ETHICS AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MORAL JUDGMENT

by T. J. Bachmeyer

One aim of ethical reflection is to guide human conduct in moral directions. To be sure, ethicists differ as to which particular behaviors or attitudes are moral. And there is a variety of current ethical methods proposed for relating ethical reflection and conduct. Joseph Fletcher urges what he calls "neocasuistry," Robert Springer calls for a flexible use of traditional casuistry, and Paul Ramsey uses a method designated as "mixed agapism."[1] Of these methods, it is important to note that all three share at least the assumption that ethical reflection must concern itself with the problematic situations confronting contemporary man. While only Fletcher can be called a "situation ethicist," all three men are concerned with guiding moral conduct in situations. This is common to each of their methods.

From the standpoint of guiding conduct, however, there is a certain problem with a situation-centered ethical method. For it cannot, or at least does not, account for how persons in situations perceive the ethical reflection which is to guide them in their dilemmas. For instance, an ethic of love might be perceived in quite contrary ways—as a morality of free affection without remorse, or as a morality of egalitarian treatment without regard for personal affection. Moreover, it is possible also that a love ethic could be construed con-

T. J. Bachmeyer is assistant professor of theology and personality science at St. Francis School of Pastoral Ministry, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

trary to the intention of the ethicist advocating that ethic. Now one might assume that careful ethical communication can preclude any gross misunderstandings between the intention of an ethicist and the comprehension of a moral agent. Joseph Fletcher seems to have difficulty in this regard,[2] however, and an ethicist as attentive to the use of words as Paul Ramsey claims to have been misunderstood even by fellow ethicists.[3] So ethicists do experience problems in moral communication.

As situation-centered ethicists have experienced problems in how people perceive their moral advocation, it is questionable how effective a guide to moral conduct their ethics can really be. If moral agents do not understand ethical principles clearly, the possibility of their acting in accordance with those principles is quite diminished. This is not to say that if an agent clearly comprehends an ethic he always will act according to it. This is to say that if he does comprehend it the possibility of such conduct then will be enhanced.

What can any ethicist do to insure that his admonitions will be comprehended clearly? Situation-centered ethicists have expressed no formal concept of moral communication and few notions of the moral patterns in which moral agents think. Were ethicists to have some clear idea of the assumptions and convictions of moral agents with whom they were dealing, it would be easier to communicate ethical norms and maxims, for an ethic then could be related to an agent's moral presuppositions. Ethical admonition could be relevant to that agent, and the possibility of an agent's comprehension of a norm and acting in accordance with it thereby would be increased. Yet given the plethora of moral viewpoints in current American culture, how can an ethicist possibly know the moral perspectives held by any given audience?

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MORAL JUDGMENT

There are several psychologists currently conducting research into the way agents perceive the moral world and how such perceptions are affected by moral communication. One is Lawrence Kohlberg of Harvard University. He hypothesizes that moral comprehension is dependent upon one's stage of cognitive development. Kohlberg's theory is that there are six stages of cognitive moral development. Each contains an increasingly differentiated view of the moral world, and each is a higher degree of integration of moral experience.[4] Each stage of judgment functions as a kind of formal moral philosophy (though the direct content of a particular stage varies from person to person) that is distinguished by its unique assumptions about value, sanctions, authority, reciprocity, choice, rules, and roles.[5]

These assumptions form a composite mental pattern which structures the mental world and the moral perceptions of every person from childhood to old age.[6] Each stage contains a basis for moral assessment, and this basis must be appealed to if an ethical directive is to make rational sense to a moral agent.[7]

It is important to see that this typology of cognitive development was originally constructed through detailed interviews with children. The interviews used Piaget's two types of morality as a point of departure. Piaget hypothesized that the child has basically two kinds of morality—initially a heteronomous respect for rules and for the adult authority behind rules, and then gradually a mutual cooperation with and respect for other persons. Kohlberg discovered that the notions of responsibility, rules, value, sanction, and duty which characterized moral heteronomy and the notions of reciprocity, justice, responsibility, and authority which characterized moral realism were not as simple as Piaget had thought.[8] In fact, Kohlberg found that such notions tended to differentiate and cluster into six basic types of moral judgment, not merely two. Furthermore, Kohlberg found that these six types could be ordered in a linear sequence of increasing cognitive differentiation and integration. Thus, the types are consecutive stages of moral judgment. The extensive statistical evidence which qualifies such a typology as scientific is found in Kohlberg's dissertation.[9] Though it is true that a certain amount of inference is used in establishing such a typology, it is one based on inference from clinical evidence. The typology also has been further tested and verified as a valuable model for depicting patterns of moral comprehension and moral communication.[10] Though the typology may have some compelling intuitive validation when one is first exposed to it, nevertheless the typology is based fundamentally not on intuition or theoretical reason but on scientific methods of experimental psychology.

One way to understand each of the six stages is to look at the notion of moral sanction and motivation in each. At stage 1 the agent conceives himself acting out of fear of punishment; at stage 2, out of self-interest. At stage 3 the agent sees himself acting for the praise or blame he receives from parental or social authority; at stage 4, out of conformity to the social order. At stage 5 the motive for action is seen as protecting one's reputation in one's community. Only at stage 6 is virtuous action seen to be not externally but internally motivated.

To understand the implications of Kohlberg's theory for ethical guidance, a fuller description of each of the stages is helpful. The stages are designated as follows:[11]

Stage 1. Obedience and Punishment Orientation. Wrong is understood

as that for which one is punished. If a child steals something but is not punished for it, he does not conceive that he has done anything wrong.

Stage 2. Naïvely Egoistic Orientation. Right is defined by one's desires. No other alternative is seen. No apology for selfishness is made. Enlightened self-interest is possible, but there is no genuine sympathy for another for his own regard.

Stage 3. Good-Boy Orientation. The child or adult conforms to stereotyped ideas of good boy, good girl, and good friend. Conformity as defined by parents in particular means embodying specific virtues such as honesty, neatness, and obedience.

Stage 4. Authority and Social Order Maintaining Orientation. The social order itself is normative for conformity. It defines what is right and wrong. Social authorities and officers as such can never be wrong, for authority and right are naïvely identified.

Stage 5. Contractual Legalistic Orientation. Human relationships are seen as governed by contractual obligations, which acknowledge that a person can act contrary to the social order—but only for the good of that order and as long as he pays the social consequences.

Stage 6. Conscience or Principled Orientation. Morality is based on universal moral principles which transcend personal desire, community custom, and social contract. It is egalitarian in that all agents are treated similarly including oneself. One thus has the capacity to hold himself accountable for the wrong he has done.

Principled morality is the highest cognitive stage of moral thought Kohlberg has found. By no means all persons reach this level in adult life; many Americans reach only stage 4. A few rare individuals, however, may reach stage 6 as early as fifteen or sixteen. They are likely to have a higher IQ, more experience of social role taking, longer attention span, and/or better lack of distractability than most.

As a scientific description of the way agents perceive the moral world at one or another time in their lives, Kohlberg's typology pertains to the dilemma of ethical advocation outlined above. Kohlberg and several of his former students have found that optimum moral communication occurs when an agent receives communication structured at his own stage or at one stage above his.[12] Such a research finding is pertinent to the dilemma of moral communication ethicists have experienced. Can ethicists, then, take account of this scientific research in the developmental psychology of moral judgment?

PROTESTANT ETHICS AND MORAL COMMUNICATION

A number of Protestant ethicists, including Paul Lehmann, Joseph Fletcher, and Paul Ramsey, have attempted to take some account

of the differing patterns of moral reasoning of contemporary agents. Each of these has a scheme of different types of moral thought—some of which are similar to Kohlberg's stages 2 and 4. Paul Lehmann, for instance, speaks of autonomous, heteronomous, and theonomous moralities.[13] Autonomous morality subordinates its moral knowledge and the awareness of its ethical duties to the exercise of its own free will. Heteronomous morality subjugates its moral freedom to the duties which bind it, duties often imposed by a moral order. The former idea is similar to Kohlberg's stage 2 morality in which self-interest is primary and ethical duties are legitimated only as they fall in line with self-interest. The latter idea of heteronomous morality is similar to Kohlberg's authority and social order maintaining orientation in the notion of conformity to a moral order regardless of individual wish. Yet Lehmann affirms that inasmuch as the theonomous morality of the *koinonia* is the only context for Christian ethical reflection, autonomy and heteronomy are dismissed from the true moral life. Neither closes the gap between freedom and duty, and therefore neither can become sensitive to God's humanizing activity.

Joseph Fletcher makes an accounting of the moral life similar to Lehmann's when he refers to antinomianism and to legalism as basic options in the moral life.[14] Antinomianism is lawlessness and is similar to the naïvely egoistic orientation in that it does not have a concept of authorized moral rules or authorized moral order. Legalism is similar to Kohlberg's stage 4 in that both are oriented to rules and laws regardless of individual need. Fletcher finds antinomianism and legalism as deficient forms of moral judgment, however, especially in light of situationism; for neither is open to the transformative power of *agape*. Thus, like Lehmann, Fletcher dismisses the two forms of moral reasoning which bear similarity to Kohlberg's typology.

Paul Ramsey is a third contemporary ethicist who attempts to take account of the reasoning of moral agents. Ramsey delineates three approaches to the moral life—self-centered morality, value-centered morality, and neighbor-centered morality.[15] Self-centered morality is a selfishness which seeks its own good in either a crude or enlightened fashion. It gives only with ulterior, selfish purpose and never for another's sake. It shares with Kohlberg's naïvely egocentric orientation the idea that the self is the basis of the moral order and that all else is subjugated to the desires and wishes of the self. Value-centered morality is a shared reciprocity based on common values. One receives the benefits from a community to the extent he contributes to that community. Thus there is always an element of selfishness in the reciprocity of value-centered morality. This is similar to Kohlberg's authority and social order maintaining orientation since

it finds the social order to be the basis of morality. As such, moral regard is extended to others only as they conform to the shared values of the social order. Though Ramsey sees self- and value-centered morality as basically sinful (due to the element of self-interest which pervades each), he does not dismiss them as useless. He finds a certain worth and moral utility in their functions. Authentic Christian morality for Ramsey, however, is neighbor-centered morality—the orientation to neighbor need without thought for return and regardless of contribution to community. This moral stance eventuates in obedience to the universal principle of love. Indeed, the principle of *agape* is the ultimate judge of all other moralities and philosophies. This is similar to Kohlberg's conscience or principled orientation in that it sees morality grounded in universal principles which apply to individuals equally in every situation. At stage 6 judgments are based neither on interests of self (for the self is subordinated to the dictates of principle), nor on social conformity (for the social order is legitimated only as it respects individual rights which transcend the social order).

Each of the three ethicists discussed would agree theologically that it is faith in God which is the ground of authentic morality. Lehmann, Fletcher, and Ramsey would disagree as to what exactly constitutes Christian morality (the theonomous conscience, *agape*, or the principle of neighbor love, respectively), yet each would hold that faith underlies this morality. The notion of faith these ethicists share is based on a paralysis-release concept of justification. In an ethic shaped by the Reformation idea of justification by faith through grace, sinful morality is basically a paralyzed morality. It is the will's inability to do the good it knows it ought (Rom. 7:15–19); it is the bondage of the will to sin, the alienation of free will from duty (Lehmann), the inability of the self to overcome self-interest (Ramsey), and the separation of moral consistency from regard for persons (Fletcher). In each case forces which constitute true morality are in conflict with one another and paralyze the moral self. In each case sin is overcome only by grace. Grace releases the bondage of the will to sin, it overcomes dichotomies between intellect and will, between selfishness and duty, and between lawlessness and legalism. Grace eventuates in a new morality. It provides a new sensitivity to God's humanizing activity (Lehmann), a new concern for persons (Fletcher), and a new orientation to neighbor need (Ramsey). Through grace man transcends the paralysis of the moral forces within him and is grasped by a new motivation, a new wholeness in Christ.

The implication of this justification notion of faith—and of a moral-

ity founded in faith—is that man's natural morality is seen as a subtle but idolatrous attempt to justify himself by the law, an attempt which by its very nature leads to the paralysis of the will. Man presumes the law to be the source of his salvation; yet he can never do all that the law requires. He cannot bring himself to renounce the law as the source of his salvation, yet he likewise cannot follow its dictates fully. His moral will becomes immobilized in this conflict and paralyzed. Natural morality in such a scheme understandably is ultimately worthless and unimportant. In Lehmann's case there is no hope for autonomy or heteronomy, and in Fletcher's case antinomianism and legalism are passed by as insignificant moral orientations. Only Ramsey affirms natural morality to have any value whatsoever. And he still delineates the natural self- and value-centered moralities from the true morality of faith, neighbor-centered morality.

The consequence of such a dismissal of natural morality upon the matter of moral communication, however, is rather drastic. Those moralities which bear semblance to stages 2 and 4 of Kohlberg's scheme are seen to be natural moralities and thus inadequate. Lehmann and Fletcher's preoccupation with Christian morality in effect dismisses those forms of moral reason which might provide some possibility of better moral communication of their ethic. And while Ramsey at least holds a notion of the moral life similar to Kohlberg's conscience orientation of stage 6, he also attributes infinite superiority to neighbor-centered morality, effectively eliminating other moralities from serious consideration in any scheme of moral communication.

Perhaps it seems natural that a Christian ethic would presuppose the most mature moral reasoning that occurs in human nature and that it should exclude more immature forms of moral reason. And it is no doubt reasonable that the moral reasoning of the justified man is superior to that of his previous sinful condition. From the standpoint of moral communication, however, rather significant problems arise either from relating the most mature moral reasoning with a Christian ethic or from excluding immature moral reasoning from Christian morality.

The stage of moral reasoning of most persons, according to Kohlberg, is that of the authority and social order maintaining orientation (stage 4).[16] Recalling the conclusions that optimal moral communication occurs when a person addresses his audience either at their stage or one stage above their moral understanding, a Christian morality in terms of stage 6 reasoning would not be communicated optimally to those at stage 4. Moreover, the more a speaker surpasses the level

of his audience, the more incomprehensible his moral communication becomes. An audience might prefer more mature moral reasoning in an implicit natural recognition that a mature solution has something compelling about it. But such a solution is not comprehensible in terms of the person's own moral action and is difficult to integrate into his own life world.[17] A morality of the Christian principle of *agape* which Fletcher, as well as Ramsey, proposes, then, would be difficult for the average adult American to comprehend clearly. And if such an ethic is not clearly comprehensible, how likely is it that it will be an effective guide for moral behavior? The data suggest that it is highly unlikely.

If, indeed, the majority of adult Americans are at stage 4, then their moral concepts are grounded not in a divine will which transcends the social order, but indeed in that very order itself. And moral counsel which equates Christianity with some form of universal, equal regard for all men (elements which Ramsey's, Tillich's, and Fletcher's respective notions of *agape* all share) will be perceived by those at stage 4 to apply only to those within their own moral community. Situation-oriented ethics and even ontological ethics which attempt to be universal and yet applicable to each individual case well may be situationally relevant but personally incomprehensible. To embrace both universal equality and individual relevance is an impossible ethical task.

POSSIBILITIES FOR COMPREHENSIBLE MORAL COMMUNICATION

The dilemma of effective moral communication which I attributed to the situation-oriented ethicists in the early part of this paper has now been demonstrated theoretically. If in light of this dilemma a theologian still wishes to retain a guidance function for ethical reflection, then he has three avenues for pursuing that goal:

1. Maintain that the action of the justified Christian's morality is not cognitively perceivable in moral concepts. If so, Christian morality would not fall into the dynamics and patterns of cognitive growth. Such a Christian morality would be a kind of instantaneous or intuitive morality whereby one would be acutely sensitive to God's humanizing activity (Lehmann), or obedient to the gospel (Bultmann), or directly obedient to Christ as Creator and Redeemer (Barth). Morality would be an existential sensing of God's will in a unique situation, then, and it would have to transcend human moral conceptualization in some fashion.

The difficulty with this approach is that as soon as we begin to criticize, explain, or justify our action, we have to use moral language (structured along the lines of Kohlberg's typology). Also, the theologi-

cal method behind such an approach finds faith beyond cognition and therefore borders on a dualism between creation and redemption which severely narrows the meaning of Christ's incarnation. Jesus did use moral language filled with notions of reciprocity, value, punishment, and sanction. It is difficult to see how any moral approach can bypass such notions implicitly or unconsciously. Such a position, nevertheless, would have to maintain that ethical communication occurs apart from such moral categories, and it would have to appeal to some "transmoral" source such as "the Word" for its "lines of instruction" (Barth). Thus, Kohlberg's categories would not apply to human moral communication and moral comprehensibility could be salvaged.

2. Maintain some system of natural law whereby transcendent Christian morality is nevertheless coincident to some degree with social order or with human nature. Paul Ramsey adopts this approach. He says that murder and rape are always wrong in light of the principle of *agape* and that rules against such conduct can be embodied in the social order. Assent to the social order from a stage 4 perspective would consequently be conformity to Christian morality. Ramsey's method of mixed *agapism* acknowledges a place for obedience to rules in the moral life (as opposed to Fletcher or Lehmann). As such, his ethical communications could be extended down to stages 5, 4, and 3 of moral thought.

The difficulty of such a position, however, comes when *agape* conflicts with current custom or social order. The conventional moralists of stages 3 and 4 in this case would follow the social rule. They would act *agapically* only when the Christian alternative had become legislated into the social order. Also problematic for Ramsey in particular is the role of self-interest as in Kohlberg's stage 2. For self-interest is essentially sinful for Ramsey and as such would function against any *agapic* morality. There would be no loving act by definition that could be accommodated to stage 2 moral thinking. Christian morality, consequently, could communicate to stages 2 and 1 only through stage 3 concepts. This leaves a problem for communication with children (Christian education, catechism, family-life programs).

3. Maintain that faith itself possesses an internal developmental dynamic and that Christian morality progresses along lines of developmental growth. Two Protestant theologians who have a notion of faith amenable to a developmental interpretation are H. Richard Niebuhr and Paul Tillich. Niebuhr acknowledges a pluralism of faiths including egoism (faith in self, ensuing in a self-centered morality), henotheism (faith in a closed society, ensuing in conformity to that society), and radical monotheism (faith in God, ensuing in love for

all being).[18] Although Niebuhr conceives these in social terms, elsewhere I have made the case for conceiving these faiths in psychological terms.[19] Likewise, Paul Tillich acknowledges that ultimate concern and a sense of unconditional moral obligation can be experienced from a young age and that religion, morality, and culture are all subject to the dynamics of growth and centeredness.[20] In both cases the assumption that faith shapes morality is retained, but also faith is seen to be a growing dynamic reality that can be described in developmental categories. Such an approach, then, does not find a developmental notion of morality alien.[21]

If faith understanding and moral awareness are wedded together developmentally, both religious and moral self-understandings are subject to growth and to the dynamics of perceptual differentiation and integration. The main assumption here is that faith involves a self-understanding which exists in embryonic state in every person and that its maturation and fullness is subject to existing psychological and sociological conditions under which men live. There are several implications of this assumption for ecclesiastical life:

a) The age of culpability. As children become adults, at some point they become morally responsible. Roman Catholic theology tradition-ally has designated age seven as the age of reason. Kohlberg's research would indicate, however, that at age seven a child likely is at stage 1 or 2. At these preconventional levels a child does not conceive any legitimate, objective moral standard to be binding upon him. Thus, he cannot be morally culpable. Kohlberg's typology pro-vides an objective way of determining when a child is able to acknowledge moral responsibility and thus avoids arbitrariness in assessing culpability. It is another matter to decide which stage would constitute culpability. O'Neil and Donovan see culpability as requiring the Piagetan capacity for formal operations, including "the capacity to evaluate one's own thinking critically.[22] From a Kohlbergian stand-point, however, such capacities occur in moral thought only at stage 6. And as most people never reach stage 6, in O'Neil and Donovan's terms they would never be culpable. Still, the issue of the age of culpability is important, particularly in times when young adolescents and even children find themselves involved in adult activities of sexual experimentation and even violent crime.

b) The age of confirmation and the task of religious education. As children's faith understanding develops, their understanding of their relation with God changes. Depending on what relation to God a particular ecclesiastical body finds normative, a child becomes eligi-ble for confirmation when he is able to understand that relation. Niebuhr's egoistic faith, in which God functions as the instrument

and protector of one's self-interest, presumably, would not qualify one for confirmation. Henotheistic faith, in which God's will is identified with the ecclesiastical institution, might so qualify. Similarities of Kohlberg's stage 2 to egoism and stage 4 to henotheism might facilitate assessing the difference between the two faiths.

A stage analysis of children's and adolescents' faith understandings could more objectively establish their readiness for confirmation instead of depending upon arbitrary decision or upon required memorization of catechism without comprehension. The emphasis in religious education and catechetics would thus be not on objective doctrine but on comprehension of its meaning and on one's conceived relation to God which underlies dogmatic affirmation. A developmental notion of religious understanding can also provide a better notion of perceptual readiness of children for given educational materials and subject matters. Ronald Goldman claims that many religious syllabi in England presuppose capacities for understanding quite beyond those of the children subjected to the syllabi.[23] A more accurate understanding of the growth of faith understanding offers the possibility of making religious teaching more in line with the developing capacities of children's comprehension. Religious education would be more effective and more meaningful for children.[24]

Should an ethicist choose method 1 or 2 for relating faith and morality, he also faces decisions about the age of culpability and of confirmation and about religious education. The advantage of position 3 is that such decisions can be made on the basis of scientific research evidence rather than on intuition or tradition alone. In the case of methods 1 and 2, however, either psychological categories generally have no place in the theological scheme and can offer no insight, or else the role of psychological contributions is limited. Only the third position is able to take fully into account the range of moral and religious development observed in the human life cycle. And only the third position permits ethical communication to agents at each stage of moral judgment.

SUMMARY

I have shown that ethicists have experienced some difficulty communicating their ethics clearly to laymen as well as to one another. One reason for this difficulty, I maintain, is that ethicists tend to presume mature cognitive capacities on the part of their audiences. Since by no means all, or even a majority of, persons possess those cognitive capacities, an ethicist's moral communication can become incomprehensible or difficult to comprehend. Yet at the same time his audience may prefer his way of communicating to their own

because they desire more adequate moral conceptualizations than they themselves possess. Expressing preference for mature moral reasoning, however, does not necessarily mean that an audience is able to integrate such reasoning from an ethicist into their own moral schemes. Consequently, an ethicist speaking at one moral stage may find his audience, who listen according to their respective stages of moral thought, acting not in accord with his admonitions, or even contrary to them. And this would be due not to ill will or malice but to different stages of moral consciousness.

Sensing such a dilemma the ethicist may elect—according to his methodological predispositions—to ignore scientific hypotheses about the structure and development of man's conscience, or he may attempt to make some accounting for this in his theological scheme. This would raise anew old questions about the relation of faith to morality.[25] My conviction is that to account fully for the growth of moral thought and to facilitate maximum moral communication, one must leave the framework of a justification notion of morality and replace it with one which is able to take account of the developmental trends and conditions of the human socialization process.[26]

NOTES

1. Joseph Fletcher, *Moral Responsibility: Situation Ethics* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), pp. 27–28; Robert Springer, "Conscience, Behavioral Science, and Absolutes," in *Absolutes in Moral Theology*, ed. Charles Curran (Washington, D.C.: Corpus Publications, 1968); Paul Ramsey, *Deeds and Rules in Christian Ethics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), pp. 104–22.

2. Note the varied interpretations of (and thus responses to) Fletcher's notion of situation ethics in Harvey Cox, ed., *The Situation Ethics Debate* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), pp. 23–49.

3. Ramsey (n. 1 above), p. 20, n. 20.

4. Kohlberg refers to each kind of moral judgment as a "stage" of moral judgment (see his "Indoctrination versus Relativity in Value Education," *Zygon* 6 [1971]: 285–310). This is because each stage involves cognitive distinctions which seem to be prerequisites for advancement to higher forms of judgment. Kohlberg's phrase, "stages of moral development," however, all too easily is misinterpreted to mean degrees of moral behavior or qualities of moral worth. Erik Erikson acknowledges the same difficulty in choosing to designate ethical strengths at each stage of the life cycle as "virtues." He notes he does not intend to ignore the fact that "in giving to these strengths the very designations by which in the past they have acquired countless connotations of superficial goodness, affected niceness, and all too strenuous virtue, I invited misunderstandings and misuses" (*Childhood and Society* [New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1963], n. on p. 274). My judgment is that Erikson does not avoid misunderstanding or misuse and that Kohlberg's "stage" terminology invites the same. Ethically, it is important to avoid such mistaken inferences of ascribed goodness when using the term "stages of moral development."

5. The way differing concepts of value, sanction, etc., fall into clusters which form distinct and composite levels of moral development is demonstrated in Kohlberg's "The Development of Modes of Moral Thinking and Choice in the Years Ten to Sixteen" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1958), pp. 88–105, 376–83.

6. Kohlberg has also found the sequence of stages to occur cross-culturally in Britain, Taiwan, Turkey, Mexico, and Yucatan in addition to the United States (see his "The Child as Moral Philosopher," *Psychology Today* [September 1968]: 25–30; and "Education for Justice: A Modern Statement of the Platonic View," in *Moral Education: Five Lectures,* ed. Nancy and Theodore Sizer [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970], p. 70).

7. I realize that men are motivated by other than rational considerations. Kohlberg's stages are levels of ego development and from a psychoanalytic perspective are certainly subject to affective forces in their personality. Kohlberg himself notes that some college students at stage 5 retrogress to stage 2 for a period of time before returning to stage 5. Kohlberg attributes this to guilt. Yet he also maintains that such moral affect is cognitively channeled through moral thought patterns (see his and R. Kramer's "Continuities and Discontinuities in Childhood and Adult Moral Development," *Human Development* 12 [1969]: 109–20; and his "From Is to Ought: How to Commit the Naturalistic Fallacy and Get Away with It in the Study of Moral Development," in *Cognitive Development and Epistemology,* ed. T. Mischel [New York: Academic Press, 1971], pp. 188–90).

8. Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral Development and Identification," in *Child Psychology: 62d Yearbook of the National Society of the Study of Education,* ed. H. Stevenson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 314–25; also Kohlberg, "The Development of Modes" (n. 5 above), pp. 151–229.

9. Kohlberg, "The Development of Modes" (n. 5 above), pp. 80–105.

10. James Rest, "Hierarchies of Comprehension and Preference in a Developmental Stage Model of Moral Thinking" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1969); J. Rest, E. Turiel, and L. Kohlberg, "Level of Moral Development as a Determinant of Preference and Comprehension of Moral Judgments Made by Others," *Journal of Personality* 37 (1969): 225–52, as reported by Rest, p. 9; E. Turiel, "An Experimental Test of the Sequentiality of Developmental States in the Child's Moral Judgments," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 3 (1966): 611–18.

11. For a more detailed description of the six stages and an analysis of how each is a cognitive advance upon its predecessor, see my "The Communication of Ethical Insight to Moral Agents: An Assessment of Contemporary Theological Ethics" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1971), pp. 53–66.

12. See n. 10 above.

13. Paul Lehmann, *Ethics in a Christian Context* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), pp. 344–67.

14. Joseph Fletcher, *Situation Ethics: The New Morality* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), pp. 17–39.

15. Paul Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), pp. 46–132, 153–90, 234–325.

16. Lawrence Kohlberg, "Moral and Religious Education and the Public Schools: A Developmental View," in *Religion and Public Education,* ed. Theodore Sizer (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1967), p. 173; also Kohlberg, "Education for Justice" (n. 6 above), p. 80.

17. Rest (n. 10 above), pp. 131–41.

18. H. Richard Niebuhr, *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1960), pp. 24–63, 114–26.

19. Bachmeyer (n. 11 above), pp. 87–156.

20. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology,* 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951–63), 3:11–106.

21. One analysis of the developmental implications of Paul Tillich's thought is found in T. Droege. "A Developmental View of Faith" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1965).

22. Robert P. O'Neil and Michael Donovan, *Sexuality and Moral Responsibility* (Washington, D.C.: Corpus Publications, 1968), p. 4.

23. Ronald Goldman, *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence* (New York: Seabury Press, 1964), pp. 5–7; and *Readiness for Religion: A Basis for Developmental Religious Education* (New York: Seabury Press, 1970), pp. 3–10.

24. The varieties of meaning to the Golden Rule illustrate this beautifully. Depending on a child's or adult's perceptual readiness, "Treat others as you would be treated" may mean anything from, "Treat others as they treat you" (stage 2), to, "Treat others as the law demands" (stage 4), to, "Treat others as you would be treated" (stage 6). I show the possibilities and difficulties of teaching the Golden Rule according to one's stage of moral judgment in my "The Golden Rule and Developing Moral Judgment," *Religious Education* (in press).

25. Comparing Christian *agape* with Kohlberg's stage 6 raises some psychological issues as well. If stage 6 is a positive orientation and if the seeds of later stages are somehow present in prior stages, then what positive aspects of moral judgment are present in Kohlberg's stage 1? In the obedience and punishment orientation is some primitive form of reward perceived apart from avoidance of punishment? B. F. Skinner claims that positive reinforcement is more effective than negative reinforcement for psychological change. Eric Berne holds that psychic growth requires nurturing strokes from the parent ego state. And Spitz's research findings on institutionalized children shows that positive handling, fondling, and attention are crucial for psychic health. Is Kohlberg missing the existence of positive factors in moral growth as his own developmental theory and other psychologists imply? Or are such factors basically affective and not cognitively perceived as part of "morality" at stage 1? In understanding *agape* from a psychological standpoint a similar problem concerning affect and cognition exists. Is *agape* an affective, feeling, or intuitive orientation without concomitant conceptualization as Barth suggests? Or is it basically a cognitive orientation of moral principles and cold rationality apart from emotion as Joseph Fletcher suggests? If *agape* involves universal principles and it transforms persons, then it must involve a union of both cognition and affect.

26. I realize that my position is closer to basic trends in Roman Catholic thought than to those in Protestantism I have outlined. This is due to my greater emphasis on sanctification in the Christian life than on justification—an emphasis inherited from John Wesley and shared by H. Richard Niebuhr and Paul Tillich. Note Niebuhr's ideas of the continuous revolution of faith and life which he calls metanoia (Niebuhr, n. 18 above, pp. 125–26, and *The Meaning of Revelation* [New York: Macmillan Co., 1962], pp. vii–ix, 137, 191).