not we think it is the *right* decision (Christopher, in press; Taylor, 1989).

MAKING SENSE OF MORAL PERSONALITY

We hope that what we have said will help our readers to understand the contention between ourselves and our commentators. But that leaves little room

for a positive program. What does it mean to say that moral development is personality development? And if it is, how could psychologists study moral character?

Eisenberg does not need to be convinced that moral personality is a worthwhile object of study. Helwig et al., on the other hand, do not think moral personality is worth studying at all. In what remains, we will sketch the challenges that the study of moral personality poses for everyone. Naturally, psychologists must stop chopping the self into noumenal and phenomenal, or "moral" and "nonmoral" components. That is the easy part. The tough part will be bringing reason and emotion together and giving proper attention to values. Though some empirical research has begun to examine the development of moral personality, theories of personality still lack the resources necessary to explain it.

Reintegrate Reason and Emotion

The dichotomy between cognition and motivation is older than Kant, and older even than Hobbes, and contemporary psychology has yet to break it down. A fundamental insight of interactivism (Campbell & Bickhard, 1986) is that cognition and motivation are aspects of a single goal-directed system that interacts with an environment. They are not the separate microworlds that psychologists still make them out to be.

Helwig et al. (1996), like Kant, take morality to be a matter of "reason" and exclude emotion from moral development almost entirely. Eisenberg (1986) tries valiantly to be inclusive, but ends up with an account of "prosocial reasoning" and another account of "prosocial emotion" that obstinately refuse to join up. On the reason side we find duty, justice as fairness, Immanuel Kant, and Piagetian clinical interviews. On the emotion side we find caring, sympathy, David Hume, and experimental social psychology. Kant wanted nothing of sympathy. Hume, on the other hand, thought that reason was impotent to make us act virtuously or avoid vice.

Take Values Seriously

Without goals, there can be no knowledge, no action, and no choice, even in the simplest of organisms. As we have argued elsewhere (Campbell & Bickhard, 1986), values are a type of goal that develops in organisms, like human beings, that are capable of reflection. Specifically, values are metagoals, goals about what kinds of goals to have, and developmental constraints operate in both directions between values and the lower-level goals that instantiate them.

Eisenberg (1996) reminds us that social psychologists, and some researchers in the "prosocial" camp, include goals and values in their theories. But the status of values in any of these accounts is tenuous. Consider the most meticulous and successful program of empirical research on sympathy and other-regarding choices (Batson, 1991). In finding that some people decide to help others even when they could alleviate their "empathic personal distress" by fleeing the situ-

ation, Batson shows that human beings have some motives that are not self-regarding in the Hobbesian sense. Eudaimonists, however, have never accepted the Hobbesian boundary between what is self-regarding and what is other-regarding. A practicing eudaimonist may stop to render aid out of sympathy for an accident victim, instead of fleeing the scene, and do this without sacrificing more important personal values. What is worse, there is no role for values, or any other enduring aspect of the person, in Batson's worldview; there is nothing but the emotions aroused at the moment and anticipations of how one might feel a few moments from now.

An account of the development of values, then, is sorely needed. And psychologists have learned the hard way what happens when the domain of *moral* values is restricted to matters of justice or rights or caring or altruism. In explaining *how moral values develop,* pluralism is no virtue—our goal as scientists should be to find the best theory. But our account of *what develops* does need to be pluralistic (Walker et al., 1995). The heuristic is plain: count any value as moral if the people you interview consider it to be moral.

Eisenberg demurs: Is the Nazi value of "cleansing the race" a genuinely moral value? It is. Such a value functions to guide and justify the subsidiary goals and the actions of those who hold it (many Nazis were not psychopaths; they thought they were abnegating themselves and doing their duty to *das Volk*). A value can function as a moral value without being good, right, beneficial, or acceptable from a normative point of view (Christopher, in press). There is pathological moral development; there are harmful and even evil systems of morality. Without getting into the messy business of distinguishing between values that function as moral and values that human beings actually ought to adopt, developmental psychology will never be able to make sense of conflicting moral views.

Study the Biography of Moral Character

In our target article we recommended that psychologists take up the "comparative biography of moral character." Eisenberg (1996) reminds us that this is already happening. We have no space to comment on their efforts, so we will simply encourage everyone in the field of moral development to pay close heed to the contributions of Blasi and Oresick (1986) and those of Colby and Damon (1992). In addition, we recommend the work of Walker et al. (1995), particularly for its forthright rejection of narrow definitions of the moral domain and its insistence that people be allowed to express their "indigenous moral concepts."

View Personality Dynamically

As is so often the case, it is the lack of ideas, and not lack of data, that poses the real obstacle to progress. Contemporary psychology is hard up for resources to explain personality development. And it is not just philosophers (Flanagan, 1991) who have inspected the cupboard and found it bare. Colby and Damon (1992) struggle with the question of dynamism. They find that steadfast moral

commitment actually encourages the transformation of specific moral goals throughout the lifespan (many of their "moral exemplars" were still vigorous and still changing in old age). They go so far as to call this a "developmental paradox"—how can a commitment be stable, yet lead to change in goals?

In a truly dynamic conception of the mind and its development, there is nothing paradoxical about a system of goals that can generate change in detail while maintaining its overall form (Bickhard & Christopher, 1994; Hooker, 1995). Psychologists think there is a paradox because enduring properties of mind are conventionally attributed to static structures, which can change only when some extrinsic force is applied to them. Conventional assumptions are manifested most blatantly in the mandatory stasis of trait theories of personality (Costa & McCrae, 1980). But they can even be found in the thinking of Piaget, whose commitment to cognitive structures blocked the path to a fully process-oriented conception (Campbell & Bickhard, 1986).

The false alternative to character as a collection of static traits is attribution theory (e.g., Ross & Nisbett, 1991), according to which human behavior is so dependent on the situation that personality falls apart. The attributionist view that everyone seeks maximum credit for his own actions while giving others maximum blame for theirs is pure Hobbes; the rear-guard actions against introspection and phenomenological experience are thinly disguised behaviorism. Attribution theory would do away with moral personality as an object of inquiry. Of course, it would also wipe out major portions of cognitive psychology (Ericsson & Simon, 1984).

Is Moral Character Worth Studying?

Helwig et al. (1996) believe that moral character is not a coherent object of study, and in support they cite the leading behavioro-Hobbesians, from Hartshorne and May down to the present day. Hartshorne and May (1928) maintained, for instance, that there is no such thing as honesty. There are just complicated patterns of socially desirable and undesirable behavior, largely controlled by the context in which they occur; not cheating on one test or competition can be predicted from not cheating on another only insofar as the two situations share "identical elements."

Helwig et al. ally themselves with the behavioro-Hobbesians so they can sustain Kohlberg's (1981) dismissal of moral character as a "bag of virtues." Yet behavioro-Hobbesianism is utterly inhospitable to a Kohlbergian view of moral development that puts moral judgment and reasoning at the forefront and seeks to explain their development in Piagetian, structuralist terms. If honesty and other virtues are reduced, in behaviorist fashion, to "an accumulation of loosely connected habits" (Hartshorne & May, 1928, p. 141), on what basis can Helwig et al. maintain the reality of Piagetian cognitive structures or the coherence and significance of moral reasoning?

Most developmentalists, we suspect, will readily agree that moral personality

is real, that it develops, and that its development needs to become a central object of study. When "selfhood and the good, or in another way selfhood and morality turn out to be inextricably intertwined themes" (Taylor, 1989, p. 3), the universe begins to looks quite different from what moral developmentalists have been accustomed to. Moral developmentalists need to come to grips with the diversity of values that animate people's lives, form a significant part of their personalities, and define their very selves. It is not noumenal selves that develop, with their fenced-off faculties of reasoning about justice, rights, caring, and altruism. What develops is the moral values that are constitutive of real human selves.

REFERENCES

Aristotle (1941). Nicomachean ethics. In R. McKeon (Ed.), *The basic works of Aristotle* (pp. 927–1112). New York: Random House. (Original work published ca. 325 BC)

Batson, C. D. (1991). *The altruism question: Toward a social-psychological answer*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bernstein, R. J. (1985). *Beyond objectivism and relativism: Science, hermeneutics, and praxis*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bickhard, M. H. (1992). Myths of science: Misconceptions of science in contemporary psychology. *Theory and Psychology, 2,* 321–337.

Bickhard, M. H., & Christopher, J. C. (1994). The influence of early experience on personality development. *New Ideas in Psychology, 12,* 229–252.

Bickhard, M. H., Cooper, R. G., Jr., & Mace, P. G. (1985). Vestiges of logical positivism: Critiques of stage explanations. *Human Development, 28,* 240–258.

Blasi, A., & Oresick, R. J. (1986). Emotions and cognitions in self-inconsistency. In D. J. Bearison & H. Zimiles, *Thought and emotion: Developmental perspectives* (pp. 146–165). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Branden, N. (1994). *The six pillars of self-esteem*. New York: Bantam.

Campbell, R. L., & Bickhard, M. H. (1986). *Knowing levels and developmental stages*. Basel: Karger.

Campbell, R. L., & Christopher, J. C. (1996). Moral development theory: A critique of its Kantian presuppositions. *Developmental Review, 16,* 1–47.

Christopher, J. C. (in press). Counseling's inescapable moral visions. *Journal of Counseling and Development.*

Colby, A., & Damon, W. (1992). *Some do care: Contemporary lives of moral commitment*. New York: Free Press.

Costa, P. T., Jr., & McCrae, R. R. (1980). From catalog to classification: Murray's needs and the five-factor model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 55,* 258–265.

Den Uyl, D. J. (1991). *The virtue of prudence*. New York: Peter Lang.

Eisenberg, N. (1986). *Altruistic emotion, cognition, and behavior*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Eisenberg, N. (1996). Caught in a narrow Kantian perception of prosocial development: Reactions to Campbell and Christopher's critique of moral development theory. *Developmental Review, 16,* 48–68.

Eisenberg-Berg, N. (1979). Development of children's prosocial moral judgment. *Developmental Psychology, 15,* 128–137.

Ericsson, K. A., & Simon, H. A. (1984). *Protocol analysis: Verbal reports as data*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Flanagan, O. (1991). *Varieties of moral personality: Ethics and psychological realism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gewirth, A. (1984). Natural law, human action, and morality. In R. Porreco (Ed.), *The Georgetown*

symposium on ethics: Essays in honor of Henry Babcock Veatch (pp. 67–90). Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Habermas, J. (1990). Morality and ethical life: Does Hegel's critique of Kant apply to discourse ethics? In J. Habermas, *Moral consciousness and communicative action* (Trans. C. Lenhardt & S.W. Nicholsen, pp. 195–215). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Hartshorne, H., & May, M. A. (1928). *Studies in the nature of character. I. Studies in deceit*. New York: Macmillan.

Hartshorne, H., May, M. A., & Shuttleworth, F. K. (1930). *Studies in the nature of character. III. Studies in the organization of character*. New York: Macmillan.

Helwig, C. C., Turiel, E., & Nucci, L. P. (1996). The virtues and vices of moral development theorists. *Developmental Review,* **16,** 69–107.

Hobbes, T. (1968). *Leviathan* (C. B. Macpherson, Ed.). Harmondsworth: Penguin. (Originally published 1651)

Hooker, C. A. (1995). *Reason, regulation, and realism: Towards a regulatory systems theory of reason and evolutionary epistemology*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Hume, D. (1957). *An inquiry concerning the principles of morals* (C. W. Hendel, Ed.). Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill. (Originally published 1751)

Irwin, T. H. (1995). Prudence and morality in Greek ethics. *Ethics,* **105,** 284–295.

Kant, I. (1959). *Foundations of the metaphysics of morals* (L. W. Beck, Trans.). Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill. (Original work published 1785)

Kant, I. (1991). *The metaphysics of morals*. (M. Gregor, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1797)

Kohlberg, L. (1981). From *is* to *ought:* How to commit the naturalistic fallacy and get away with it in the study of moral development. In L. Kohlberg, *Essays on moral development, Vol. I: The philosophy of moral development* (pp. 101–189). San Francisco: Harper & Row. (Original work published 1971)

Kohlberg, L., Levine, C., & Hewer, A. (1983). *Moral stages: A current formulation and a response to critics*. Basel: Karger.

Lakatos, I. (1978). Falsification and the methodology of scientific research programmes. In J. Worrall & G. Currie (Eds.), *The methodology of scientific research programmes: Philosophical papers Volume 1* (pp. 8–101). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1970)

Laudan, L. (1977). *Progress and its problems: Towards a theory of scientific growth*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Maslow, A. (1968). *Toward a psychology of being* (2nd ed.). New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Mussen, P., & Eisenberg-Berg, N. (1977). *Roots of caring, sharing, and helping: The development of prosocial behavior in children*. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman.

Rand, A. (1964). The Objectivist ethics. In A. Rand (Ed.), *The virtue of selfishness: A new concept of egoism* (pp. 13–35). New York: New American Library.

Rasmussen, D. B., & Den Uyl, D. J. (1991). *Liberty and nature: An Aristotelian defense of liberal order*. LaSalle, IL: Open Court.

Rawls, J. (1971). *A theory of justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ross, L., & Nisbett, R. M. (1991). *The person and the situation: Perspectives on social psychology*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Smith, A. (1982). *The theory of moral sentiments* (D. D. Raphael & A. L. Macfie, Eds.). Indianapolis: Liberty Fund. (Original work published 1759)

Staub, E. (1984). Steps toward a comprehensive theory of moral conduct: Goal orientation, social behavior, kindness, and cruelty. In W. M. Kurtines & J. L. Gewirtz (Eds.), *Morality, moral behavior, and moral development* (pp. 241–260). New York: Wiley.

Suppe, F. (1977). Afterword. In F. Suppe (Ed.), *The structure of scientific theories* (2nd ed., pp. 617–730). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the self*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Turiel, E. (1983). *The development of social knowledge: Morality and convention*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

Veatch, H. B. (1971). *For an ontology of morals: A critique of contemporary ethical theory*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Walker, L. J., Pitts, R. C., Hennig, K. H., & Matsuba, M. K. (1995). Reasoning about morality and real-life moral problems. In M. Killen & D. Hart (Eds.), *Morality in everyday life: Developmental perspectives* (pp. 371–407). New York: Cambridge University Press.