

**PRESUPPOSITIONS IN MORAL EDUCATION DISCOURSE:  
DEVELOPING AN ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK AND  
APPLYING IT TO SEVERAL MORAL EDUCATION TRADITIONS**

by

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## ABSTRACT

Moral education is ever more important in our schools today, but the various moral education traditions make it difficult to decide which tradition best serves our purpose and population. This dissertation develops and uses an original analytic framework to narrow the choices of moral education curricula. The analytic framework introduced presuppositions that expounded upon one's center of value or source of moral authority, the nature of people and their capacity for rational thought, the nature of society, the time orientation of tradition, and the resulting morality in action. The analytic framework was then applied to ten notable traditions: Catholic religious education, values clarification, Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory, five multicultural education traditions (Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different, Human Relations, Single-Group Studies, Multicultural Education, and Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist) reviewed by Sleeter & Grant, and Skinner's theory of behavior modification. This study presents the analytic framework in depth and offers a brief narrative of its application across traditions. The resulting synthesis offers a review of commonalities, differences, surprises, and finally, a proposal that an existing presupposition stands as *the* defining one in regard to differentiating among moral education traditions.

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, especially NR, and to the memory of my father, Mike Sciaino.

Dad, I know you are smiling down on all of us.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Presenting Problem.....	1
Purpose of the Study .....	3
Historical Background .....	5
Moral Education Traditions .....	7
Significance of the Study .....	11
Summary .....	13
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF EXISTING ANALYTIC FRAMEWORKS .....	15
Introduction.....	15
Presenting the Existing Frameworks .....	16
Synthesis of the Existing Frameworks.....	29
CHAPTER THREE: PRESENTING THE NEW ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK.....	33
Introduction.....	33
Center of Value .....	35
Presuppositions about People .....	38
Presuppositions about Society and Tradition/Culture.....	41
Presuppositions about Morality in Action .....	47

CHAPTER FOUR: APPLICATION OF THE ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK TO TEN	
NOTABLE MORAL EDUCATION TRADITIONS .....	49
Introduction.....	49
Catholic Religious Education .....	51
Five Approaches to Multicultural Education.....	60
Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different Approach .....	61
Human Relations Approach.....	65
Single-Group Studies Approach .....	70
Multicultural Education Approach .....	74
Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist.....	79
Multicultural Education: A Synthesis of Approaches .....	84
Kohlberg’s Cognitive-Developmental Moral Theory.....	85
Postconventional, Autonomous, or Principled Level .....	91
Skinner’s Behavior Theory.....	96
Values Clarification .....	103
From Analysis to Synthesis .....	109
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION.....	112
A Review .....	112
Synthesis of All Traditions .....	113
Identification of a Prevailing or Defining Presupposition .....	116
Implications for Practice.....	121
Critique of the New Framework .....	123
Future Research .....	126

Epilogue .....	127
LIST OF REFERENCES .....	128



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Comparison of Existing Frameworks .....	32
Table 2 Presuppositions Chart .....	110

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### The Presenting Problem

Throughout history, moral education has always been a part of America's public schools and, while continuously evolving, still holds a prominent place in the educational landscape. Moral issues involve interactions with people and thus are political and social in form, but they also extend into the environment and express how we care for the inhabitants of nature (Purpel & McLaurin, 2004). Through moral education, students learn to handle these personal, social, and political issues with "more sophisticated modes of moral reasoning" (Oliver & Bane, 1971, p. 269). As long as moral issues pervade a person's life experience, then according to Aristotle, moral education should begin early and must also pervade a person's life (Nash, 2002).

Moral education takes many forms. It can be accomplished through the social studies, English, and humanities curricula (Oliver & Bane, 1971). It can be deliberate instruction in moral reasoning applied to moral situations or dilemmas. It can be secular or religious. Moral education inhabits our schools and neighborhood institutions, and is sometimes inherently located in the "hidden curriculum" (Purpel & Ryan, 1975). Moral education also has many synonyms. Terms such as "character education," "values education," "applied ethics," and "religious education" have been employed by various populations, sometimes in order to avoid using the term "moral."

This study acknowledges that a multitude of moral education traditions exist, all with their different vocabularies and theoretical distinctions. Since schools reflect the current political, economic, social, and cultural ideologies, it stands to reason that contrasting moral education traditions emerged throughout the history of public education to address the perceived needs and to assuage the discontent of the populace. For instance, multicultural education approaches addressed the growing needs of America's pluralistic society (Sleeter & Grant, 2003). Then, when American citizens grew reticent to include "moral" education in the public school curriculum, the relativism of the Values Clarification approach filled the bill by teaching valuing instead of imposing a set of values (Raths, Harmin, & Simon, 1966). Popular opinion instigated changes in the offerings of moral education traditions.

This study proposes that many of the differences among the various traditions rest upon the underlying conceptions of each, and as such, spring from philosophical differences (Carr & Steutel, 1999). These differences can be represented by presuppositions about the source of moral authority, the nature of people, the nature of society, and the relationship of morality and action. Despite their underlying philosophical differences, the moral education traditions all seem to have the same goal: the development of the morally educated person. But a question arises—why so many variations on a common theme?

In addition to the multiplicity of moral education traditions, confusion also often ensues because terms are interwoven. For instance, the term "character education" has become synonymous with moral education, perhaps because the word "moral" carries a strong value-laden quality. But character education is itself a viable, self-standing

tradition of moral education (see for instance Lickona, 1991). There are those who consider anything moral by default religious, and thus taboo for public schools. If the term “values” is used, then the next logical question becomes “Whose values?” Some differentiate between social training, moral training, and moral education (Baier, 1971). These multiple categories contribute to the vagueness of what we mean by moral education. This ambiguity is further complicated by the value laden terms used throughout various moral education identities—terms such as “the common good,” “public interest,” “natural rights,” and “social justice,” along with relative attributes of good and bad, right and wrong.

How do schools and educators make informed decisions regarding moral education curricula, considering the numerous options for moral education traditions, the controversy over value laden terminology, and the confusion surrounding the various philosophical names for the traditions? What questions do we ask in order to understand fully the moral education traditions and encourage scholarly discourse amongst contrasting theorists?

### Purpose of the Study

Given the various traditions of moral education available to educators, this study aims to answer the question of how we begin to make informed decisions about moral education curriculum. Informed choice should begin with critical analysis. Moral education traditions and philosophies are no strangers to critical analysis. In fact, they have been and continue to be the focus of both philosophical and educational analysis.

This is as it should be since “engaging in moral education without thinking about its goals and methods seems dubious as it would be in intellectual education” (Kohlberg, 1971, p. 29).

The questions we ask about moral education traditions are the same questions we ask about morality. In fact, Barrow (2000) asserts that when referring to moral education, the *only* answers to be gleaned are answers to philosophical questions. So this study will be one of moral philosophy, specifically analytic moral philosophy. Chazan & Soltis (1973) explain that analytic moral philosophy concentrates on the following activities:

1. The analysis of concepts used in the moral sphere and in moral discussions; e.g. good, right, wrong, moral, value, indoctrination, evil.
2. The analysis of central problems of the moral sphere; e.g. the role of reason in ethics, autonomy versus habit in morality, the nature of the justification of moral decisions.
3. The delineation of the nature of the moral sphere itself (as distinguished, for example, from the religious, political, or the aesthetic). (p. 4)

In an effort to accomplish this analysis of competing moral education traditions, a new analytic framework has been developed. The framework poses questions that intend to expose presuppositions, or underlying beliefs, individuals hold about people, society, morality, and source of moral authority. The framework will be applied to various moral education traditions in order to determine whether an analysis of the presuppositions will help us to better differentiate between those traditions and their educational value.

The resulting analysis of each tradition in light of the analytic framework could provide an understanding of how those presuppositions may influence curriculum choice.

Additionally, by exposing the presuppositions using a common framework, this study hopes to encourage scholarly discourse among educators from diverse moral education traditions. Finally, this study might encourage educators to acknowledge that we must be cognizant of the presuppositions we hold that might influence our curriculum choice. When considering that the field of education is often accused of making curricular decisions without informed practice, this study has the potential to answer that challenge.

### Historical Background

Before delving into the analysis, a review of the history of moral education in the United States deserves attention. In Colonial America, moral education and education in general were religious in nature. As the complexion of America changed, the complexion of moral education changed. A brief chronology of traditions reveals the evolution of moral education (McClellan, 1999). The 17<sup>th</sup> century Puritans in New England considered moral education the responsibility of the family. By default, moral education was religious in nature as it was important for the early settlers to perpetuate their Christian faith and their social structure (McClellan, 1999; Spring, 2001). Children were often apprenticed, at which time their masters became the primary educators in vocation and moral and religious education. In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, schools began to support the family effort in moral education. The primary purpose of the schools was to provide skills for literacy, but the content was still religious and moral in nature. During the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, schools became more prominent institutions in providing moral education, and the function of this education was to instill a feeling of

nationalism and patriotism for the new nation. Toward the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, Horace Mann advocated for public schools within which moral education would take on a more secular, non-sectarian flavor. The emphasis was on character building and civic education. Throughout this time, the focus was on building common moral, political, and cultural values, and the schools accepted the role for providing this education.

The early 20<sup>th</sup> century brought a significant change to society. Moral education was no longer viewed as the school's primary purpose. Instead, vocational, academic, and social skills rose to the head of the curriculum. While some like Milton Fairchild proposed a character education built on traditional values, others saw education as a means of social control (Spring, 2001). Educators like Dewey promoted teaching the skills of critical thinking and deliberation in order to make sound moral judgments (Spring, 2001). There was no set of virtues or values, but rather the emphasis was on problem solving abilities to weigh consequences of actions. All school subjects could incorporate activities to provide a moral education.

As American society entered the post World War II and Cold War Era, an almost purposeful disregard and avoidance of moral education in the school curriculum ensued, probably in response to the social and cultural difficulties of the time such as the Civil Rights Movement, the Viet Nam War, and various ethnic, racial, and class divisions (McClellan, 1999). This period of difficulty in finding common values led to a cultural relativism and eventually a moral relativism. For three centuries prior, moral education had been the primary purpose of education. Now it had become "peripheral and problematic" (McClellan, 1999, p. 78). Despite the controversy over moral education, from 1960-1990, three approaches to moral education surfaced—values clarification in

the works of Kirschenbaum and Simon, Rath, & Harmin, cognitive developmental theories of morality, specifically Kohlberg and Piaget, and the ethics of caring in the work of Gilligan and Noddings (McClellan, 1999). A resurgence of a virtue-centered character education (e. g. Lickona, 1991) also made its way into the moral education sphere.

This plethora of moral education traditions all aspired to improve the moral lives of individuals. An overview of the moral education traditions reveals the following historic and contemporary models: religious education, moral rationalism, caring, values clarification, Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory, multicultural education, critical theory and social reconstruction, character education, Victorians and neo-Victorians who teach etiquette and manners, legal education, conflict resolution, volunteerism and service learning, and civic education (Boote, Grant, Sciaino, & Ichilov, 2002). Each moral education tradition rests upon a foundation of tenets and theories, all of which contribute to their uniqueness. The following paragraphs offer a brief review of several prominent moral education traditions.

### Moral Education Traditions

Education is a moral endeavor (Purpel & McLaurin, 2004), and this study recognizes the numerous traditions that exist to provide education in morality. Fundamental differences lie at the foot of the traditions and speak to the variations between different traditions as well as among common traditions such as religions, multicultural traditions, and values clarification schools (e. g. Kirschenbaum versus Rath, Simon, and Harmin).



The following section by no means is an exhaustive description of the many traditions. Instead, it is offered as a sampling to introduce the many traditions designed to instruct students in morality.

### *Religious Education*

Religious education itself is such a vast entity because of the many religions represented in the United States. In addition to three major religious denominations—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—we must acknowledge the eastern religions of Buddhism, Hinduism, Shintoism, Taoism, Sikhism, Jainism, Parsis, Confucianism, and the countless religious communities (Bowker, 2002). Religious education naturally has the component of living the good and moral life. But even though this may be the common goal, the means to this end vary from religion to religion.

### *Moral Rationalism*

Moral rationalism refers to moral theories that underscore the use of reason or a rational system in making moral decisions. For instance, early philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Aquinas believed that people used their ability to reason in order to reach a higher moral understanding. Moral rationalists such as Kant and Mill believe that people do what is good and right because reason dictates it, and, because we are rational agents with autonomous will, we follow reason (Hill, 2000).

### *Kohlberg*

Kohlberg's (1984/1986) cognitive-developmental theory asserts that moral reasoning depends on one's cognitive ability. Therefore, as an individual's cognitive reasoning evolves, one's ability to reason morally also evolves. Kohlberg researched and defined

his moral stage theory through the use of moral dilemmas. Three distinct moral levels were identified based on the answers given for the dilemmas. Those levels are named preconventional, conventional, and postconventional. Each level is subdivided into two stages.

### *Multicultural Education*

Multicultural education addresses more than just racial and ethnic diversity. In addition to the diverse cultures, multicultural education recognizes the diversity in gender, socioeconomic class, and people with disabilities. Multicultural educators are concerned with improving social conditions. Many approaches exist regarding multicultural education. Sleeter and Grant (2003) offer five different approaches to multicultural education. One particular approach emphasizes promoting a society based on social justice and equal opportunity, with respect for those who are different. Moral behavior is defined as civic behavior, behavior that would value equity and justice (Banks, 2002).

### *Character Education*

Character education, while it often is used as a synonym for “moral education,” stands on its own as a full-fledged moral education tradition in the work of Lickona (1991), who represented character through three sides of humanity: cognitive, emotional, and active. The components for good character are moral knowing (cognitive), moral feeling (emotional), and moral action (activity). Lickona believed that simply knowing right from wrong did not guarantee that one would act morally. One needed also to *care* about

acting morally. Finally, Lickona believed that moral knowing and moral feeling provided the source of moral motivation and led to the “doing” of moral action.

### *Values Clarification*

Values clarification originated as a moral education tradition in the 1960s (Elias, 1989). Two versions of values clarification have emerged—that of Rath, Simon, and Harmin, and that of Kirschenbaum (Chazan, 1985). The emphasis of both versions is not on teaching specific values, but instead on teaching the process of valuing (Elias, 1989; Rath, Harmin, & Simon, 1973). In fact, there is no predetermined set of values or moral principles. Students are encouraged to explore their emotions, make choices, explore and examine alternatives, reflect on consequences, consider what they value, and act in accordance with their choices (Rath, Harmin, & Simon, 1973). Values clarification focuses on the personal nature of values and espouses that individuals determine their own values and do not blindly accept values shaped by external forces (Elias, 1989). In response to criticisms that values clarification stressed individual choice apart from the social context, Kirschenbaum integrated two additional components to the valuing process—thinking and communicating—and emphasized that choices needed to be considered in the context of what is good for us and society (Chazan, 1985; Elias, 1989).

### *Ethics of Care*

Noddings and Gilligan offer an alternative theory in response to Kohlberg. Kohlberg’s theory of cognitive development focuses on justice and rights. The ethics of care proposed by Gilligan and Noddings emphasizes interconnectedness, responsibility, and caring for others (Johnson, 2002). Noddings (1997) suggests that an education

should be centered on themes of care, specifically “caring for self, intimate others, global others, plants, animals, and the environment, objects and instruments, and ideas” (p. 6).

### Significance of the Study

The previous section served to provide a glimpse of the many moral education traditions employed by schools, past and present. At first glance, the only aspect they seem to share is their overall intent to produce a morally educated person. The underlying theories and methods applied vary considerably. The embodiment of a morally educated person may also vary. The dilemma facing the practicing educator and school community seems to be choosing from the many traditions intending to fulfill the same purpose. Moral education needs clarity (Wilson, 2000). Wilson and others have long reported obstacles to the application of moral education. Among the many obstacles cited are 1) the nature of our pluralistic society, whose different populations have different expectations and theoretical bases for moral instruction, 2) the belief that moral education belongs in the home and church, 3) the critique that schools have enough trouble with intellectual education and have no time to devote to moral education, 4) the rebuke that teachers are not seen as moral exemplars nor as having enough knowledge and skills to teach values, and 5) the fear that moral education can become indoctrination (Purpel & Ryan, 1975).

Wilson (1990) recounts obstacles he considers emotional in origin. He refers to these as the “personal prejudices, fantasies, and other irrational but very deep-rooted feelings” (p. ix) as well as “contemporary climates of opinion” (p. ix) in respect to the social

aspects. Wilson relates to these as “moral failings” and suggests that unless people free themselves from these obstacles, the practice of moral education will be stalled. Wilson also believes people want to know the authority of morality.

If we interpret Wilson’s “moral failings” within the context of this study, they may very well fit into the concepts of presuppositions about people and society. A difference would be that while Wilson charges us to overcome these failings, this study suggests that we become cognizant of the presuppositions we hold and recognize their potential influences over curriculum decision making.

Some citizens have questioned whether moral education has a legitimate place in formal education or whether it is the responsibility of the home and church alone (Purpel & Ryan, 1975). Some philosophers question whether morality can be separate from religion (Nucci, 2001) while other educators have argued that it must be “secular and separated from religion” (Spring, 2001). In response to some of these obstacles, some avoid the controversy by purposefully ignoring any attempt at moral education (Nucci, 2001). But John Dewey (1934) stated that moral education is central to the mission of schools (as cited in Purpel & Ryan, 1975). Further, this statement from the Fifth Yearbook of the Department of Secondary School Principals makes it clear that the purpose of the schools is moral education:

What we wish the state to be the schools must be. The character of our citizens is determined by the character of our pupils and the development of character in this broad sense must be the goal of education. (Spring, 2001, p. 265)

Society must acknowledge that moral education, in one form or another, has been and should remain a component in formal education. Now educators must ensure that the

curriculum decisions surrounding which moral education tradition to apply are made with a clear understanding of the presuppositions inherent in each moral education tradition. In addition, educators should be aware of the presuppositions we hold and how, whether consciously or unconsciously activated, they consequently affect curriculum decisions.

### Summary

Moral education should exist and the schools must provide it. Several obstacles complicate the delivery of a moral education. First, the diversity of our student population makes a consensus in what constitutes an education in morality difficult to achieve. Add to that the disagreement among educators about whether teaching in morality is about specific content or a process, and what, if any, roles reason, religion, and emotion play in the process. Finally, the sheer number of moral education traditions available to the educator confounds curriculum choice. How do educators make informed curriculum decisions?

This study develops and uses an analytic framework to expose the presuppositions held by several moral education traditions. These presuppositions will reveal the underlying assumptions about the nature of people and their capacity for rational thought, the nature of society, the time orientation of tradition, one's source of moral authority, and the resulting morality in action. An analysis of each tradition could provide practitioners with a tool for comparison.

The outcome of the study will provide a narrative detailing each tradition's presuppositions as well as a comparison and contrast across traditions. Finally, the study

will attempt to discover whether any one particular presupposition stands as a defining and differentiating one for the traditions. Ultimately, my hope is that this study encourages scholarly discourse among the broad range of moral educators and theorists.

The next chapter reviews and critiques five existing analytic frameworks that have been applied to moral education traditions specifically or to the study of morality in general. While the frameworks offered common elements and revealed crucial aspects for an analysis of this nature, they did not provide the scope of underlying assumptions that were the initial sparks for this study. The following chapter reviews the strengths and weaknesses of the existing frameworks and explains the rationale for creating an original framework.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF EXISTING ANALYTIC FRAMEWORKS

### Introduction

Questions about morality are philosophic in nature, and since moral education traditions are the mediums with which we attempt to teach about morality, we *must* ask questions about the moral education traditions to determine if we are indeed participating in an education in morality. But educators do not speak the same moral language, and because of that, we are “moral strangers” with different moral visions (Nash, 2002). Our different moral visions contribute to controversies in moral education surrounding methods, content, processes, and outcomes. So how do educators bridge this language barrier in order to compare competing moral education traditions and make informed curriculum choices? Crittenden (1971) suggested that “the moral vocabulary draw(s) its vitality from a certain view of man and human society and from being used within the context of a social order in which this view is at least partially applied” (p. 283). How do we accomplish the task of building a common vocabulary?

Theorists have created analytic frameworks with which to analyze moral philosophies in order to identify commonalities and differences, to reflect on what constitutes moral education, to better articulate the differences in the philosophies by using an established criteria for comparison and contrast, and to determine whether religious and secular ideas can cohabit the moral philosophies. An initial review of the literature uncovered researchers who have employed analytic frameworks to examine moral education philosophies, an analytic framework to teach ethics courses, and a framework with which



to approach an understanding of the influences on curriculum development. The existing frameworks comprise some common elements to the new framework introduced in this study. This realization endows the new framework with credibility. The following section details each existing framework, in no particular order, and offers a critical analysis of each.

### Presenting the Existing Frameworks

#### *Nucci's Framework*

Nucci (2001) posed questions about the moral domain, recognizing that the very nature of morality in a multicultural society brings with it controversial issues. The questions Nucci posed frame the definition and nature of morality such that once determined, educators could choose a tradition to accomplish the task of a moral education. Nucci asks the following six questions about morality:

- a) Is morality a set of rules we acquire like any other, or does morality constitute a set of understandings that are in some way distinct from the areas of social knowledge?
- b) Does morality involve or even rely on cognition, or is it simply an emotion like empathy or guilt that guides our conduct? In other words, does it require the ability to reason, or does it rely on emotion to prompt action?
- c) Are there universal or transcultural aspects to morality or is morality culture specific?

- d) Does morality rest on religious norms, or are moral and religious concepts distinct from one another?
- e) Can morality be taught or does it have to be “caught?”
- f) Is there such a thing as moral character? (p. xvii)

Nucci also ponders the core component of moral action, whether it be rational thought, emotion, affect, or a combination. These questions mirror other questions of similar philosophic realms, and the answers to these questions have the potential to drive a moral education curriculum.

Nucci goes a step further when he contends that there are three domains in effect and all three have a role in moral judgment. He specifies the moral domain in addition to the personal and the social convention domain. Nucci makes a clear distinction between morality and social convention. In fact, he clearly differentiates between the two with this statement:

Moral issues are viewed to be independent of the existence of social norms and generalizable across contexts, societies, and cultures. Social conventions, on the other hand, are rule dependent, and their normative force holds only within the social system within which the rule was formed. (p. 10)

The previous statement answers some of the questions posed within his framework. He answers another question about the distinction between religious norms and morality with this brief summary of the results of a conducted study:

[C]hildren’s moral understandings are independent of specific religious rules...there can be moral education compatible with, and yet independent from, religious doctrine. (p. 50-51)

Finally, Nucci reminds educators that while the three domains may develop synchronously, there is an equal chance that they may not. For example, Kohlberg and Piaget expected cognitive development to coincide with moral development, but Nucci recognizes that the three domains, while interacting to affect moral judgment, may not necessarily be aligned, and moral education practices must allow for inconsistency.

#### *A Critique of Nucci's Framework*

Nucci's framework presents a comprehensive look at the questions surrounding the nature of morality and even delves into the controversial issue of morality and religion. His questions also frame the context of morality (universal or culture specific) and the expression of morality. Nucci admits that social structures carry a great deal of influence over the nature of the moral domain, citing that

members of a culture can be impervious to the moral contradictions within their own existing social system, and how ethnocentric interpretations of cultural values can mask the principled moral perspectives of other cultural groups. (p. xix)

He even states that individuals should participate in moral reflection and critique of their social structures. This reference to established social structures suggests an importance to the assumptions societies hold about their social group. Apart from identifying what constitutes moral action, little information is questioned about the nature of people.

However, Nucci, along with Chazan, seem to offer inclusive frameworks for the analysis of moral issues.

### *Chazan's Framework*

Chazan (1985) introduced an analytic framework that comprised three realms—philosophic, educational, and practical—because he believed that moral education addresses questions present in all realms. Specifically, the philosophic realm encompassed assumptions about the concepts of good and bad, right and wrong, duty and obligation—all questions reflected in ethics. The educational realm addressed philosophy of education, which is typically interested in the relationship between moral knowing and moral doing as they relate to the moral sphere. Of particular interest is the “interrelationship between reason and habit in moral education; the role of moral principles in education; socialization and autonomy in moral education” (Chazan, 1985, p. 5). Chazan believed these elements overlapped with moral philosophy. Finally, Chazan viewed education in general and moral education specifically, as a practical matter that encompassed actual issues to be considered at home and in school.

Chazan's framework highlighted the following five philosophic questions:

1. Is morality a social or individual phenomenon? Is morality defined by the group, resulting in collective norms, or is it defined by individual conscience, resulting in free choice?
2. What role do moral principles play? A principle is a statement or tenet that forms the basis of a system of belief. Chazan asked whether moral principles were generalizable or context specific.
3. Is there a connection between reason and ethics? Chazan addressed several questions ranging from whether reason had a place in morality, and if it did, how it functioned; whether moral reasoning was unique or common across

other forms of reason; whether moral reasoning had any relationship to moral action, habit, or passion; and finally whether morality was dependent on the ability to reason.

4. Does morality have a specific content or is it a process? This question attempted to determine whether moral education should be about transmitting a particular ideological content or moral philosophy or whether it should be about developing the capacity to confront moral issues and process them. This could be simplified to the question of whether morality should be about a product or process.
5. What is the relationship between morality and action (i. e. moral knowing and moral doing)? Does morality imply performance of an action? Chazan asked two specific questions:
  - a. Does increased knowledge necessarily lead to increased moral deeds or not?
  - b. Can there be genuine moral action that does not flow from moral intention? (p. 4-5)

From the educational perspective, Chazan considered the conception of the morally educated person by contemplating whether this person was a performer of good works, should think and act in a certain way, made a commitment to a set of moral principles, and was one- or multidimensional. The morally educated person is, in essence, the end product of a moral education, so determining what constitutes a morally educated person establishes an outcome. Chazan also analyzed each tradition to determine whether participation in the tradition resulted in a moral education or indoctrination. Chazan

considered whether certain philosophies participated in indoctrination and whether education was even possible without indoctrination. Of course, the implication is that if indoctrination carries a negative connotation, it is to be avoided, especially if the moral education occurs in the public school classroom.

From the practical perspective, Chazan looked at the role of the teacher and the pedagogic aspects. When considering the role of the teacher, various issues are raised surrounding the skills and abilities, as well as the personal characteristics, required of educators to participate in moral education. The pedagogic aspect of moral education traditions looks at the everyday elements required to teach, such as the accessibility of materials, the interest level of proposed activities, the cost to implement, and the general effectiveness of the proposed program. These are the everyday routine items that must be considered when implementing moral education programs.

#### *A Critique of Chazan's Framework*

An advantage to Chazan's framework is that it is comprehensive. It addresses philosophical, educational, and practical aspects, lending itself to both theory and practice. This framework could easily be applied to further study, especially in light of the fact that only a few traditions have been reviewed. The application of this framework opens possibilities for exploring other moral education traditions in the same scope as traditions he has already analyzed (Kohlberg, values clarification, Wilson's rational utilitarianism, and Durkheim's moral socialization). A weakness of his framework is that it does not address the social context of morality, but instead reviews moral theory and practices within the context of the individual and the overall concept of morality. The one area that comes close to addressing a social aspect is the question that asks about

morality being individual or social in origin. In this, Chazan seems to consider whether morality is defined by the group, resulting in a collection of norms, or individually.

When comparing the other frameworks, Chazan's stands as the most comprehensive.

### *Frankena/Elias' Framework*

Frankena (1970) offered the following framework as a guide to analyzing general philosophies of education. In particular, Frankena's focus was in normative philosophies of education, those that define and dictate the "oughts" and "shoulds" of education, the role of educators and schools, and the aims, goals, objectives, methods, and content of education. Frankena (1970) focused on four areas of analysis. A normative theory will:

1. List and define a set of dispositions to be fostered by parents, teachers, and schools;
2. Give a line of thought to show that the dispositions by it are desirable or should be cultivated;
3. Tell us what we should do in order to acquire or foster the dispositions recommended [by the philosophy], or the means, methods, curriculum, and administration;
4. Provide reasons for advocating the above methods. (pp. 17-18)

This framework set out to identify components of a philosophy and then justify and prescribe the methods of instilling the identified dispositions.

Elias (1989) adapted these four statements specifically for analyzing moral education traditions, such that the framework now examines the following aspects of a theory:

1. The dispositions of the persons to be fostered by the educational theory, (i. e., its view of the morally educated person);
2. The rationale for advocating such dispositions (e. g. philosophic positions, theological premises, or empirical factors);
3. Any recommendations about methods for developing the morally educated person;
4. Rationales for the recommendations about method. (p.34)

The description of the morally educated person suggested that one consider the context of the actions, the interactions with other people and nature, one's reasoning ability, and the goal of the moral action. This question also looked at whether the moral domain is a separate component or whether it is integrated into the whole person.

The second aspect of Elias' framework, the rationale of advocating the dispositions of a morally educated person, offered three positions—philosophic, theological, and empirical. Elias considered the philosophic and theological positions ones that highlighted the nature of people in regard to “their place in this world” and “their ultimate destiny” (p. 36). If one espoused an empirical position, one made use of the studies available to explain human issues. The position and its inherent theories stood as the basis of one's view of the morally educated person.

The third element in the framework reviewed recommendations about the methods for developing the morally educated person. One could propose following a prescribed set of



rules, modeling actions after a moral exemplar, heeding religious dictates, conforming to discipline, or acquiring skills through direct instruction in moral values.

The fourth element followed the same aspects of the second. The method one selected to develop a morally educated person aligned itself theoretically with either a philosophic, theological, or empirical rationale.

#### *A Critique of Frankena/Elias' Framework*

In contrast to Chazan's framework, Elias' is narrow and limited. This framework also focuses on analyzing the philosophical concept of morality and considers it in the context of people, ignoring the social aspect completely. The spotlight turns to the definition and description of a moral person, the method of arriving at such a moral person, and the theoretical underpinnings that drive the view of a moral person. While Elias allows for the possibility that one's theoretical foundations may be philosophical, theological, and empirical, he offers little differentiation between philosophical and theological, and no example regarding empirical theories of human nature. The framework could be reduced to how one defines a moral person and what theoretical belief affects one's definition. Again, no reference to society's influence or position regarding morality is acknowledged.

#### *Nash's Framework*

Nash (2002) confronted challenges to teaching applied ethics—challenges that resemble the same ethical questions posed by the previous analytic moral philosophers. Nash struggled with how ethical behavior should be defined and whether it was a matter of feeling, reasoned judgment, personal virtue, standards determined by personal or

professional communities, or a mixture of all. While Nash’s original framework was offered as a framework for teaching ethics, this framework could be employed to analyze moral education traditions as well. After all, if ethical behavior (or moral behavior) is a “measurable outcome,” we must have some preconceived idea of what it should look like and what steps we should take to get there. These questions and their subsequent answers imply underlying presuppositions about moral behavior that must be recognized and acknowledged, as they drive definitions and ultimately practice in moral education traditions. So, my study introduces Nash’s (2002) three moral languages and examines one most particularly as it contributes to our proposed presupposition analysis.

Nash identified three moral languages in his analysis of teaching applied ethics—the language of background beliefs, the language of moral character, and the language of moral principle. This review focuses primarily on the language of background beliefs because it has shared fundamental assumptions to the original presuppositions analysis that initiated this study (see Egan, 1978). The language of background beliefs acknowledges the existence of “moral ultimates” that people hold as their source of ethical beliefs. This includes their source of truth and their concept of ethical behavior. These underlying assumptions are consistent with the philosophical questions posed by Chazan (1985), Frankena (1970), Elias (1989), and Egan (1978). Nash believes that in order to fully understand one’s view of ethics, one must identify and expose one’s background beliefs.

Nash (2002) lays bare the following six questions for reflection:

1. What does it mean to be moral? Immoral? Who says so?
2. Is there a spiritual as well as physical, intellectual, and emotional realm of existence? To what realm do you attribute primary importance? Why? Can you be moral and not believe in God?
3. Would you characterize your moral philosophy as being predominantly rationalist? Intuitionist? Emotivist? Naturalist? Sensualist? Theist? Secularist? Humanistic? Communitarian? Individualistic? Egoist?
4. Is an objective morality possible? Or desirable? Or is all morality subjective?
5. Do you believe that any moral actions, or standards, should be universalizable?
6. Do women and men approach moral dilemmas differently? (pp. 41-52)

#### *A Critique of Nash's Framework*

In all fairness, Nash's framework was not intended to analyze moral education traditions. Its original intent was to consider the challenges instructors face in teaching ethics. Considering this stated purpose, the framework exposes three areas that may cause disagreements amongst moral educators and teachers of ethics—differences in background beliefs, moral character, and definitions of moral principles. Such an analysis offers opportunity for scholarly discourse and fine tuning one's established beliefs.

Nash explores the philosophical questions of morality within his language of background beliefs, which is the language on which I chose to concentrate due to its likeness to the concept of presuppositions. Nash highlights the underlying assumptions about moral authority, the nature of moral people, the objectivity or subjectivity of

morality, and the universalizability of morality. Nash is the only theorist who contemplates whether there is a difference in the way men and women approach moral dilemmas. This is reminiscent of Gilligan and Noddings' alternative theory to Kohlberg (Johnson, 2002). So Nash allows for exposing underlying beliefs in respect to identifying concepts of morality. Nash offers an exhaustive list of "isms" on how people identify their moral philosophy, which could prove overwhelming. Since Nash's framework was not intended to analyze moral education traditions, it was found unsuited for this study.

### *Kieran Egan's Presuppositions*

Egan (1978) presented four presuppositions that influence curriculum decision-making. Egan's proposed presuppositions were presented in dichotomous or trichotomous forms and were not intended to represent an absolute value of each presupposition but allowed rather for the qualities to rest on a continuum. His first presupposition reflects on human nature, and asks the question, "Are people innately good or bad?" Here, Egan wonders, if left to their own devices, are people naturally inclined to good or bad? Depending on the answer, curriculum and instruction would be driven to a child-centered (people are good) or teacher-directed (people are bad) philosophy.

Egan's next presupposition looked at whether culture existed "without" or "within." If culture is "without," then culture is considered to be composed of objects such as books, pictures, and performances, the arts, and attitudes about these cultural objects. Education becomes the process of familiarizing children with those cultural objects and instilling an understanding of their value as defined by society's standards. On the other hand, if culture is "within," then culture is viewed as a set of experiences, and the items

in a particular culture derive their meaning and importance through each individual's interpretation. Thus, Egan claims that one who views culture from without will speak of one culture, whereas one who views culture from within will speak of many cultures.

Egan's third presupposition looks at the time orientation of consciousness—whether one attaches most value to the past, present, or future. This time orientation explains one's view in relation to history. For example, if one values an orientation to the past, one accepts that history explains our present day situations. If the present is of greater value, then the importance is placed on understanding today and the current issues at hand. Finally, if one values the future, then importance is placed on planning for what is to come and considers whether education's task is one of process vs. product and problem solving vs. set answers.

Finally, Egan inquires concerning where one attaches their center of value. He identifies three possibilities: body, mind, and soul. If the body is the center of value, then one acknowledges sensation, pleasure, and self-gratification as prominent. If the mind is the center of value, then one attaches meaning to ideas and exercises of the mind. If the soul is the center of value, then one attaches great worth to the elements of life that inspire awe and speak to the mystery of existence.

### *A Critique of Egan's Framework*

As in the case of Nash, Egan's presuppositions were not intended to analyze moral education traditions. Egan merely intended to demonstrate how an understanding and acknowledgement of one's presuppositions drive curriculum choice. Throughout his work, Egan admits that the presuppositions are not in any particular order, are not an exhaustive list, and may overlap among the others. Further, while he mentions that some

may be more influential than others, he does not identify which may hold more significance regarding curriculum issues. He merely challenges educators to acknowledge the possibility that underlying presuppositions often influence curriculum decisions and account for differences in curricular schools of thought.

My initial experience with Egan's presuppositions sparked enough interest to begin applying it to my analysis of moral education traditions. However, the four identified presuppositions proved limited to my study since there was not a component that considered the nature of society. Egan's presuppositions inspired development of a new framework which would incorporate the idea of presuppositions but would ultimately encompass more of the issues related to moral education—issues regarding people, society, the time orientation of tradition, the character of moral action, and one's center of value or source of moral authority. While Egan's framework was itself insufficient, it served as the springboard for this study.

### Synthesis of the Existing Frameworks

Various elements were common across the existing frameworks and affirmed the development of a new analytic framework. Those common elements included the nature of morality (i. e., content or process), the definition of morality (i. e., defined by the social group or individual), the relationship between morality and action, the role of principle and reason, and the characterization of moral behavior. The descriptions differed from framework to framework, but the underlying concepts had enough resemblances to justify their connection to the newly developed framework.

Questions about morality require an analysis of underlying beliefs and presuppositions, so the basis for proceeding with this manner of framework offers an analytic frame of reference with which to continue my study.

Each framework has attempted to disclose certain aspects of morality, and in so doing, expose the underlying assumptions or philosophical questions inherent in a study of this nature. What elements are necessary to conduct a complete analysis of the nature of morality or the underlying assumptions of a moral education tradition? The preceding review revealed a number of common questions posed by the analytic frameworks (see Table 1). Each considered the definition of morality or at the very least, the actions that constituted a moral person. Chazan, Nucci, and Nash considered the role of reason regarding ethical behavior. Nash and Egan argued that people attach authority to either an external or internal source. Frankena and Elias implied a conception of presuppositions about people when they applied the rationale for defining a moral person with either a philosophical or theological basis. Chazan, Nucci and Nash questioned the universality or context specific nature of morality. Finally, Chazan and Nucci pondered whether teaching morality was about content or process. The similarities abound across the existing analytic frameworks, and in fact, when the next chapter presents the new analytic framework, these common elements will reappear.

However, none considered the nature of the society and its role in the definition, construction, and instruction of morality. Chazan approached this topic when he questioned whether morality is individual or social, but that is as far as he ventured. All of the frameworks fell short of analyzing morality within the social context. Nucci alluded to the need to reflect upon social structure, but not in respect for defining moral

issues. Contemplating the nature of people alone does not account for the nature of the society in which people live, work, and participate. Morality must be defined within the context of social groups. This is where the shortfall of the existing frameworks becomes apparent and why they are not sufficient for my proposed study. My new framework incorporates many of the common elements necessary for an analysis of moral education traditions and then it magnifies the analysis by infusing the presuppositions about society and the contribution these make to issues of morality.



Table 1 Comparison of Existing Frameworks

Theorist	Definition of morality, moral behavior or moral	Role of Reason	Morality universal or context specific	Nature of People	Center of Value	Difference between men and women	Is morality social or individual?	Time orientation	Religious or distinct	Content or process
Nucci	X	X	X						X	X
Chazan	X	X	X				X			X
Elias/ Frankena	X			X						
Nash	X	X	X		X	X			X	
Egan				X	X			X		

## CHAPTER THREE: PRESENTING THE NEW ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK

### Introduction

Two years ago, Dr. Boote and I initiated a review of moral education traditions using Egan's (1978) concept of presuppositions. The initial attempt yielded interesting results and encouraged us to proceed with a more thorough analysis (Boote, et al., 2002). However, Egan's taxonomy proved to be inadequate for the task. Egan detailed only four presuppositions—the nature of people, the location of culture, the orientation of consciousness, and the center of value. This composition proved to be too narrow for our purposes. It did not identify many of the components we believed were necessary for an analysis of moral education. Specifically, we believed that the nature of people, society, tradition, morality in action, and source of moral authority were components crucial to a study of this nature. Thus, for two years, Dr. Boote and I worked to develop the analytic framework presented in this study.

In addition to presuppositions about people, the new analytic framework includes presuppositions about society in order to account for morality's social context. The framework also includes an additional presupposition about morality in action. This is consistent with other frameworks (e. g. Chazan, 1985; Elias, 1989), which also considered the view of a morally educated person. In addition, we adapted Egan's time orientation presupposition so that it looked particularly at the role of tradition in society, and to what time orientation of tradition one holds. Because the expectation of this study was that one's source of moral authority would drive one's underlying assumptions about

people, society, and moral action, we developed the framework in a hierarchy, with center of value, or source of moral authority, being the overarching presupposition. Presuppositions about people, society, and moral action were made subordinate to the primary center of value presupposition, with the expectation that the moral education tradition's center of value would influence the presuppositions about people, society, and morality.

This study relied on the full development of the new analytic framework. Each presupposition needed to be completely explained and sufficiently grounded in theory in order to facilitate its future use. I believe that this framework fulfills the requirements set forth for analytic moral philosophy as described by Chazan & Soltis (1973). The presuppositions ask questions that analyze concepts used in the moral sphere, specifically the concepts of good, right, moral, and values, by exposing beliefs about the nature of people and society and the place of social norms. The presuppositions also pose questions about the role of reason, autonomy, and moral decisions by considering the capacity for rational thought and the characterization of morality in action. Finally, the source of moral authority presupposition may fulfill the third component of analytic moral philosophy, which delineates the nature of the moral sphere as distinguished from religion, politics, and aesthetics. The analysis of one's center of value has the potential to situate the origin of moral authority within the context of religion (transcendent), politics (social), and aesthetics (rational or material). I offer the exposition of the analytic framework in hopes that I have accomplished a thorough explanation of each presupposition.

## Center of Value

What is one's source of moral authority? Who or what defines what is moral? Where does one find the source of "the good?" Further, what process is used to define "good?" These questions are answered by identifying one's center of value. In this study, the term "center of value" will represent the source of one's moral authority. Nash (2002) considered one's moral authority as the source of ethical beliefs and asserted that it comprised "the most fundamental assumptions that guide our perceptions about the nature of reality and what we experience as good or bad, right or wrong, important or unimportant" (p. 37 ). Charles Taylor viewed moral authority as the "moral horizons against which things take on significance for us" (as cited in Nash, 2002, p. 39). If we identify the basis for our ethical understanding, we are better able to articulate our ethical views and defend them, if necessary, to those who would question our sense of morality. Thus, for this study, one's center of value functions as the primary overarching presupposition of the analytic framework.

This framework identifies four broad categories for center of value: transcendental, intellectual/rational, material, and social. The first three categories mirror Egan's (1978) soul, mind, and body, respectively. I included an additional center of value—society—since morality occurs within the social context.

A transcendent center of value will find its source of moral authority through religion, spirituality, mysticism, nature, God or gods. If one believes in God or gods within a religious context, the moral authority is grounded in moral law, most probably in religious text and scripture. Religious tenets convey moral truths and prevail as the

authority in moral situations. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine spoke as agents of the Roman Catholic Church and expressed that a person's understanding of God's moral law was conferred through the conscience, which is an innate sense (Haldane, 1991). This innate sense was an open channel to the word of God, which is the ultimate source of moral authority. On the other hand, if one is more spiritual or perhaps feels a universal connectedness, the source of moral authority may stem from a cosmic connection or observance of natural law. M. Taylor (1991) explained that "morality has a voice within" (p. 26) and that this inner voice acts as a "moral sense" or "intuitive feeling of right and wrong" (p.25-26). M. Taylor further explained that "Rousseau frequently presents the issue of morality as that of our following a voice of nature within us" (p. 27). Shermer (discussed in Walker, 2004, p. 4) expressed a moral authority that exists "outside the human mind;" "a sense of being;" and a "human universal." These stand as examples of a transcendent center of value void of religious undertones. Still, a collective unconscious (Potkay & Allen, 1986), as described by Carl Jung, represents a connection to something larger than oneself and fits into the transcendent realm. While this center of value does not necessarily assume a religious affiliation, we expect that religious education fits into this category.

A rational center of value will find its source of moral authority in the mind. Moral authority exists through the recognition of moral principles. The capacity for moral reasoning and deliberation about these principles will be paramount. Analyzing and synthesizing ideas will be the primary moral activity. Morality will be decided upon by the rational consideration of options and the contexts within which the moral situations present themselves. Rational thought must be accompanied by the freedom to exercise

the will, which according to Kant is “nothing but practical reasoning” (1998, p. 289). O’Neill (1991) details Kant’s idea that “Moral obligation derives neither from God, nor from human authorities and communities, nor from the preferences or desires of human agents, but from reason” (p. 175). With this proclamation, Kant seems to dismiss the soul, society, and the body respectively as sources of moral authority. Moral education traditions that emphasize cognitive ability probably fit into this category.

A social center of value will find its source of moral authority in society. Social conditions are the focus and will define morality in the context of the society in which one lives. In Aristotle’s time, virtue ethics focused on pursuit of eudaimonia, or the good life. One attained the good life through living a virtuous life. The community defined morality, not through rules but through moral standards. Citizens voluntarily demonstrated moral character in striving to live a virtuous life. In early 20<sup>th</sup> century France, Durkheim argued that society was the supreme moral authority (Pickering & Lussier, 1995).

Today, various kinds of societies exist. Presently, a segment of American society exists with rigid views of morality, based on objective, prescriptive moral rules. Sometimes these moral rules are derived from Puritan ethical standards and are often legislated (e. g. sodomy laws, laws against same-sex marriage, and laws against homosexuals adopting children). Moral education traditions that look either to perpetuate current social conditions or reconstruct current social conditions will fit into this category. Depending on the society, the means to affect their moral education will vary.

Finally, a material center of value emphasizes the pursuit of sensual pleasure and the avoidance of pain. This source of good runs contrary to those who would advocate for

moderation of passions and affections and who view self-control and a calm demeanor as virtues (Kant, 1998). Several philosophical schools of thought seem to embrace a material center of value. Those include Bentham and Mill's utilitarianism (Cahn & Markie, 1998, Ch. 11), James' emphasis on bodily pleasures and relief from pain (James, 1998), and the Epicurean pleasure principle (Cahn, 2002). One such principal doctrine of Epicurus states, "It is not possible to live pleasantly without living prudently and honourably and justly, [nor again to live a life of prudence, honour, and justice] without living pleasantly" (Cahn, 2002, p. 278). Sensual gratification brings about pleasure, whether that pleasure springs from food, drink, adornment of clothes or body ornamentation, movement, or adventure (Egan, 1978). The other source of gratification is the avoidance of anything that causes pain and discomfort. Hence, avoiding punishment is a manner of bodily satisfaction. Behavior modification and methods of discipline employing rewards and punitive consequences most probably fit into this category.

### Presuppositions about People

#### *Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

The first presupposition seems to ask a simple question about human nature. While I agree with Egan (1978) in that the question about whether people are, by nature, good or bad may exist in a continuum, I expect to find that moral education traditions will have some clear distinction about the belief in human nature. Crittenden (1971) believed "...an adequate moral education cannot avoid examining theories about the nature of

man” [sic] (p. 280). This lends significance to exploring presuppositions about the nature of people. Some will believe that people are inherently good and left to their own devices, they will be prone to good actions. The literature is full of examples throughout history that support the tenet that people are inherently good. Rousseau believed that people are born good with a natural propensity for good, love, and sympathy (Verbeke, 1990). St. Augustine believed in the goodness of people because they are created in God’s image (Cahn & Markie, 1998, Ch. 5). Augustine did leave room for the premise that because people are not supremely good, as the Creator is, then they are subject to being corrupted by evil, as was demonstrated by man’s fall and the consequent Original Sin. A. S. Neill (Kohlberg, 1971), Rogers (Potkay & Allen, 1986, Ch. 7), and Mencius, a follower of Confucius (Kupperman, 1999), all claimed that people are innately good and strive for good.

On the contrary, some believe people are inherently bad, and left to their own devices, will be prone to bad actions. The psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud (Potkay & Allen, 1986, Ch. 3) rests on the principle that the inherent nature of man is bad and that people have unconscious, instinctual sexual and aggressive urges that must be repressed and controlled. Immanuel Kant (1960) claimed that people are not moral beings at all, and in fact, they are evil by nature. Contemporary anthropologists and archeologists cite examples of ancestral tribal warfare and evidence that humans are inherently violent (Walker, 2004).

Finally, others may very well espouse the *tabula rasa* theory of John Locke, which advocates that the human mind is a blank slate at birth, with no predisposition for good or bad.



Aristotle claimed that people are born neither good nor bad (Aristotle, 330 BCE/2005). This claim is substantiated in the *Nicomachean Ethics* Book II with the following quote: “For we are not called either good or bad...we do not become good or bad by nature” (Aristotle, 330BCE/2005, p. 29). The behaviorists, especially Skinner, also believed that people were born a blank slate, and that it was their interaction with the environment and the consequences of their actions that shaped their behavior and resulted in good or bad manifestations (Potkay & Allen, 1986, Ch. 5).

### *Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

The second presupposition will question one’s capacity for rational thought and then ask further whether rational thought leads to moral action. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle held to the belief that right action followed right reason (Rowe, 1991). This thought is in line with the rationalist philosophy that presupposed that people were born with the capacity for rational thought (Haldane, 1991; Verbeke, 1990). Thomas Aquinas also espoused the rationalist view, recognizing the conscience as a person’s inherent capacity for rational thought (Haldane, 1991). These philosophers acknowledged, however, that right action may not always require reason or reflection prior to action, as would be the case in an emergency situation where one would perform a right action as a result of right habits, and then contemplate after the fact that the action had right reason. The alternative view of the rationalist philosophy was held by St. Augustine, who believed that people were born with a moral sense, and through this moral sense, intuit right and wrong actions. These intuitionists believed that this moral sense, or conscience, revealed God’s law, and then through the will to do “good,” one would perform right action.

A counter idea to man's capacity for rational thought does not dispute that reason and deliberation play a part in moral judgment, but instead adds to this theory evidence from neuroscience that suggests that emotions also contribute to and in fact dominate reason (Greene & Haidt, 2002). This idea, referred to as "affective intuition," suggests that the origin of human morality is in an inherent emotional component that contributes to caring about others (Greene & Haidt, 2002). Shermer (in Walker, 2004, p. 7) expresses yet another view that "moral judgment is not calculatingly rational. It is intuitively emotional." Hedonists take the most extreme view that right action is doing right as it relates to pleasure and does not require rational deliberation at all (Rowe, 1991). This view is similar to Hume's belief that feelings move us to action and reason alone cannot do so (Schneewind, 1991).

### Presuppositions about Society and Tradition/Culture

#### *Is Society Beneficent or Hostile?*

The first presupposition about society is a descriptive one and mirrors the first presupposition about people. This presupposition will look for evidence regarding whether society instills a feeling of community and belonging or whether it instead breeds a sense of isolation and alienation. Durkheim believed that people needed to recognize that they were a part of something larger than themselves and that something was society (Pickering & Lussier, 1995). In fact, Durkheim took this thought one step further and suggested that people should love society and as the moral authority, see society as beneficent and good (Pickering & Lussier, 1995).

Others, like Rousseau, envision society as bad. Rousseau observed that when man began to live in social groups, inequities began to emerge between wealthy and poor, powerful and weak. These opposing conditions led to divisions of power and eventually slavery, such that Rousseau claimed that life in society caused human degeneration (Verbeke, 1990). Clearly, society had some characteristics that set people against each other. Even contemporary curriculum theorists such as Michael Apple, Paulo Freire, and Ivan Illich (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998) saw the conservative society as one that silenced minority voices and consequently denied them an equal opportunity in the society in which they lived. Ethnic groups of color and women have been denied opportunities to participate fully by law, denial of educational experiences needed to fully function, and racial discrimination (Banks, 1997). A society with a social structure that is repressive cannot be beneficent.

### *Should Society Be Homogeneous or Heterogeneous?*

The second presupposition is normative in nature and explores the way in which people expect society to be characterized. Do we expect a society comprised of diverse groups or do we expect and therefore strive to create a common culture? Peterson (1974) reported Durkheim's assertion that society should be homogeneous as cited by the following quotation: "...homogeneity that makes society possible" (p. 40); society has a "single collective representation from which an ideal man (and a system of education for developing this ideal) can be drawn" (p. 45); and "...diversity of persons...can only be counterproductive" (p. 45). Peterson's account described Durkheim's identification of a society by the sameness of its people. While this account denies differences within a society, Boote (2002) described Durkheim's recognition of a social pluralism, which

acknowledges differences across communities. Durkheim (1992) himself stated that each society had its own morality.<sup>1</sup>

Multiculturalists such as Banks (2002) would stand in opposition to Peterson's account of Durkheim, contending that society should be heterogeneous because "ethnic and cultural diversity enriches the nation" (p. 1). Maxine Greene (1997) viewed multiculturalism and cultural pluralism as expansions of the community with opportunities not to *divide* but to *diversify* (emphasis mine). This pluralism strengthened the community and realized a heterogeneous community envisioned without conformity (Greene, 1997).

#### *Are Social Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

The third presupposition resembles Egan's (1978) culture presupposition but breaks the question down more to the individuals in society instead of cultural objects. Therefore, I look to see whether society and social norms are defined independently of individual behaviors or whether they are ultimately created by the interdependent behaviors of individuals.

Durkheim believed that a society could not exist without a common set of morals, and he went further to say that this "common morality existed outside the individual" (Pickering & Lussier, 1995, p. 2). Durkheim considered social norms as *sui generis*, existing independently of individuals (Pickering & Lussier, 1995).

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<sup>1</sup> Writers have different interpretations of Durkheim's views on society and moral rules (e. g. Boote, 2002, Peterson, 1974 and Pickering & Lussier, 1995). It is not within the scope of this dissertation to resolve those differences, but the reader should be made aware they exist.

Durkheim's (1992) morality was a system of rules, although the rules themselves do not define moral life. Acting morally was not just acting out of duty alone, but out of respect for duty. Instead, Durkheim intertwined morality and society stating, "To act morally is to act in terms of the collective interest...the domain of the moral begins where the domain of the social begins" (Durkheim, 1961, p. xii). The collective interest, society, stood as the moral standard, and as such, embodied social norms.

An opposing view, contractarianism, considers Durkheim's *sui generis* social norms as a morality of constraint—one that is independent of a person's desires and interests, and as such, one that disregards and denies the existence of alternative moral orders (Gauthier, 1998). Gauthier (1998) details the contrasting elements of a contractarian position with the following:

The reflective capacity of rational agents leads them from the given to the agreed, from existing practices and principles requiring constraint to those that would receive each person's assent. (p. 650)

The essence of contractarian morality is such that members of society join together to act in ways that all can "reasonably and freely subscribe to as common moral standards" (Diggs, as cited in Kymlicka, 1991). This fosters a morality of mutual agreement instead of adherence to established standards. Kymlicka (1998) compares and contrasts two social contract traditions—Hobbesian and Kantian. Both see a natural equality of people, but equality in different areas. Hobbes espouses an equality of physical power, and morality is only possible insofar as this equality of nature exists. Kant espouses an equality of moral status where the social contract develops, instead of replaces, traditional notions of moral obligation (Kymlicka, 1991, p. 191). Perhaps the social contract theory,

specifically the Kantian theory, stands as an example of social norms existing as interdependent with individuals.

*What is the Time Orientation of Tradition?*

The fourth presupposition analyzes the time orientation of tradition. When we speak of tradition we refer to the customs, rituals, and habits of a particular society. We look particularly at the time orientation to understand whether the moral education tradition will attempt to perpetuate past tradition, create a present tradition, or reconstruct tradition for a better future. Giddens (1996) viewed tradition as “an orientation to the past” and as such, having a “heavy influence over the present (p. 62). But Giddens gave equal importance to tradition being about the future because “established practices are used as a way to organize future time” (p. 62). Giddens’ time orientation to tradition is more of a continuum that views tradition as a frame of reference as opposed to justification for reconstructing the past or restructuring the future. However, for this study, I examine the time orientation expecting to see whether the moral education tradition sees tradition as good or bad, and in doing so ask, “Is tradition good, suggesting a hold to the status quo or is it bad and in need of complete transformation?” (Boote, et al., 2002).

Some people speak of the ‘good ole days’ and view the past tradition as one with the most value and one that should be perpetuated. Durkheim (1992) believed that past tradition had great value for the present and saw society as a collective conscience comprised of individual consciences, past and present (also in Peterson, 1974; Pickering & Lussier, 1995). Behaviorists such as Skinner (1953 as cited in Gredler, 2001) believe that a culture must transmit its past traditions to the next generation and that it is the responsibility of education to perform this task. Educators of a perennialist philosophy

such as Mortimer Adler and Allan Bloom agree that past tradition is of the greatest value and the great books through a liberal education can accomplish this transmission of culture (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998).

However, others see the present as an opportunity to create new traditions and therefore participate in recreating current traditions from past ones. Dewey (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998) believed that culture should be both transmitted from the past and transformed for the present by educational institutions. Dewey believed that “the school must represent present life” (1997, p. 19) and since the school is an instrument of the culture, then the present tradition must be of great value.

Still others see conditions in society as problematic and symptomatic of traditions that are antiquated and obsolete if not discriminatory and in need of restructure. Throughout history, although the United States is a supposedly democratic society, theorists have revealed the inequality of society as perpetuated by tradition. In the 1930s, Counts (1997) examined the economic and social problems of the Depression Era and saw the schools as agencies of reform. In the 1970s, Paulo Freire (1997) accused the social system as repressive to minority populations and challenged society to engage in dialogue with all members; and recently, Jonathan Kozol (1991) laid bare the “savage inequalities” throughout societies in America. These inequities in society call for a restructuring of the traditions and insist on changes.

## Presuppositions about Morality in Action

With the proposed presupposition, I hope to answer the question about what defines morality in each moral education tradition. Is it an outward expression or act or is it enough to know or intend to do a moral act that defines a moral person? John Mill's utilitarianism states that an act is good if it has good consequences (Craig, 2002; Schneewind, 1991), so following this progression of thought, a moral action would be moral if it had good consequences. St. Augustine considered that a good act was measured by motive behind the act and not just the action itself (Haldane, 1991). But how is "good" defined? Must we demonstrate overt moral acts to be considered moral?

Chazan (1985) and Elias (1989) both analyzed moral education traditions looking for the same answers—defining morality and describing a moral person. The word "action" implies that one must demonstrate some act in order to be deemed moral. But some moral education traditions may not hold that same assumption, and intention, feeling, or reasoning may be the criteria from which to judge morality. Gauthier (1971) holds that the ability to perform moral acts precedes the reason (reflection) to act morally. Is a moral act "moral enough" if performed void of reason? If moral education traditions all presumably work to encourage an awareness of the consequences of one's actions (Gauthier, 1971), how does each tradition know when it has accomplished its task and brought about a morally educated person?

This question brings us to reflect upon the various learning theories and how theorists associated with each would characterize morality and subsequently explain how people learn to be moral. Three prominent learning theories are the behaviorist, cognitive, and



social cognitive. Behaviorism, specifically Skinner's operant conditioning, employs reinforcement, shaping, and rule governed strategies as methods of instruction (Gredler, 2001). Rule governed behavior would recognize moral action as that which is reinforced or acted upon due to rules or consequences of actions, because learning requires action void of reason or intention. Moral action would be an overt moral behavior. Cognitive theorist Piaget argued that cognitive ability was a prerequisite for moral deliberation because the development of thought processes leads to the capacity for logical thought, which ultimately drives action (Gredler, 2001). Piaget's ideas greatly influenced Kohlberg's cognitive developmental theory (Kohlberg, 1973), which supports that as one's cognitive ability develops, one's reasoning develops and leads to deliberate moral choices based on consideration of the issues at hand and not merely through the promise or expectation of reinforcement. The social cognitive theory of Bandura extends the cognitive learning theory by acknowledging that learning can occur without any outward performance of a skill, and this learning can be achieved through the use of modeling vicarious reinforcement, or vicarious punishment (Gredler, 2001). Thus, morality in action could be a moral understanding without an obvious moral action or intended action. This presupposition seems to be most related to an application of moral education instead of merely an analysis. Presuppositions about how people learn will not be treated separately in this analysis; nevertheless, if educators embrace a particular learning theory, this presupposition is apt to have great influence on the moral education tradition that may best be compatible with that belief and may aid in defining morality in action.

## CHAPTER FOUR: APPLICATION OF THE ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK TO TEN NOTABLE MORAL EDUCATION TRADITIONS

### Introduction

The analytic framework was initially applied to four moral education traditions—Catholic religious education (specifically the *Catechism*), values clarification (Raths, Harmin, & Simon, 1966), multicultural education (particularly the five approaches listed by Sleeter & Grant, 2003), and Skinnerian behavior modification. These four traditions were chosen due to their prevalence in schools. While the proposed analytic framework has the potential to be applied to any of the extant moral education traditions, these four were chosen with a definite rationale. The four chosen traditions assume *prima facie* to represent each of the four proposed centers of value. My study assumes that Catholic religious education will follow a transcendent center of value, values clarification a rational center of value, multicultural education a social center of value, and the seeking of pleasure/avoidance of pain aspects of behavior modification a material center of value.

My original expectation was that markedly different presuppositions would serve to differentiate each moral education tradition. I also expected to find differences in relative hierarchies of the presuppositions amongst the various moral education traditions. The most obvious difference amongst the four chosen traditions was their respective centers of value. But this was due to the deliberate attempt to represent each of the sources of moral authority. While this study assumes that the center of value in some way supercedes all the other presuppositions, it was important to avoid a potential pitfall and false assumption that *the* defining presupposition would only be the center of value. For

instance, this study assumes that the multicultural tradition has a social center of value. But the five approaches as offered by Sleeter and Grant (2003) may have very different answers to the subordinate presuppositions about people and society. Additionally, values clarification and Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory may both have a rational center of value, but some other presuppositions must differentiate since they are different moral education traditions. Thus, the decision was made to consider the approaches offered by Sleeter and Grant as separate traditions and to add Kohlberg's moral development, with a presumably rational center of value to the analysis. This adaptation to the original selection of moral education traditions offered a comparison *between* similar centers of value in addition to a comparison *amongst* different centers of value. Kohlberg's theory has been the topic of other analytic frameworks (Chazan, 1985; Elias, 1989), and as such, this addition may provide an opportunity to compare the contrasting frameworks. Finally, although character education has enjoyed resurgence in public schools, I purposely avoided analyzing this tradition. In light of the fact that the term "character education" continues to be used interchangeably with "moral education," I wanted to avoid any confusion. Thus, since it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to differentiate between "character education" as the major term and character education as *one* tradition (e. g. Lickona, 1991) under the term "moral education," I have opted to defer its analysis for another time.

The primary sources of each tradition have been analyzed and the proceeding narrative is offered to elaborate the answers to the proposed presuppositions as outlined by the analytic framework. I concede that absolute answers to some presuppositions may be difficult to justify. Where evidence is clearly stated, a definitive answer will be

proposed and defended by citing exact quotations from primary sources. Where evidence is not as obvious, I will present information that supports the proposed answer, citing interpretations of information comprising the moral education tradition's tenets. In some cases, certain presuppositions seemingly have not been addressed. On those occasions, I will draw a conclusion as to why the presuppositions have been left without comment.

### Catholic Religious Education

Catholicism is one of the oldest and largest organized religions in the world (Nucci, 2001). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reigns as the written authority of the church. It encompasses the doctrine of norms and directives from God. Its authority rests in its sources, specifically the "Sacred Scriptures, the Fathers of the Church, the liturgy, and the Church's Magisterium" (p. 11). Its traditions have been handed down from the Apostles, whose origins were the teachings of Jesus and divine revelation of the Holy Spirit. The expressed purpose of the *Catechism* is to assure unification of normative Catholic doctrine, serve as a reference text for teaching Catholic doctrine, and perpetuate traditional Catholic doctrine of faith. The content and process of morality resides in the *Catechism*. Therefore, as *the* written authority of Catholic doctrine and the "beginning point for moral education" (McClellan, 1999, p. 37), the analytic framework was applied to seek answers to the presuppositions about one's center of value, nature of people, nature of society and role of tradition, and morality in action.

### *Center of Value: Transcendent*

God is the source of truth, goodness, happiness, and life. Acts 17:26 states that “in Him we live and move and have our being.” Jesus, as God incarnate, is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and His life on Earth exemplifies the authority for performing good, moral, and just acts. The Holy Spirit works as the voice of God, or conscience, urging people toward the good which is the will of God. The Holy Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, embodies the source of all good. Individuals’ hearts and souls, which have their origin in God, are the vessels of morality and moral choice. The *Catechism* states that the law of God is written on the hearts of people by God. Knowledge of the pure and good resides in the heart, and the heart is the root of all human acts. The call to be moral “comes from God, and we hear it in our hearts” (Wadell, 1998, p. 11).

Clearly, the *Catechism* asserts that the source of moral authority is God, who is the author of truth and happiness. God placed in people a longing for the truth and goodness that only He can satisfy, and thus humankind’s journey is to return to God. God is “the first cause and final end of all things” (*Catechism*, p. 20), and according to the Nicene Creed, is the God of “all that is seen and unseen” (p. 95). There is no question of what is right or wrong as long as the soul listens to God and seeks communion with Him.

The Catholic religion celebrates the transcendent. For Catholics, everything takes its meaning from religion. “Nothing is more important than the transcendent” (Taylor, 1965, p. 46).

### *The Nature of People: Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

Contrary to the concept of Original Sin, people are born good. Much evidence of this is revealed in the *Catechism*. First and foremost, people were created in God’s image,

and as such must be holy and good since the essence of God is holy and good. While the concept of Original Sin suggests the idea that people are born bad, an alternative view offers that human nature is not bad but merely wounded and without original holiness, and as such, in need of healing. Wounded and in need of healing does not necessarily denote “bad.” The *Catechism* defines Original Sin as a state and not an act, which alludes to the nature of people as bad. But an *act* by Adam *is* what brought about the *state* of Original Sin for all. Therefore, I present an interpretation which proposes that Original Sin itself does not condemn human nature to being bad; instead the *Catechism* holds more prominent the fact that people are created in the likeness of God and are therefore born good.

Admittedly, a contradiction seems to exist, especially in light of the fact that the sacrament of Baptism is necessary to erase Original Sin. This required Baptism by water implies that Original Sin results in people being born bad, although Catholic theology would use the description “without divine grace” (Brink, personal communication, March 4, 2005). In fact, the baptism of infants is crucial because people are “born with a fallen human nature and tainted by original sin...” (*Catechism*, p. 350). Baptism is necessary for salvation; it is receipt of the gift of grace through faith. Consequently, the need for grace implies the presupposition that people are born “bad” or with a wounded nature, and therefore have a propensity to sin. Yet the *Catechism* states that “human nature has not been totally corrupted” (p. 114). Also, according to the liturgy, God blessed people in Christ so that we would be holy and blameless before Him. Therefore, while the existence of Original Sin may imply a wounded nature, this study purports that the

*Catechism* reveals stronger evidence that people are born good with a dignity that is inherent in each person.

*Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

People have the capacity for rational thought and reason because they are created in God's image. "Without this capacity, man would not be able to welcome God's revelation" (*Catechism*, p. 22). God's revelation assists individuals in understanding religious and moral truths. But the capacity for rational thought surpasses the mere understanding of moral truths. "God created man a rational being, conferring on him the dignity of a person who can initiate and control his own actions" (*Catechism*, p. 481).

Having the capacity for rational thought does not assure that people use it appropriately. In fact, the consequences of Original Sin made rational thought difficult and flawed. In addition, the capacity for rational thought does not assume freedom of thought. The *Catechism* instructs people to regulate their conduct by using their reasoning ability and freedom "in obedience to the One who has entrusted everything to him" (p. 526). But reason alone does not make moral understanding. People also need to rely on God's guidance and the revelation of the Scriptures to inform their moral understanding and choices. People have free will, but "by faith, man completely submits his intellect and his will to God" (*Catechism*, p. 44). Therefore, faith demands that people temper their freedom of thought, despite their capacity for rational thought, in order to be in compliance with God's will.

### *The Nature of Society: Beneficent or Hostile?*

A prerequisite to answering this presupposition is to define society. The *Catechism* views the family as the original society. Family life is the first community in which children learn moral values. According to the *Catechism*, “Family life is an initiation into life in society” (p. 590). In this sense, the family would be a most narrow interpretation of society, a microcosm perhaps. Another step up but still a narrow conception of society would be the Catholic Church. The Church is sanctified by Jesus, and the family is an extension of God’s love through a joining of man and woman. Therefore, the answer to the question in this context would be that society is beneficent because the Church is good and holy and God’s love is good and holy.

On the other hand, when society is interpreted broadly to encompass society in total, then society is hostile. One justification for this proposal is the progression of thought that since societies are comprised of people, and people are inclined to evil through the effects of Original Sin, then society is hostile and inclined to evil. The expectation of good will among people and the recognition of human dignity are requirements for a just society, but human beings have a “wounded” nature that prevents them from perfectly exercising these qualities. Larger society is hostile because it is unjust as manifested in the unequal social and economic conditions.

### *Should Society be Homogeneous or Heterogeneous?*

While the Catholic Church may admit that greater society should be, and in fact is, heterogeneous, the Catholic society should be homogeneous. The Church acknowledges that the differences in ethnicity and spiritual gifts from God are part of God’s plan so that we need each other. However, heterogeneity is flawed given the negative inequities that



exist and result in unequal social and economic conditions, clear examples of true disparity of human conditions. These inequities act against social justice, equality, personal dignity, and social and international peace.

Further, the Catholic Church Community recognizes the diversity of cultures and the need for possible adaptations to the liturgical celebration. However, the Church clarifies the character of diversity with the following statement:

Liturgical diversity can be a source of enrichment, but it can also provide tensions, mutual misunderstandings, and even schisms. In this matter it is clear that diversity must not damage unity. It must express only fidelity to the common faith, to the sacramental signs that the Church has received from Christ, and to the hierarchical communion. Cultural adaptation also requires a conversion of the heart and even, where necessary, a breaking with ancestral customs incompatible with the Catholic faith. (*Catechism*, p. 340, quoted from John Paul II *Vicesimus quintus annus*, 16)

With this statement, the *Catechism* asserts a required homogeneity of Catholic society. So, if society is defined in its narrowest terms as the Catholic Church, especially where the liturgy is involved, then society should be homogeneous. However, it must be noted that the Catholic Church recognizes and celebrates the diversity of cultures.

#### *Are Societal Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

Given the basic tenet that all people are entitled to respect based on their inherent human rights and dignity, the *Catechism* admits the need to assure that these basic rights are fulfilled. The *Catechism's* response to this assurance is that “every human community needs an authority to govern it” (p. 515), and by this governing, assure that each member of society enjoy these rights. The *Catechism* states further that

[h]uman society can be neither well-ordered nor prosperous unless it has some people invested with legitimate authority to preserve its institutions and to devote themselves as far as is necessary to work and care for the good of all. (p. 515)

The authority comes from God, and those charged with exercising authority are to be respected by the community at large.

The *Catechism* instructs that these inherent human rights are “prior to society and must be recognized by it” (p.521). This statement stands as evidence that social norms are independent of individual behavior and have been established outside of the group. The social norms that dictate moral behavior find their origin in the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments. They have been the established law since before the coming of Jesus Christ, and then were validated by Jesus when He was being challenged by the Jewish Religious leaders. The *Catechism* states that the

deposit of Christian moral teaching has been handed on, a deposit composed of a characteristic body of rules, commandments, and virtues proceeding from faith in Christ and animated by charity. Alongside the Creed and the Our Father, the basis for this catechesis has traditionally been the Decalogue which sets out the principles of moral life valid for all men. (p. 546)

When the Decalogue is heeded, an atmosphere for the common good emerges. This common good assumes respect for all, requires the social well-being and development of the group, and requires peace—the establishment of security for society’s members. Regardless of individual beliefs and behaviors, the Ten Commandments remain the primary source of social norms.

### *Time Orientation: Past, Present, or Future?*

The Catholic Church honors tradition and considers its high purpose the transmission of her doctrine, life, and worship to every generation. The *Catechism* aims to perpetuate Catholic doctrine and in doing so maintain the valued traditions of the past. These traditions are preserved through fulfillment of the sacraments, the teachings of the Decalogue (Old Covenant), the teachings of the Gospels (New Covenant), and the handing down of the disciples' stories depicting their walk with Jesus. Each Sunday Mass is a celebration of the Eucharist. The celebration commemorates the first Eucharist as celebrated by Jesus and his twelve disciples, so the past tradition is recreated and memorialized through each real re-enactment of the saving death of Christ.

### *Morality in Action*

When interpreting scripture in the moral sense, “the events reported in Scripture ought to lead us to act justly” (*Catechism*, p. 39). Human dignity implies the presence of moral rightness. Thus, moral action is acting justly and in fact, people are obligated to act rightly and justly. But moral actions are evaluated in a much greater context than mere actions themselves. The *Catechism* states that human acts are deliberately chosen in light of one's conscience, and as such can be evaluated as either good or evil. This evaluation is based upon three elements: 1) the object, or “the good toward which the will deliberately directs itself” (p. 485); 2) the intention of the acting subject, which considers the purpose or end goal of the act; and 3) the circumstances or consequences which contribute to the goodness or evil of the act. Circumstances can increase or decrease both the goodness and evil of an action and increase or decrease personal responsibility of the actor.

The object involves one's will to act given the capacity for free choice. One's conscience helps in recognizing the moral quality of an act performed either in the past, in the present, or the future. Thus, deliberate choice and conscience have an impact on an individual's moral actions. But the *Catechism* also recognizes the contributions that emotions make in moral actions. Emotions are neither good nor bad, but instead are interpreted in light of their resulting actions. Given the impact of emotions on moral actions, the "passions must be governed by reason" (*Catechism*, p. 488). The perfect moral good is the good action that is moved by reason and emotion. Moral actions involve the interplay of free will, reason, emotion, intention, and conscience, but ultimately require acting within the will of God.

### *Summary*

Catholic religious education rests on past tradition. The presuppositions about the nature of people and society arise from the transcendent view that God is the source of *all* that is good. Thus, people are good inasmuch as they conform to the image of God and act within the confines of His will. Society is defined within the context of the church community, and it is through this association that society attains its beneficent character. Moral action exemplifies acting justly and rightly in accordance to God's will. Catholic education's version of a moral person requires a learning theory that allows for modeling and emulating a person of righteous character. To some degree, even though the Catholic tradition acknowledges capacity for rational thought, right action ultimately conforms to the will of God and is encouraged and reinforced by the tenets of the church, specifically the rewards of Heaven and the tortures of Hell. The behavioral learning theory or the social cognitive theory could be used in the instruction of a moral person.

## Five Approaches to Multicultural Education

Multicultural Education is a term often associated with race and ethnic studies only. But actually Multicultural education is the popular term “educators use increasingly to describe educational policies and practices that recognize, accept, and affirm human differences and similarities related to gender, race, disability, class, and (increasingly) sexuality” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 156). This description opens a multitude of interpretations about what populations in the school community deserve attention and expands the definition of diversity considerably. In an effort to synthesize the various areas of multicultural education, Sleeter and Grant conducted a review of the educational literature. Their resulting work, *Making Choices for Multicultural Education: Five Approaches to Race, Class, and Gender*, is the culmination of this review of the literature that addresses race, culture, language, gender, social class, and disability. This piece has organized the many varied definitions and approaches to multicultural education into five distinct approaches that share some commonalities but also differ in some fundamental ways. The authors recognized that people’s ideologies, backgrounds, visions of society, and assumptions about learning affect definitions of multicultural education and methods of achieving it. This recognition validates my study’s emphasis on analyzing presuppositions. This text will serve as the primary source for this moral education tradition.

Since this book offered five distinct approaches to multicultural education, it was the natural choice for applying the analytic framework for this tradition. However, the five approaches will be treated as five separate multicultural education traditions to allow for

the variation in the approaches and to determine whether traditions that share a common center of value are differentiated by the subordinate presuppositions about people, society, tradition, and moral action. For the purpose of this study, I propose that each of the approaches holds society as its source of moral authority, although the look of their respective societies may be quite distinct.

The analytic framework will be applied to the following five approaches: 1) Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different, 2) Human Relations, 3) Single-Group Studies, 4) Multicultural Education, and 5) Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist. After each approach is analyzed, this study will offer a proposed synthesis of the five approaches.

#### Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different Approach

This approach rests on the premise that a bank of knowledge and skills is required to function and succeed in American society. It also attests to the fact that the U. S. culture is reasonably good and just as it exists. This assimilationist philosophy dominated American education early on, and in particular, represented early multicultural education from 1900-1960 (Banks, 2001). Educators consider their main goal as assisting students who are culturally different or from exceptional populations in acquiring the necessary education in order to assimilate into American culture. Schools can build bridges to facilitate student learning, but ultimately the goal is to provide the experiences necessary for minority cultures to succeed in the dominant culture.

### *Center of Value: Social*

Society, particularly mainstream society, recognizes skills, knowledge, and values that are necessary to be successful in the mainstream culture. These skills contribute to the betterment of society and the individual. The skills valued by society include “a high level of literacy, a respect for time schedules, competitive skills, an ability to act independently of other people, certain interpersonal skills, skills in the use of standard English, and so forth” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 37). Society sets the standards, and anyone who hopes to function and succeed must meet these standards. Those who comply with the standards are deemed normal and reap society’s rewards in the form of increased income, upward mobility, improved social status, and essentially a piece of the American pie.

### *The Nature of People: Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

The multicultural educators in this approach do not concern themselves with contemplating the inherent nature of people. People are neither good nor bad, but people who do not fit into the “normal” of society—“normal” defined as resembling the mainstream populace—are viewed as either deficient or different. They are deficient inasmuch as they have mental, physical, or cultural deficiencies that prevent them from fully developing the skills and knowledge necessary for mainstream culture. The deficiency orientation is illustrated by low socioeconomic status, lower intellectual capacity, and language deficiencies, as well as physical, mental, and sensory impairments. The difference orientation views differences not as deficiencies to be remediated but as bases with which to build bridges to new learning. Educators should

understand these differences and incorporate instructional strategies and curriculum that will build upon students' current knowledge.

*Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

This presupposition is not explicitly addressed. If the curriculum content and instructional strategies are an indication, though, then perhaps a conclusion can be made that people have an eventual capacity for rational thought, but only after basic skills and knowledge are acquired (Sleeter, personal communication, Jan. 2005). The approach explains that exceptional and culturally different people are culturally disadvantaged or disabled, and because of these disadvantages, require education to fill knowledge gaps. This is accomplished by teaching basic skills, school skills, and thinking skills mostly by using repetitive drill sessions to reinforce content. These are not skills associated with the ability to think rationally, but are necessary building blocks toward the ability for critical thought.

*The Nature of Society: Beneficent or Hostile?*

Society is good and this approach advocates maintenance of the social status quo. "Proponents of this approach believe that American society is essentially fine the way it currently exists" (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 36). Those from diverse populations are expected to obtain the necessary skills to assimilate into the American mainstream culture.

*Should Society be Homogeneous or Heterogeneous?*

If advocates of this approach see a primary goal to be assimilation of those exceptional or culturally different into the mainstream culture, then the goal of this



approach conveys the expectation that society should be homogeneous. The approach strives to “make everyone like White middle-class people” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 64). The answer to this presupposition happens to also be the point of criticism by opponents. The crux of the criticism is that assimilation into the major culture results in elimination of minority cultures. The assimilation is accomplished through education in “one shared body of knowledge, which happens to be based primarily on the experience of White, middle-class males...” (p. 66).

#### *Are Societal Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

Social norms are independent of individual behavior, especially in light of the fact that these norms are established by White middle-class American males. Values held by other cultures go unrecognized and do not contribute to the established social norms. Diverse cultures may attempt to retain their cultural identities, but they must ultimately conform to the dominant culture if they desire to “fit in.”

#### *Time Orientation: Past, Present, or Future?*

The time orientation of tradition is the past as evidenced by the reliance on the standard curriculum. This standard curriculum is comprised of the one shared body of knowledge housing the skills necessary for successful integration into the mainstream American society.

#### *Morality in Action*

If the goal for this approach is to have diverse populations fit in to mainstream America, then the epitome of moral action would be conformity to the established social norms. This could be manifested through spoken and written literacy in English,

promptness, hard work, and following the rules of society. Compliance to social norms promises rewards: improved income, upward mobility, better employment, and improved social class. Minorities considered these the gateway to a better life and a means to achieve a “piece of the America pie.”

### *Summary*

Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different emphasizes assimilation into mainstream American culture. This approach values the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in mainstream society. Society is the authority, and as such, sets the standards for moral behavior. This approach rewards conformity to social norms and promotes perpetuation of the status quo: homogeneous, association with established practices, and acquisition of necessary skills.

### Human Relations Approach

The second multicultural approach is characterized by its emphasis on love, respect, and communication, and works to foster a cooperative environment. It has its roots in general psychology and social psychological theory. This approach emerged during World War II and flourished throughout the Civil Rights Era and well into the 1970s. Much of the impetus for this approach derived initially from the Holocaust. Other historical events that triggered the rise in human relations included the Japanese internment, the desegregation of public schools, migration of people of color and the poor to other areas of the country seeking employment, and P.L. 94-142 which focused on

educating handicapped students in the least restrictive environment. Further historical events throughout the next three decades included the realization of sexual harassment, the continued racial hostility, and the aggravated racial tension immediately after September 11, 2001, when American patriotism soared as did suspicion of anyone of Middle Eastern culture. Clearly, in light of the omnipresent tensions, diversity needs to be recognized as the focus becomes teaching diverse groups to get along, respect each other, and strive for a reduction of prejudice and stereotyping.

#### *Center of Value: Social*

Society deems the values of respect, cooperation, acceptance, love, and positive communication as paramount. Society also values unity and tolerance and promotes a cooperative spirit. Human relationships are most important and social members are encouraged to accept differences and get along with each other.

#### *The Nature of People: Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

The Human Relations Approach offered no obvious statements about the nature of people. However, if people are worthy of respect and love, then an interpretation of this is that people are good. They have inherent value as human beings and have the potential to share their propensity for good with their fellow social members. The term “humanness” is used in this approach, and people are encouraged to feel good about themselves.

#### *Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

The strategies employed by this approach imply that people *are* capable of rational thought. Human Relations proponents advocate the cognitive-developmental approach

that stresses that people engage in categorizing to make sense of their environment, and that they are constantly assimilating new information or accommodating existing knowledge. The importance of this cognitive activity is demonstrated by the following: “The mind has a need to relate, organize, and simplify phenomena in order for experiences to make sense” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 79). Thus, the ability to categorize and organize requires the capacity for rational thought. Another activity that demonstrates the presence of rational thought is the engagement of “social skills training,” which is a popular approach used in building moral behavior. This strategy requires the ability to recognize and practice appropriate behaviors and interpret feedback from peers. Finally, at the core of the Human Relations Approach is its challenge to stereotypes. These activities involve higher order thinking processes and suggest the capacity for rational thought is expected.

#### *The Nature of Society: Beneficent or Hostile?*

The Human Relations Approach accepts the status quo for society and in that acceptance must view it as beneficent. The approach discusses acceptance of diverse populations but does not discuss the inequalities or injustices that evolve from these differences. Stereotyping unfortunately exists as illustrated by the gender role expectation of women being housekeepers and especially women of color fulfilling these roles. Admittedly, the Human Relations Approach works to alleviate these kinds of stereotyping. Despite the efforts, proponents still consider mainstream society as “good” and one in which all people can flourish.

### *Should Society be Homogeneous or Heterogeneous?*

Although the status quo of society is accepted, this approach expects that society should be heterogeneous. While this may seem to be a contradiction, it is not. The first approach emphasized changing its diverse members to be like the mainstream citizen, but the Human Relations Approach asks no such thing. In fact, just the opposite is encouraged. The Human Relations Approach promotes “unity, tolerance, and acceptance within the existing social structure” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 80). This statement seems to imply that society can be unified without being homogeneous in composition. Differences *can* and *should* exist and members can learn to cooperate despite these differences. Members can retain their cultural, social, and racial distinctions and still be participating members of the status quo. This approach takes on the task of improving relations among diverse populations by promoting positive self-concepts and discouraging stereotyping.

### *Are Social Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

The acceptance of the status quo for society suggests that established social norms have value. No attempt or expectation of changing the status quo is mentioned. People are encouraged to cooperate within the existing social structure rather than change the status quo. This implies that an existing idea of “getting along” has been defined by the dominant society. Members of marginalized groups do not participate in defining what behaviors constitute “getting along.” The social norms are clearly independent of individual behaviors.

### *Time Orientation of Tradition: Past, Present, or Future?*

The Human Relations Approach pinpoints the current relationships of society's members. The expectation remains that by increasing cooperation, respect, and communication, intergroup relationships will improve. The approach does not consider conditions of the past or changes for the future. Society as it exists remains unchanged, but interpersonal relationships are improved to make present conditions peaceful. Therefore, the time orientation seems to be present focused.

### *Morality in Action*

Actions that demonstrate respect, love, cooperation, positive communication, tolerance, acceptance, and justice would be characteristic of morality in action. This approach to multicultural education concurs with the notion that "with acquaintance and understanding, respect may follow" (Banks, 2002, p. 1). One might expect that actions such as these would lead citizens to strive for social equality, but as has been discussed, social inequalities still exist and are not addressed or recognized as problems in society.

### *Summary*

The Human Relations approach promotes unity, cooperation, acceptance, tolerance, and recognition of diversity. The status quo of society is still accepted, but people are encouraged to celebrate diversity, which contributes to a heterogeneous population. The emphasis becomes getting along with those who are different and promoting a cooperative and unifying spirit despite diversity.

## Single-Group Studies Approach

The Single-Group Studies Approach originated during the Civil Rights Era and has a political as well as educational perspective. African-Americans led the way, and all other ethnic groups followed, claiming rights to a separate ethnic identity (Banks, 2001). As the name implies, this approach focuses on one particular group. Since many specific groups can be identified, this approach covers a wide range of group studies (i. e. Women's Studies, Asians, African-Americans, etc.). The overall goal of this approach is "to promote social equality for and to recognize the group being studied" (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 114). This approach intends to educate others about the group being studied and the discrimination the group has historically endured. Single-Group Studies proponents are particularly concerned with the reasons why marginalized groups do not share equally in social, political, and economic resources. Units of study, such as Black History Month, are often the avenues to education. The Single-Group Studies supporters oppose the "melting pot" concept of social integration and instead insist that the United States is comprised of a multitude of diverse cultures that should not be assimilated. Through education, this approach hopes to empower members of oppressed groups and motivate them to work for social change. This approach offers definite contrasts to the two preceding approaches.

### *Center of Value: Society*

Greater Society stands as the source of moral authority, but this authority is viewed as suspect with members of this approach. Education perpetuates the socio-political status quo and is not politically neutral but acts as an agent for socializing people into the

“American way of life” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 117). Socialization and social control are the tasks of public schools. The oppressed groups form collective identities of their own, and as such, quite possibly could hold to a moral authority that represents this smaller sub-cultural community (Sleeter, personal communication, January 2005).

*The Nature of People: Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

Individuals derive their identities from association with their socio-cultural communities; therefore, the nature of individual people may very well be irrelevant to members of this approach, or the goodness of people is derived from their group. People have value and worth, but the primary focus is the group and not the individuals that comprise the group. Empowerment comes from a collective voice, so individuality and its respective goodness or badness is irrelevant.

*Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

Within the Single-Group Studies Approach, students are viewed as “willing and eager to learn, capable of making decisions, and committed to reflection about his or her learning” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 115). The approach encourages a critical analysis of one’s behavior and one’s place in society and further encourages analysis, evaluation, and awareness of culture. Reflection, critical analysis, evaluation, and decision-making all require the capacity for rational thought.

*The Nature of Society: Beneficent or Hostile?*

The predominantly monolingual, monocultural WASP culture reigns in the face of obvious cultural pluralism, and while diversity is acknowledged as an existing characteristic of society, the place of diverse cultures is virtually ignored in the context of



social, political, and economic equality. This dominant society is seen as hostile because it strives to indoctrinate citizens into the WASP culture through schooling, which in itself is viewed as a means of social control and political advocacy of social policy. But even more compelling an argument comes from the obvious inequity of power and resources. Ethnic groups of color and women have been denied opportunities to fully participate by law, the denial of educational experiences necessary to fully function, and through racial discrimination (Banks, 1997). While the dominant members of society view it as open and fair (benevolent), the oppressed groups which do not share an equal distribution of socio-political power and resources view society as closed and unfair (hostile).

*Should Society be Homogeneous or Heterogeneous?*

The Single-Group Studies Approach celebrates diversity and uniqueness, but it does so with the interest of advocating a particular group. Society should be heterogeneous, and this fact is acknowledged. However, when so many individual groups are competing for attention in the curriculum and advocating for their particular group, the approach may seem to be disjointed, and critics use this as an opportunity to discredit the approach. Some opponents claim that the political agenda of the Single-Group Studies Approach and its study of oppression may aggravate relations between diverse groups, breeding hostility and resentment instead of pride and celebration.

*Are Social Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

Social norms are independent of the individual and the group and are established by the dominant White culture. The norms stand as evidence that despite the cultural pluralism and acknowledgement of racial, ethnic, and religious differences that create our

cultural heterogeneity, “Our value judgments, our value system, and our social consciousness remains predominantly White Anglo-Saxon Protestant—that is, representative of the monolingual and monocultural predominant society” (Guerra, 1973, p. 27-28, cited in Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 116).

Schools take the responsibility for teaching the values consistent with the dominant social culture and dismissive of cultural pluralism.

#### *Time Orientation of Tradition: Past, Present, or Future?*

The Single-Group Studies Approach is “aimed toward social change” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 116). The approach disapproves of the way schools are used as agents of social control and it attacks the “knowledge normally taught in schools” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 116). In fact, according to Banks (2002), “many school, college, and university practices related to race and ethnicity are harmful to students and reinforce many of the ethnic stereotypes and discriminatory practices in U. S. Society” (p. 1). The past and present situations are unacceptable and, therefore, the approach has a future orientation that would focus on improving conditions for the particular ethnic groups.

#### *Morality in Action*

Moral actions are those that demonstrate tolerance, acceptance, and justice, but are also actions that move toward equality for all. Unfortunately, even though the approach takes moral action one step further than the Human Relations Approach, it falls short in effecting change in the status quo curriculum in the eyes of multicultural educators from the Social Reconstructionist philosophy. While the Single-Group Studies approach accomplishes the task of highlighting diverse groups and insisting on their inclusion in

the general curriculum, the approach itself makes little to no gains in reforming the regular mainstream curriculum (Sleeter & Grant, 2003). Unless the mainstream curriculum is reformed, attitudes toward social justice will not be affected.

### *Summary*

The Single-Group Studies approach promotes education and recognition of one particular minority group. The approach believes that through education, members of marginalized groups can be empowered and motivated to work toward social change. People gain identity and acceptance through their association with the group.

## Multicultural Education Approach

The Multicultural Education Approach to multicultural education, like the other approaches, had its origin in the 1960s and 1970s in the midst of the Civil Rights Era, the women's movement, and laws advocating an appropriate education for the handicapped and speakers of other languages.

Sleeter and Grant admit that it may be confusing to have a Multicultural Education Approach to multicultural education, but they offer a clarification to distinguish the overarching term from the specific approach. Upon reviewing the goals of "multicultural education" in the context of it being associated with educational policies and practices that strive to promote tolerance, acceptance, and affirmation of diversity, one can glean an understanding of the term as a moral education tradition.

The goals include the following, according to Sleeter and Grant (2003):

1. promoting the strength and value of cultural diversity
2. promoting human rights and respect for those who are different from oneself.
3. promoting alternative life choices for people.
4. promoting social justice and equal opportunity for all people.
5. promoting equity in the distribution of power among groups.

(p. 156)

Each of the approaches has one or more of these goals inherent in them. Sleeter and Grant assert that the Multicultural Education Approach addresses all five. Briefly stated, the ideology of this approach maintains that cultural diversity should be recognized, the contribution of women to United States history should be included in the curriculum, the poor and handicapped need to become more visible, and the country should strive for cultural pluralism and equal opportunity. A more in depth examination of the goals of the big term “multicultural education” will be offered in the synthesis section. For now, the narrative proceeds with application of the analytic framework.

#### *Center of Value: Society*

The measure of moral authority in a society from the Multicultural Education perspective would include the value of diversity, the importance of human rights, equal opportunity, and social justice. In other words the source of the good would be a society that allows diversity in whatever form it takes, tolerates alternative lifestyles, and supports equal opportunity and social justice. The society is comprised of individuals who can simultaneously participate in all aspects of society without surrendering their

unique identities. This approach would concede, however, that the dominant society ultimately determines the standards for morality.

*The Nature of People: Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

This approach views people collectively as a heterogeneous group of people who happen to co-exist within a society. There are no direct statements about the nature of people. This can imply that the nature of individuals is either irrelevant or not as important in the grand scheme of society as the nature of the collective group. It could also equally assume that people are good based on their inherent dignity and the approach's optimistic view of society.

*Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

If people are encouraged to value diversity and critically analyze social conditions in order to promote improved conditions for all, then they must be capable of rational thought. Proponents of this approach see that "...the student is an innately curious individual, capable of learning complex material and performing at a high skill level" (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 156). Teachers and students alike must hold high expectations for learning.

*Nature of Society: Beneficent or Hostile?*

Presuppositions about society were most strongly asserted, more so than presuppositions about people. Society could be viewed as hostile as illustrated by the following statement:

This approach does not advocate that the world is fine as it is and that children should learn about it more. Rather this approach is borne of a concern that society as it exists

is unfair and detrimental to many people. Society does not afford equal opportunity for all. (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 168)

There is no question that a society that holds any members back from fully participating and reaping the opportunities is viewed as hostile. But the word “hostile” is a strong word, and a better representation could be that society has the potential to be better, as proponents of this approach hold to an optimistic view of society’s core values (Sleeter, personal communication, Jan. 2005). After all, the Multicultural Education Approach states goals of equality and freedom for all. There is a definite inconsistency between society’s reality and its ideal view.

#### *Should Society be Homogeneous or Heterogeneous?*

The United States is comprised of micro-cultures and sub-cultures interspersed among the dominant culture. These cultures have the right to exist and in fact should co-exist. Cultural diversity has strength and value and stands as the underlying purpose of promoting multicultural education. Society should be heterogeneous and this heterogeneity can begin with the schools as “classrooms should be ‘multilingual, multicultural, multimodal, and multidimensional’” (p. 164 as cited by Sizemore, 1979, p. 348).

#### *Are Social Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

While this approach would promote an ideal answer to this presupposition, a more forthright evaluation would be that in the context of today’s American society, social norms are still independent of individual behavior. An assimilation ideology exists, even in the face of obvious cultural pluralism, and states that the “major culture not only

should prevail, but will prevail” (p. 165). Assimilation ideology supports one language, one tradition, one history, one people. Social norms as established by the dominant culture would take precedence. If the advocates for a Multicultural Education realized their vision, social norms would be interdependent, and diverse populations would retain the uniqueness while at the same time transform into a modified version. New representations of culture might emerge from the joining of the dominant and minority cultures, and social norms could emerge from this cooperative spirit.

#### *Time Orientation of Tradition: Past, Present, or Future?*

The past and present represent oppression, exclusion, and intolerance. There is still hope for the future. Society must learn to appreciate and value diversity. The place to start this change in thought and sentiment is the school. Therefore, “the Multicultural Education Approach seeks to reform the entire process of schooling for all children” (p. 172) starting with curriculum reform. This is the first approach that suggests a reform to current curriculum instead of either an acceptance of the status quo or an additional curriculum that celebrates or highlights cultural diversity.

#### *Morality in Action*

The key actions that demonstrate morality are appreciation, cooperation, and tolerance. The Multicultural Education Approach calls for neither blind acceptance of the status quo nor the elimination of it. Instead, the approach advocates “maintenance of diversity, respect for differences, and the right to participate actively in all aspects of society without having to give up one’s unique identity” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 159). A moral person would have the social and civic skills, attitudes and knowledge that

would facilitate functioning within the ethnic culture, the mainstream culture, and across other ethnic cultures. Social inequalities exist, and civic action is necessary in order to improve social conditions (Banks, 2002).

### *Summary*

The Multicultural Education approach highlights goals that emphasize tolerance, acceptance, affirming diversity, social justice, equal opportunity, and equitable distribution of power. Human rights must be the focus, and society must recognize the contribution of all ethnic and minority groups.

### Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist

This final approach concentrates more fully on issues of oppression and social structure inequality than the other four approaches. It specifically targets race, social class, gender, and disability populations and calls for a complete reconstruction of society. Reconstructionism is a “philosophical orientation of education” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 195) that critically analyzes contemporary culture. The social reconstructionist approach has many names and corresponding theorists. Freire’s political literacy and conscientization, Gordon’s emancipatory pedagogy, Shor’s critical teaching, and Giroux’s transformational education are all philosophical forms of social reconstructionism. Race, class, and gender are all treated together instead of splintering these forms of diversity, and the drive is toward social change. The social reconstructionists challenge social stratification based on diversity.



Of all the approaches, this one is most political and seen by critics as most radical. The expression of presuppositions is obvious and is verified with forceful evidence.

*Center of Value: Social*

Society is the source of moral authority but conflicting opinions exist concerning how standards should be established and how power is distributed. American society boasts about opportunities afforded across multiple ethnicities, cultures, languages, genders, social classes, and abilities, but in reality, many of these diverse groups still do not enjoy this promise. This approach shares this common critique of mainstream society with the Single Group Studies Approach. The major difference between the approaches is the extent to which each views oppression. This approach emphasizes the multiple forms of oppression as opposed to the narrow view taken by the Single-Group Studies Approach.

*The Nature of People: Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

Whether people are inherently good or bad is irrelevant. The complexion of society is what is most important. Society is comprised of individuals, so a natural conclusion might be that hostile societies are founded by hostile people, and the logical intervention would be to build humanity and civility in order to improve social conditions. But even if people are inherently good, social circumstances are greater than they are, and they may have little to no influence over changing those conditions. The primary focus of the social reconstruction approach is society and not the “individual parts” otherwise known as people.

### *Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

This approach recognizes the cognitive developmental model of learning and asserts that students participate in constructing their own knowledge. Not only are people capable of rational thought, but they are encouraged to practice analysis of their life experiences and constructive reflection and response to their analysis. An emphasis on critical thinking and social decision-making, similar to the philosophy of John Dewey, pervades this presupposition. The Reconstructionists charge that schools should teach students to practice critical thinking far more than they do.

### *The Nature of Society: Beneficent or Hostile?*

Social reconstructionists view the dominant society as hostile but with potential for justice (Sleeter, personal communication, Jan. 2005). The basis for such assertion rests upon the belief that society is unjust and unfair, and that the dominant culture participates in an unequal distribution of and access to wealth, power, and education. Members of diverse minority cultures are oppressed by this social inequality, and schools are viewed as institutions that perpetuate inequity. Some critics view the social reconstructionists as either too radical or too idealistic in their expectations that schools can provoke social change. But nothing less than a total restructuring of the curriculum will suffice.

### *Should Society be Homogeneous or Heterogeneous?*

This approach shares the belief of the Multicultural Education Approach that society should be heterogeneous, and it is through such diversity that society becomes richer. All attempts at assimilation into a dominant culture are resisted. Yet, reconstructionists

admit that cultural transformation does occur in response to racism and economic discrimination, almost as a means of survival and acceptance.

*Are Social Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

Social reconstructionists concede that dominant social norms exist, but they encourage citizens to change them or resist them. They cite that “people should not have to adhere to one model of what is considered ‘normal’ or ‘right’ to enjoy their fair share of wealth, power, happiness, or respect” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 197). They even go so far as to admit that there is not one dictated ideal or right vision of society. Culture, which is affected by socio-political influences, is “continually re-created as people confront their daily environments” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 206). This conscious re-creation can be interpreted as the process of social norms being interdependent on individuals. Another example comes from the field of sociology which asserts that improving individual behavior first does not necessarily improve society. In fact, the assertion is just the opposite. “Individuals shape their beliefs and behavior to fit their niche in the social structure” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 198). In order to effect change in individuals, they must experience a change in their existing social structure. “The assumption is that if we change peoples’ world significantly, then their attitudes, beliefs and behavior will change accordingly” (Sleeter & Grant, 2003, p. 198). This seems to support the notion that social norms are interdependent with individual behavior. Social reconstructionists believe that people can actively confront the daily occasions of oppression and work cooperatively to address them in a positive way. People should interact to create and re-create social norm patterns that eliminate oppression.

### *Time Orientation of Tradition: Past, Present, or Future?*

This forward-thinking approach strives for an ideal society that can be characterized as one in which an equal distribution of resources exists. An education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist is one that strives to persuade future citizens to reconstruct society so that all groups of people, especially those who are of color, poor, female, disabled or are members of any other diverse group can enjoy an equal distribution of socio-political and economic resources. The past and present traditions have marginalized the minority cultures to the extent that they have not shared in the inheritance of the promised American way. Therefore, social reconstructionists are future minded and endeavor to improve conditions for all people.

### *Morality in Action*

For social reconstructionists, moral action equals civic action and social action that elicit social, political, and economic changes. These actions are intended for constructive empowerment and not just open resistance to oppression. The actions move to break stereotypes and level the playing field for minority groups who have historically endured social, political, and economic inequality. But critics assume that this approach expects schools alone to make changes in the social structure without supportive steps in other social institutions. Some questions arise such as “Can a capitalist society ever realize equitable social and class status?” and “Is it realistic to assume that equal opportunity will or should result in equal outcome?” These are the questions that social reconstructionists pose to citizens and ask them to address through social and civic action.

### *Summary*

The Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist approach views mainstream society as perpetuating the inequitable distribution of power and resources. For that reason, this approach calls for the complete reconstruction of society. It stresses the enriching power of diversity and it calls for social action to affect change in the existing social structure. People are encouraged to establish social practices that eliminate oppression.

### Multicultural Education: A Synthesis of Approaches

The Multicultural Education tradition for moral education includes a variety of philosophical approaches which proved as diverse as the populations they discussed. While the approaches are not linear or meant to be hierarchical, particular trends were observed and are offered for synthesis.

As the study moved from one approach to the next, the response to cultural diversity moved from assimilation and elimination (Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different) to recognition (Human Relations), to celebration (Single-Group Studies), to promotion of respect and cooperation (Multicultural Education), to finally, insistence on equal opportunity and social justice (Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist). Moral action evolved from conformity to cooperation to political action and opposition to oppression. The view of society moved from acceptance and maintenance of the status quo to open resistance and efforts of social action in order to make changes.

Heterogeneity and rational thought were a given in all approaches except the first. Banks (2002) agrees that multiple perspectives that spring from ethnic and cultural diversity enrich the nation and offer novel ways for citizens to perceive and solve problems. The last three approaches constitute a more contemporary philosophical position and express a desire to effect social changes through education. In fact, Banks (2002) charges that

[t]o create and maintain a civic community that works for the common good, education in a democratic society should help students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to participate in civic action to make society more equitable and just. (p. 4)

The different approaches to multicultural education all incorporate different methods, but their end goals are similar—equal opportunity in education, political arenas, and economics as well as justice for all.

### Kohlberg's Cognitive-Developmental Moral Theory

Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory of moral development grew from a longitudinal research study during which time Kohlberg categorized responses to moral dilemmas. This theory determined that moral reasoning developed over time and progressed through an invariant sequence of stages. Kohlberg considered these stages to be universal across cultures, hierarchical, and linear. People progress through each stage in order and all moral reasoning moves toward more mature moral growth. Therefore, people move up stages but do not move backwards. Kohlberg (1980) believed that moral development "represents transformation that occurs in a person's form or structure of

thought” (p. 54). Moral development stresses process and not content. Further, moral development was determined to have a cognitive core such that cognitive development was parallel to moral development.

Kohlberg identified three distinct levels of moral judgment, with each level further subdivided into two stages. The three levels are Preconventional, Conventional, and Postconventional (otherwise referred to as autonomous or principled level). The corresponding stages were differentiated by the conception one had of justice and the capacity for which one demonstrated empathy. As the stages moved up the hierarchy, these capacities increased.

Before applying the analytic framework to Kohlberg’s theory, I originally expected that it would in total represent the rational center of value. However, after a review of the levels and stages, contradictions manifested themselves. Therefore, in an effort to clearly articulate the presuppositions, I decided to treat the Preconventional and Conventional Levels independently from the postconventional level when applying the framework. Each level and stage will be explained in the subsequent paragraphs and then analyzed in light of the presuppositions. Primary texts from Kohlberg endured the analysis, and where additional texts illuminated the presuppositions further, they were also employed.

### *Preconventional and Conventional Levels*

Commonalities across the first two levels facilitated the analysis and thus it was decided to present the two levels together, making distinctions when apparent. The explanation of the Preconventional and Conventional levels are offered as described by Kohlberg and Hersh (1977) in order to accurately detail the characteristics:

### *Preconventional*

At this level, the child is responsive to cultural rules and labels of good and bad, right and wrong, but interprets these labels either in terms of the physical or the hedonistic consequences of action (punishment, reward, exchange of favors) or in terms of the physical power of those who enunciate the rules and labels. (p.54)

### *Conventional*

At this level, maintaining the expectations of the individual's family, group, or nation is perceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences. The attitude is not one of conformity to personal expectations and social order, but of loyalty to it, of actively maintaining, supporting, and justifying the order, and of identifying with the persons or group involved. (p. 55)

Stage 1 is termed the punishment and obedience orientation. Stage 2 is termed the instrumental-relativist orientation. Stage 3 is the good-boy-nice girl orientation, and Stage 4 is characterized by the law and order orientation.

### *Center of Value: Social*

At the Preconventional and Conventional levels of moral development, society stands as the external judge of right and wrong. Established rules and labels of good and bad have been accepted as the moral authority. The moral reasoning at each stage will vary and manifest very different moral actions, but the ultimate moral authority is the society in which one lives. At Stages 1 and 2, the social world holds power, and moral conflict arises from the imbalance that occurs from incompatibility of individual interest and conformity to social authority. Later at Stages 3 and 4, the social authority defines itself



not through power but the “social sharedness” or social consensus of the good. Kohlberg increasingly emphasized the social nature of morality, and these two levels exemplify the importance of social authority.

*Nature of People: Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

Kohlberg (1981) paralleled his ideas about the nature of people to that of Socrates, who believed that “...the knowledge of the good is always within but needs to be drawn out...” (p. 46). This statement implies that Kohlberg believed that people have the innate potential to be fundamentally good. But the nature of people alone did not determine their capacity for good action. Kohlberg believed that people have a natural psychological capacity to develop higher reasoning ability, and like Dewey, proposed that education’s aim should be to develop the intellectual and moral capacities of children (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977).

*Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

People are capable of rational thought. In fact, Kohlberg’s (1980) theory dictates that moral judgment derives from rational thought, and his stages are based on varying degrees of rational thought. “The cognitive aspect of morality for Kohlberg is not reserved for Stage 6” (Chazan, 1985). Individuals use cognitive ability to reflect upon the moral conflicts posed in their social world, and based on the maturity of their moral reason, individuals apply moral judgment to these dilemmas.

### *The Nature of Society: Beneficent or Hostile?*

Kohlberg's descriptions of the levels make no assertion about the make up of society. However, if the moral authority is society, one can infer that Kohlberg must have viewed society in a positive way. If society sets the standard for morality, then that society must be beneficent. Additionally, if Kohlberg's view of morality being rooted in the interrelationship of the individual and society is accurate (Chazan, 1985), then society must be good by association to the individuals comprising it.

### *Should Society be Homogeneous or Heterogeneous?*

While Kohlberg viewed the relationship between individuals and society as one of interaction, he did not make any comment as to whether society should be homogeneous or heterogeneous. Although he considered the stages of moral development to be universal across cultures (Kohlberg, 1984/1981), this does not imply that he believed societies were or should be homogeneous. In fact, since Kohlberg's theory focused on moral judgment, which is an individual asset, it is possible to infer that the make up of society could be quite irrelevant. Individuals will interact with the society in which they live and their respective moral reasoning will develop within that context.

### *Are Social Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

Social norms in the Preconventional and Conventional levels exist independently of individuals. Throughout Stages 1-4, people move from compliance with social norms at first for individual gain and then for societal gain and loyalty. People are expected to conform to social norms and act to maintain these norms. The social order must be perpetuated and this is accomplished by following established independent norms.

### *Time Orientation of Tradition: Past, Present, or Future?*

Kohlberg expanded the ideas of Piaget that children are constantly constructing their own knowledge. In the realm of moral development, people are constantly interacting with their environment and constructing their moral understanding. All of the actions happen in the present time. While social norms may be established, they are not necessarily meant to perpetuate the good old days of morality. Kohlberg stated that moral development was about a process and not content. Simply put, the process happens in the “now.”

### *Morality in Action*

Moral actions change from one stage to the next. This is explained by the acknowledgment that if a major component of moral action is moral judgment, and the capacity for moral judgment changes from one stage to the next, the moral exemplar also changes. Kohlberg (1984) believed that an “understanding of an actor’s reasoning is a necessary condition for explaining moral action” (p. 555). The extent to which a person has a conception of justice and propensity for empathy drives the appearance of moral actions at each stage.

Kohlberg also asserted that moral judgment, or rational thought, alone does not lead to moral action. He recognized emotion, will, purpose, and strength of character as crucial agents in moral actions (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977).

At Stage 1, actions are good if their consequences are good. Individuals at Stage 1 act to comply with rules and avoid punishment. At Stage 2, right actions are defined by those that satisfy individual needs and occasionally the needs of others in the context of reciprocal exchange. However, when considering another person, “right comes second to

advancing one's interests" (Thomas, 1991). Stage 3 brings identifying with one's social group into play as right and wrong is defined by the expectation of others (Thomas, 1991). Good behavior at this stage equals behavior that pleases or helps and is approved by others (Elias, 1989; Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). Stage 4 expands the importance of the social group, and right behavior is associated with doing one's duty, respecting others, and maintaining the social order. The matter of right and wrong is simply "what the law says it is" (Thomas, 1991, p. 467).

All of the overt actions have underlying moral reasoning as their motivation. The social authority still defines the parameters of moral behavior, but the individual's reasoning provides the purpose behind the actions. Justice at Stage 1 is less mature and narrower than justice at Stage 4. As individuals develop their cognitive skills and move up the moral development hierarchy, they acquire a wider context with which to view justice. As individuals approach Stages 5 and 6, they move beyond social convention as their source of authority, and their moral judgment takes on an entirely new dimension.

#### Postconventional, Autonomous, or Principled Level

The Postconventional Level accommodates the highest levels of cognitive and moral reasoning. A clear separation from the Preconventional and Conventional Levels emerges as individuals demonstrate the capacity to consider moral principles instead of social rules and apply greater empathy to a larger, more universal social group.

Kohlberg and Hersh (1977) offer the following account of the Postconventional Level:

At this level, there is a clear effort to define moral values and principles that have validity and application apart from the authority of the groups or persons holding these principles and apart from the individual's own identification with these groups. (p. 55)

Stage 5 is termed the social-contract, legalistic orientation in which individuals enter into contracts to “preserve basic rights in society and to promote general welfare” (Elias, 1989, p. 83). Stage 6 is characterized as the universal-ethical-principle orientation where moral decisions are reached through the consideration of self-selected ethical beliefs.

Kohlberg refers to the Stage 5 orientation as a utilitarian theory and Stage 6 as a deontological theory (Thomas, 1991). An application of the analytic framework to the Postconventional Level reveals significant differences to the Preconventional and Conventional levels in the presuppositions regarding center of value, the nature of society and social norms, and morality in action. Even though the three levels share a common belief in the capacity for rational thought, the depth to which individuals exhibit rational thought at the Postconventional Level will greatly exceed the preceding levels.

#### *Center of Value: Rational*

Moral principles rise above rules of society and blind obedience to social convention and laws. Individuals at the Postconventional Level realize that universal principles supercede social convention. These universal moral principles are realized through individuals constructing personal values that align themselves with ultimate justice, equality, and human dignity. External rules of society no longer dictate moral authority. Instead, rational consideration of social utility and individual conscience become the standard for moral judgment. This level “takes a prior-to-society perspective—that of a

rational individual aware of values and rights prior to social attachments and contracts” (Chazan, 1985, p. 74).

*Nature of People: Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

Again in the manner of Socrates, Kohlberg (1981) believed people have the potential to be fundamentally good as evidenced by the quote “...knowledge of the good is always within but needs to be drawn out...” (p. 46). Particularly at this Postconventional Level, individuals have developed their capacity for the highest forms of reason and thus have the most opportunity to express the “good.”

*Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

Most definitely at this highest level of moral development, people are capable of rational thought. This level assumes that reasoning ability is at its utmost as one contemplates personal values and ethical principles that contribute to moral judgment. While the capacity for rational thought is present throughout all of Kohlberg’s levels of moral development, it is most prominent at this level. This level involves the most mature level of cognitive and moral development.

*Nature of Society: Beneficent or Hostile?*

Social norms still exist, but individuals at this level see them as mutable in the face of moral principles and ideals that supercede social convention in favor of social utility (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). Social norms are not necessarily bad although they may be viewed as benign. One could argue that society is good only inasmuch as the degree to which it exemplifies justice and encourages equality. However, moral reasoning holds the ultimate source of authority, so the nature of society may very well be irrelevant. The

only thing that matters is universal application of moral principles apart from society and social norms.

*Should Society be Homogeneous or Heterogeneous?*

Kohlberg made no overt statement regarding the composition of society, which could lead to two different interpretations. The importance of society is evident by Kohlberg's notion that society and the individual are integrated regarding moral issues. However, whether that society is homogeneous or heterogeneous is irrelevant to the individual application of rational thought. On the other hand, Kohlberg may have expected that society should be heterogeneous; hence the contingency for the significance of respecting all, recognizing human dignity, and improving human relations. Regardless, Kohlberg believed that moral development had universal application across cultures.

*Are Social Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

As the center of value has shifted to rationality and the capacity for rational thought has heightened, the ability to critically evaluate the position of social norms has been magnified. Social norms are now the focus of examination in the context of their social utility and in relation to one's appeal to personal ethical principles. At Stage 5, moral standards become ones that have been agreed upon by the entire society. Personal values and opinions are relative and social standards are reached by consensus (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). Further, at Stage 6, moral principles evolve through self-understanding and a tap of one's conscience. Social norms are clearly interdependent with individual behaviors and are defined and redefined in each distinct social context.

### *Time Orientation of Tradition: Past, Present, or Future*

Because social norms are defined and redefined according to each social context, the time orientation must be one of the present. Individuals at this highest level of moral development are not interested in reproducing past tradition. If indeed Stage 5 is likened to utilitarianism and Stage 6 to deontological theory, then both will focus on present conditions. A utilitarian focus would focus on promoting the greatest good for the greatest number of people and a deontological focus would attempt to secure equality and justice through universal conscience. Neither of these would find these ideals in the past nor would they seek to restructure society for the future. The goal would be to procure human rights and dignity in the present.

### *Morality in Action*

At this highest level, moral action reflects the moral principles underlying the ultimate virtue—justice. Stage 5, characterized by Kohlberg as utilitarian in nature, reflects a morality “based upon rational agreement in the endeavor to secure the greatest good for the greatest number” (Thomas, 1991, p. 467). Right actions are those that both preserve individual rights and advance general welfare. At Stage 6, moral actions are those which champion justice, equality, and respect for human dignity. This deontological perspective comes through duty and obligation to universal principles and what “ought to be” regarding justice, human dignity, and equality. “Moral value resides in conformity by the self to shared and shareable standards, rights, or duties” (Chazan, 1985, p. 71).



### *Summary*

Kohlberg's theory of cognitive moral development highlights the capacity for rational thought across all three levels. More mature cognitive ability elicits more mature moral reasoning. This manifests itself through the progression of the source of moral authority: society at the early levels provides the authority for right action while rationality triumphs at the Postconventional Level. Further, the presupposition of morality in action evolves from basic compliance to social norms to an advanced understanding of the ethical principles of justice and equality driving moral judgment. The progression of moral judgment exemplifies Kohlberg's theory and underscores the defining quality of rational thought.

### Skinner's Behavior Theory

Skinner believed strongly that the study of behavior deserved a place in the scientific community. Prior to Skinner, the scientific community counted behavior as a symptom of a biological or physiological state. In contrast, Skinner insisted that behavior deserved to be analyzed apart from mental state, motivation, or intention, especially since he found these inner states irrelevant. Skinner believed that the effects of the environment, and not these inner states, shaped and maintained behavior (Skinner, 2002/1971). The effects of the environment, labeled as consequences or contingencies, operated as reinforcers of behavior, and it was through these that the environment "selected" or strengthened responses. This aspect of consequences after behavior illustrates the major difference in the preceding stimulus-response behavioral theories of Pavlov. Skinner posited that the

consequences after the response contributed to change in behavior. His operant conditioning theory, simply explained, recognized that a stimulus from the environment evoked a response from the individual, which led to a consequential outcome that essentially shaped behavior. Therefore, the primary tenet of Skinner's behaviorism was that when people behave in ways that are reinforcing (or good), it is more likely that they will repeat such behaviors. Skinner's idea of moral education involved the use of behavior modification to control and shape behaviors.

These ideas are manifest through the prolific use of functional behavior assessment and analysis in schools, particularly as it is applied to students with disabilities. The methodology used in conducting a functional behavior assessment includes observation and recording of behavior in order to determine the antecedent (stimulus), behavior (response), and consequence (contingency/reinforcement). After the functional behavior assessment is completed, the data are analyzed to determine the function of behavior. This information is then used to develop a behavior management plan which will incorporate reinforcements that will modify and shape behaviors. While it is true that methodology other than strict behaviorism is effective in modifying behaviors, to a great degree, this assessment and analysis epitomizes the Skinnerian approach to moral education as it focuses on avoidance of pain and seeking of pleasure.

One could also argue that while the functional behavior analysis process is an overt example of a behavioral approach to moral education, a more covert approach can be found in the "hidden curriculum" (e. g. Jackson, 1990). Although Jackson argued that the hidden curriculum was morally neutral and was not meant to function in the development of morality, he clearly explained that through the hidden curriculum, students learn to

adapt their behavior to receive praise (an example of seeking pleasure and avoiding pain). In this context, the hidden curriculum could be considered an informal example of moral education with behavioral undertones. For the purposes of this study, the functional behavior assessment process more definitively aligns itself to the behavioral approach of Skinner in regard to moral education and more adequately serves as a scientific technique for modifying behavior.

The primary text for analysis of this moral education tradition is Skinner's *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* originally published in 1971. Supplemental resources added explanations and interpretations to Skinner's behaviorism.

#### *Center of Value: Material*

With its emphasis on escaping and avoiding painful stimuli, particularly through good acts, Skinner's behaviorism manifests a material center of value. Good acts generally receive positive reinforcement, which is pleasurable. Good acts also avoid negative consequences (the removal of a painful stimulus) and punishment (the implementation of a painful stimulus). Skinner characterizes reinforcements with the following statement:

Men have generalized the feelings of good things and called them pleasure and the feelings of bad things and called them pain, but we do not give a man pleasure or pain, we give him things he feels as pleasant or painful. (p. 107)

Individual acts are judged by the degree to which they bring pleasure or avoid pain.

#### *Nature of People: Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

The importance of innate temperament is irrelevant to Skinner's behaviorism, because an individual is not seen as a "self" apart from behavior since according to Skinner

(2002/1971) a “self is a repertoire of behavior appropriate to a given set of contingencies” (p. 199). People are neither inherently good nor bad; rather, behaviorism concerns itself with observable behaviors, and these behaviors are measured according to their antecedent events and resulting consequences. Skinner believed that “...man is not a moral animal in the sense of possessing a special trait or virtue; he has built a kind of social environment which induces him to behave in moral ways” (p. 198). This statement implies that innate characteristics called “good” or “bad” have no relevance in the moral domain. Behaviors, which are defined as responses to one’s environment, matter to Skinnerian behaviorism.

#### *Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

While Skinner’s view of behaviorism attests to more than Pavlov’s stimulus response theory or reflex action, Skinner still does not recognize a cognitive component to behavior, let alone moral development. People are incapable of rational thought, and all behaviors are considered in the context of the environment. Skinner states that there is no such thing as an autonomous person (Elias, 1989), and in fact, believes that “as we learn more about the effects of the environment, we have less reason to attribute any part of human behavior to autonomous controlling agent” (Skinner, 2002/1971, p. 101). Reason, or rational thought, plays no part in behavior. Behavior is merely a response to environmental stimuli and subsequent consequences that make continued behavior more likely.

### *The Nature of Society: Beneficent or Hostile?*

Skinner (2002/1971) asserted that “to make a value judgment by calling something good or bad is to classify it in terms of its reinforcing effects” (p. 105). Considering the nature of society within the context of this statement, then society is *both* beneficent and hostile, because depending on one’s actions, the environment will either be positively reinforcing or punishing. The nature of society would be good if one’s actions result in a positive consequence (good) and society would be hostile if one’s actions result in punishment (bad). It is important to emphasize that Skinner did not attribute an inherent nature to people, society, or the environment, apart from the context of individuals’ actions.

### *Should Society be Homogenous or Heterogeneous?*

Skinner concedes that since it is hard to categorize society in terms of behaviors and contingencies, he refers to a social environment which he calls culture. Skinner also recognizes a cultural relativism, which grants that different groups define what is “good” and that the “good” may very well vary from culture to culture. Thus, different cultures are expected. But when referring to one culture, the implication is that the environment shapes behavior and if people exist in the same environment under the same conditions, their behaviors should be shaped in common fashion. Therefore, society, or social environments, should be homogeneous. Skinner does, however, make reference to cultural evolution, so while society may be homogeneous, it is not static. Social environments adapt and evolve in response to changes in the physical environments and sizes of the groups.

*Are Social Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

Skinner's behaviorist tradition is based on rule-governed behavior. Established rules or laws exist, and the individuals in a culture follow the rules and abide by the laws in order to avoid penalty in the form of punishment or fines (Gredler, 2001). However, these social norms, which are defined as statements of contingencies of behavior, are independent of individuals.

Skinner (2002/1971) states that

A culture is not the product of a creative "group mind" or the expression of a "general will." No society began with a social contract, no economic system with the idea of barter or wages, no family structure with an insight into the advantages of cohabitation. (p. 133-134)

Individual behaviors are shaped by one's environment by external reinforcers. People have no part in creating or establishing these contingencies.

*Time Orientation of Tradition: Past, Present, or Future?*

The only time orientation that has relevance to Skinner is the present. Behaviors occur in the here and now, and they are immediately followed by reinforcement. While past consequences may be recalled, these past reinforcements do not influence present behavior. For instance, unless a behavior is reinforced for each occurrence, it will be extinguished regardless of any past reinforcements. Additionally, although consequences are recognized as having the ability to influence future behavior, the future speaks of the "likelihood" of behavior, a likelihood that cannot be measured (Gredler, 2001).

Therefore, the past and future traditions have no meaning in behaviorism's present orientation.

### *Morality in Action*

The idea of morality for Skinner does not entail a set of absolute values or moral principles. Actions are judged to be moral merely by their consequences. Therefore, actions that result in good consequences are deemed morally right, and actions that result in aversive consequences are deemed morally wrong. Skinner (2002/1971) defines a moral person as “one whose behavior has been so shaped and controlled that he or she conforms in all actions to what is best for the survival of the culture” (p. 67). Intention, motivation, and emotion have no place in Skinner’s view of morality. Behavior stands on its own, particularly behavior that has been shaped by the environment.

### *Summary*

Skinner’s theory of behavior modification characterizes moral action at its most basic form: good behavior. Good behavior for Skinner involves responses to stimuli that result in good consequences devoid of any intent to perform good acts. Rational thought and innate goodness play no roles in moral action. In fact, for Skinner, people are born *tabula rasa* and do not have the capacity for rational thought. People merely react to their environments in ways that will bring pleasure and avoid pain. Described in this way, moral action is more like “moral reaction,” with the contingencies in the environment dictating which behaviors are functional and which, through lack of reinforcement, will become extinct.

## Values Clarification

Various ideas, beliefs, and value statements bombard people every day. Different perspectives, parents, church, teachers, government leaders, and peer groups have differing opinions on which values are desirable and right (Simon, Howe, & Kirschenbaum, 1972). With all these competing perspectives, how do people come to an understanding of what to believe? The Values Clarification Approach, a popular approach to moral education in the 1960s and 1970s, was developed based on the ideas of Louis Raths, “who in turn built upon the thinking of John Dewey” (Simon, et al., 1972, p. 19). The approach differed from the contemporary approaches to moral education (e.g. the various multicultural education traditions, and the behaviorist theories). First, the term “values” was specifically defined as “those elements that show how a person has decided to use his life...” (Raths, Harmin, & Simon, 1966, p. 6). Then, the approach made clear the idea that values were developed through a process of sorting alternatives, such that a person using this process built their own value system. Raths emphasized that the approach concerned itself with the *process* of valuing and not the *content* of values. In fact, Raths and colleagues would argue that although a “value represents something important in human existence” (1966, p. 9), no particular set of values existed. Instead, one’s experience with weighing the consequences of actions would aid them in building a method of deciding on what is important and creating a unique value system. The primary text used for analysis was *Values and Teaching* (Raths, Harmin, & Simon, 1966).



### *Center of Value: Rational*

People are born with an understanding of right and wrong, true and false, good and bad, and just and unjust. This understanding implies thinking, knowledge, intelligence, and sense. Therefore, the Values Clarification Approach has a rational center of value. “Values...lean more heavily toward the intellectual side; there is deliberation, assessment, looking at alternatives, and a choosing” (Raths, et al., 1966, p. 199). Further, the process of valuing encompasses deciding from among ideas one holds about certain situations. Raths, et al. stated that “many readers will note the similarity between the value theory and certain approaches to critical thinking” (p. 9). Even so, critics considered Values Clarification an *affective* instead of *cognitive* approach, citing that it did not engage students in moral reasoning but instead encouraged exploration of feelings, beliefs, and attitudes (Elias, 1989). In response to this criticism, Kirschenbaum added elements of critical thinking, creativity, communicating empathetically, and higher levels of moral reasoning to Raths’ original paradigm of choosing, prizing, and acting (Elias, 1989). This approach makes it clear that “individuals determine values and not external forces as such religion, society, or tradition” (Elias, 1989, p. 171). The essence of the individual’s moral authority is the intellect or rational thought.

### *The Nature of People: Are People Inherently Good or Bad?*

This approach deems the process of valuing more potent than the essence of values. The text highlighted examples of people who were not living value directed lives. These ideas drive a tendency to view the nature of people as neutral, believing in neither fundamentally good nor bad natures of people. It is important to note, however, that this approach does make a significant statement regarding the potential goodness of people.

[A] conception of humanity that says human beings hold the possibility of being thoughtful and wise and that the most appropriate values will come when persons use their intelligence freely and reflectively to define their relationship with each other and an ever-changing world. (p. 39)

While this study might infer an innate potential for goodness from the preceding statement, this alone does not explain good and right behavior. Values are choices and must develop through personal reflection. Innate goodness or potential for goodness cannot explain right actions.

#### *Are People Capable of Rational Thought?*

The Values Clarification Approach depends on the capacity for rational thought. The entire focus of this approach is the process of thinking, weighing consequences and alternatives, considering pros and cons, and evaluating choices. Through this process of valuing, “we apply critical thinking techniques to matters that are largely in the affective domain” (p. 9). Raths, et al. described the valuing process with the following elements: “Choosing freely; choosing from among alternatives; choosing after thoughtful consideration of the consequences of each alternative; prizing and cherishing; affirming; acting upon choices; repeating” (p. 28-29). Recall that Kirschenbaum added critical thinking, creativity, and higher levels of moral reasoning to the original elements (Elias, 1989). Together, these elements decidedly point to the capacity for rational thought.

#### *The Nature of Society: Beneficent or Hostile?*

The Values Clarification Approach underscores the “personal nature of values” (Raths, et al., 1966, p. 36). This acclamation of values being personal and individual,

seemingly devoid of the social context, opened the door to critics, who exposed a contradiction in the Values Clarification alignment to Deweyan philosophy. Critics were quick to point out that Dewey stressed the importance of the social context when considering the intelligence and valuing process (Chazan, 1985). If educators interpret the valuing process as strictly individual and personal, then the role and nature of society become irrelevant. Society is good, bad, or neither, but any answer is irrelevant. Consider, though, the earlier explanation of the genesis of the Values Clarification Approach—the response to a cacophony of conflicting perspectives on values. This bombardment of conflicting ideas creates confusion in individuals that, in turn, makes the process of valuing difficult. If society is viewed under this condition, then the nature of society could be construed as hostile. Since more evidence exists for the personal nature of values, this study will infer that the nature of society is irrelevant.

*Should Society be Homogeneous or Heterogeneous?*

While the personal and individual nature of valuing results in an irrelevant view of the nature of society, this same tenet supports the heterogeneity of society. If indeed values have a personal and individual character, then each person stands to have unique life experiences that will, in turn, affect the development of their values. Society should be a heterogeneous group of individuals, each of whom have developed their own value system, or in some cases, have chosen to not develop values at all.

*Are Social Norms Independent of or Interdependent with Individual Behavior?*

The Values Clarification Approach recognizes no established social norms, because the process of valuing is more important than “values.” This approach would venture to

state further that any existence of outside norms would be a form of coercion. This would seem to negate the existence of social norms independent of individual behavior. Also consider that since values and valuing are individual and personal, there can be no interdependence of social norms and individual behavior. Since no predetermined values exist, and values are personal in nature, this presupposition seems to be irrelevant.

### *Time Orientation of Tradition: Past, Present, or Future?*

As the primary text defined the active processes of this approach, the orientation of the verbs clearly articulated an orientation to the present. Words such as “valuing,” “clarifying,” “choosing,” “reflecting,” “affirming,” and “weighing consequences” all connote a present tense. There is no past tradition to perpetuate, and it is not necessarily important to prepare for any future circumstances. The question and answer technique of Values Clarification means to encourage individuals to reflect and evaluate their values given distinct situations. John Gardner (1964, as cited in Raths, et al., 1966) expressed the present orientation cogently with this statement:

Instead of giving young people the impression that their task is to stand a dreary watch over ancient values, we should be telling them the grim but bracing truth that it is their task to recreate those values continuously in their own time. (p. 10)

### *Morality in Action*

Morality in action would be defined as a culmination of the process of valuing and the subsequent acting on the determined value. If one does not act on their choices, then valuing, or moral action, has not occurred. Morality is more than reasoning, intention, motivation, or feeling. Morality involves acting upon choices. The Values Clarification

Approach contends that "...for a value to be present, life itself must be affected," and "The person who talks about something but never does anything about it is dealing with something other than a value" (p. 29). While the approach expects that individuals will develop values after thoughtful reflection, it also realizes the possibility that one can just as easily choose *not* to develop values. The approach stresses techniques that most probably result in development of personal values and ultimately a person acting on those values.

### *Summary*

The term "relativistic" describes the Values Clarification Approach because, unlike the other traditions, it disregards any association with social norms. Moral action reflects individual choice and relativistic valuing. Social norms do not matter because people must determine for themselves what they value and why. The nature of people and society are also irrelevant in the process of valuing. This tradition focuses on teaching the process of valuing, and then encourages people to engage in this process when faced with moral decisions. Educators employing the Values Clarification Approach encourage students to construct their own knowledge and values system. This clearly defines use of cognitive learning theory techniques.

## From Analysis to Synthesis

The framework was developed, explained, and applied to ten notable moral education traditions. The preceding narratives offered an in-depth analysis of each tradition as it endured the application of the framework. But analysis is not enough if this study hopes to determine whether a defining presupposition acts to differentiate amongst moral education traditions. Therefore, the study now presents a synthesis of traditions and an at-a-glance visual representation with which to compare and contrast the ten traditions (see Table 2).

Table 2 Presuppositions Chart

Moral education tradition	Kohlberg Preconventional/ Conventional	Kohlberg Postconventional	Values Clarification	Catholic Education
Center of value	social	rational	rational	transcendent
Nature of people	good	good	neither	good
Rational thought	yes	yes	yes	yes
Nature of society	beneficent	irrelevant	irrelevant	Micro- beneficent Macro-hostile
Make up of society	irrelevant	irrelevant	heterogeneous	homogeneous
Origin of social norms	independent	interdependent	irrelevant	independent
Time orientation	present	present	present	past
Morality in action	<p><i>Stage 1</i> Good actions are measured by good consequences</p> <p><i>Stage 2</i> Right actions defined by actions that satisfy individual needs</p> <p><i>Stage 3</i> Good behavior equals behavior that pleases, helps and is approved by others</p> <p><i>Stage 4</i> Right actions are defined by doing one's duty</p>	<p><i>Stage 5</i> Right actions are those that preserve basic human rights and promote general welfare; the greatest good for the greatest number</p> <p><i>Stage 6</i> Right actions are determined by self-chosen ethical principles arrived at by conscience and results in justice, equality, human dignity</p>	Any action that reflects choice and demonstrates a process of valuing	Acting justly and rightly in accordance with conscience, God's voice/will

Table 2 (continued) Presuppositions Chart

Moral education tradition	Skinner's Behavior Theory	Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist	Multicultural Education	Single-Group Studies	Human Relations	Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different
Center of value	material	social	social	social	social	social
Nature of people	neither	irrelevant	irrelevant	good	neither	neither
Rational thought	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Nature of society	both	hostile	hostile	hostile	beneficent	beneficent
Make up of society	homogeneous	heterogeneous	heterogeneous	heterogeneous	heterogeneous	homogeneous
Origin of social norms	independent	interdependent	independent	independent	independent	independent
Time orientation	present	future	future	future	present	past
Morality in action	Good actions are those with good consequences and conform to actions that are good for the culture	Social action; civic action	Civic action; values diversity	Civic action, tolerance, equality, justice	Acceptance, tolerance, and justice	Conformity to social norms



## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

### A Review

Moral education must exist and the schools must provide it. Schools *have* been providing a moral education, in one form or another, either purposely or through the hidden curriculum. “Intended” moral education has been offered through a variety of existing traditions and with the same goal in mind: the development of a morally educated person. Throughout the history of American education, schools have provided moral education with a religious theme, through character education, multicultural education approaches, cognitive approaches, behavioral theories, and values clarification. Considering the list of moral education traditions, a logical question ensued: why so many variations on a common theme? One possible answer was that educators were not using a common vocabulary or set of concepts and underlying assumptions. In an attempt to substantiate this inference, this study proposed that an analysis of the various moral education traditions would reveal underlying presuppositions that serve to define and delineate the various philosophical approaches to moral education. An original framework, inspired by Egan’s (1978) presuppositions, was developed and applied to the following notable traditions—the Catholic religious education tradition, values clarification, Kohlberg’s cognitive-developmental theory, five multicultural education traditions, and Skinner’s behavior theory. The resulting analysis uncovered commonalities, differences, and even some surprises.

## Synthesis of All Traditions

### *Introduction*

Applying a common framework provided direction to the analysis in a manner that has been attempted before by other researchers (e. g. Chazan, 1985; Elias, 1989 reviewed in Chapter 2). Several existing frameworks had been applied to conduct previous analyses of moral education traditions. None of the existing frameworks included all the dynamics necessary to a study in moral education curriculum. This study employed a framework that included many components crucial to the study of morals: moral authority, the nature of people and society, the role of tradition and culture, and finally, the picture of a morally educated person. Whenever possible, direct quotations from primary works were cited to substantiate the claim of the presuppositions. In some cases, presuppositions were implied based on the information available. A visual representation was created to offer an “at a glance” synthesis of all presuppositions across all traditions (see Table 2). This afforded a brief and simplified comparison and contrast for the analysis. The text synthesis offers a closer look into the subtle nuances of the analysis and takes the liberty of drawing conclusions about the existence of one defining presupposition. Finally, this conclusion offers a look at implications for practice and future research.

### *Common Themes*

The new analytic framework was developed with the center of value presupposition purposely identified as the overarching presupposition and the one to which all the others would be subordinate. The center of value was to be the most obvious difference among the traditions. In an effort to avoid inaccurately assuming it would be *the* differentiating

presupposition, traditions with similar centers of value were selected and analyzed. For instance, five multicultural approaches to moral education were selected to represent the social center of value, and Kohlberg and Values Clarification were initially both selected to represent the rational. Upon further analysis, this study concluded that Kohlberg's Postconventional Level alone represented a rational center of value.

In addition to sharing common centers of value, many of the traditions held similar presuppositions about people, society, tradition, and morality in action. Common themes began to emerge. When the moral education tradition deemed the nature of society as good, a time orientation to the past or present always followed, and the view of morality in action included conformity to social norms or an external moral authority. For instance, Kohlberg's Preconventional and Conventional Levels deemed society as beneficent with a present time orientation and its corresponding morality in action included good actions that conformed to social expectations. The Catholic tradition viewed society as beneficent (particularly the church community) with a time orientation to the past, and its corresponding moral actions included acting in accordance to God's will, an external authority.

On the other hand, when society was considered hostile, the traditions all held to a future orientation and the morality in action included social action and affecting social change. The multicultural approaches of Single-Group Studies, Multicultural Education, and Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist all considered society hostile, and the corresponding moral action included a range of social action with the aim of social improvement.

A review of the presupposition about social norms revealed that most traditions recognized independent social norms. The exceptions to this included Kohlberg's Postconventional Level and the fifth approach to multicultural education, Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist. Both of these traditions recognized an interdependence of social norms, and their respective moralities in action involved social change and improvement.

Another common theme surrounded the capacity for rational thought. When people were capable of rational thought, their moral action comprised an element of choice or will, as in the case of Kohlberg, Values Clarification, Catholic education, and four multicultural approaches. Skinner and Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different multicultural approach both denied the capacity for rational thought, and thus, resulted in a moral action devoid of choice and will.

In addition to common themes, the in-depth analysis provided some unexpected findings. The analysis revealed answers to presuppositions about which I had previous assumptions. The "surprises" are detailed in the next section.

### *Surprises*

Prior to applying the framework to the selected moral education traditions, I held some assumptions that were counteracted by the analysis. First, I expected to find that the Catholic tradition would believe that people were inherently bad, based on the concept of Original Sin. While the *Catechism* confirmed the existence of Original Sin, the doctrine also reminded the reader that people are born in the image of God, and if that is the case, they are inherently holy and good.

Another assumption I held was that since Kohlberg's theory was based on cognitive development, the tradition would epitomize a rational center of value. As I reviewed the literature and read Kohlberg's account of each level and stage, the Preconventional and Conventional Levels both aligned with a social center of value, while the Postconventional Level alone portrayed a rational center of value. This revelation was completely contrary to what I expected to find.

Further, the morality in action descriptions in Kohlberg's Stages 1-4 resembled the moral outcome found in Skinner's behavior theory. The major difference was that Kohlberg's belief in the capacity for rational thought contributed to moral action while Skinner's theory accounted for behavior devoid of any rational thought. The moral outcomes appeared to look the same, but the manner in which one arrived was very different.

Finally, after reviewing the presupposition chart, I realized that while the moral education traditions shared many common presuppositions, one major difference emerged across traditions, and it was not the center of value presupposition as I originally expected. This realization led me to the conclusion that one presupposition might emerge as *the* defining or differentiating one, but the process of discerning that proved more complicated than it would originally seem.

#### Identification of a Prevailing or Defining Presupposition

One presupposition prevailed as the defining one across moral education traditions, but it was not the one I originally expected. At the beginning of this study, the most

likely presupposition to take precedence was the center of value because of the prominent place it assumed as the overarching presupposition. After categorizing the presuppositions and representing them in a chart for an at-a-glance review, the presupposition that differed across all traditions was the morality in action presupposition, which accounts for what a morally educated person looks like. Even when traditions shared a common set of presuppositions, ultimately the major difference was the expected moral action. In fact, all the moral education traditions, with the exception of values clarification, offered a specific idea of a moral person.

If indeed the morality in action presupposition is the defining and differentiating one, it must be considered within the context of all other presuppositions and not as a separate entity. This begs the question of what presuppositions, if any, contribute to each distinct view of a morally educated person. I approach this question by first comparing several traditions in light of their commonalities and differences in order to determine the presuppositions that may define the different views of morality in action. Within that synthesis, I continue by detailing the individual progressions of their presuppositions and their contribution to the differences.

Consider that Kohlberg's Postconventional Level and Values Clarification share similar presuppositions regarding center of value (rational), capacity for rational thought, nature of society (both irrelevant), and time orientation (present). The differences arise in their presuppositions about the nature of people, the make up of society, and the origin of social norms. I contend that the presupposition about the origin of social norms represents the critical difference when considering morality in action. Social norms are irrelevant to Values Clarification; hence, the view of morality as a process of valuing as it

refers to personal choice. In contrast, social norms are interdependent in Kohlberg's Postconventional Level, leading to the moral actions that highlight general welfare, justice, equality, and human dignity.

Now consider the multicultural perspectives which all share the common presupposition regarding center of value (social). From here, look more specifically at the Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different approach and the Human Relations approach. These share common presuppositions regarding the nature of people (neither good nor bad), the nature of society (beneficent), and the origin of social norms (independent). They differ in their presuppositions about capacity for rational thought, make up of society, and time orientation. I contend that all three of these presuppositions contribute to their different outcomes for morality in action. The Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different perspective believes people do *not* have a capacity for rational thought, society should be homogeneous, and a past time orientation for tradition. These result in moral action that conforms to social norms. In contrast, the Human Relations approach recognizes the capacity for rational thought, the heterogeneity of society, and a present orientation to tradition. The resulting moral action highlights acceptance, tolerance, and a move toward justice.

A further analysis of the other three multicultural perspectives reveals more distinctions across presuppositions. The Single-Group Studies, the Multicultural Education, and the Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist approaches share a social center of value along with belief in the capacity for rational thought, the nature of society (hostile), the make up of society (heterogeneous), and the time orientation of tradition (future). They differ in their view of the nature of people

(either good or irrelevant), and their origin of social norms (either independent or interdependent). I contend that these three approaches share the closest moral action outcome in that the difference appears to lie in the degree to which civic and social action is manifested.

When comparing Kohlberg's levels, the most obvious overriding difference appears to be the center of value and the origin of social norms, which I contend is an outgrowth to the center of value. The Preconventional and Conventional Levels characterize the less mature and less autonomous cognitive development with the social center of value. This results in moral action that parallels the conformity to social norms and authority. The Postconventional Level manifests the higher cognitive abilities associated with autonomy of thought and ethical principles.

Finally, the cross-section of Catholic Education and Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different tradition surprisingly reveals similarities in many presuppositions: both assume that society is beneficent and should be homogeneous, social norms are independent of individuals, and past tradition is most valued. Their respective moralities in action show the influence of their centers of value. While both allude to conformity to norms, the Catholic tradition clearly recognizes the transcendent center of value in God's will specifically while Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different approach yields to the social center of value. In a sense, these are both external sources of moral authority that require conformity to the established norms. These contribute to their distinctive moralities in action.



### *Contradictions*

Two comparisons admittedly deviate from the assumption that the morality in action presupposition defines and differentiates all traditions from each other. Consider Kohlberg's Postconventional Level compared to the Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist, and the analysis reveals similar presuppositions in the capacity for rational thought and the interdependence of social norms. Their morality in action presuppositions also appear to be very similar. This is contrary to the other examples and suggests that the center of value may take precedence and influences the other presuppositions. For example, Kohlberg's Postconventional Level assumes that people are good and that the nature and make up of society are essentially irrelevant. The focus of the morality in action is justice and equality reached through individual reasoning and ethical principles separate from society (a rational center of value). On the other hand, Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist assumes that the nature of people is irrelevant and that the nature of society is hostile and the make up should be heterogeneous. The morality in action reflects a clear focus on improving society through social and civic action (a social center of value).

The comparison of Skinner's Behavior Theory and Kohlberg's Preconventional/Conventional Levels illustrates another potential deviation from the proposed defining presupposition. In this comparison, both traditions possess similar morality in action presuppositions. For Skinner, good actions are those with good consequences that are also good for the culture. Kohlberg's early stages characterize morality in action with very similar descriptions. This is a clear contradiction to my conclusion. Since their morality in action presuppositions are similar, which

presuppositions differentiate these traditions? The following presuppositions all differ: Kohlberg's center of value is social and Skinner's is material; Kohlberg's assumes the nature of people as good while Skinner's view human nature as neither good nor bad; and finally, Kohlberg recognizes the capacity for rational thought while Skinner does not. Although the resulting morality in action for both traditions resemble each other, the center of value and the presupposition about the capacity for rational thought seem to differentiate these two traditions.

The evidence shared substantiates morality in action as the defining presupposition within the confines of the other presuppositions across *most* traditions. The analysis challenges educators to recognize that each tradition's view of the moral person depends to some degree upon the assumptions about people and the society in which we live. This is to say that all of the presuppositions are significant and contribute collectively to the view of the morally educated person. However, if the outcome of the moral person is the defining presupposition in the context of the others, then learning theories can now come into play, especially since a specific outcome has been identified. This naturally leads to implications for educational practice.

### Implications for Practice

Analyzing the moral education traditions using a common framework resulted in an enlightenment of the presuppositions each held about center of value, the nature of people and society, the role of tradition, and the manifestation of morality in action. The resulting synthesis uncovered commonalities, differences, surprises, and a defining

presupposition. While these revelations have added to a unique view of existing moral education traditions, my desire is to contribute more than research and theory. After all, other researchers have analyzed moral education traditions using common frameworks. What makes this study significant?

At the onset, my purpose was to respond to the challenge that the field of education often makes curricular decisions without informed practice. The newly developed analytic framework presented in this study offers educators a tool for self-reflection as well as a tool for making informed decisions regarding moral education traditions. By exposing our own presuppositions about center of value, the nature of people and society, the role of tradition, and the appearance of morality, educators can begin to match the needs of a school community with the moral education tradition that best suits their population. This naturally leads to deliberate choices for appropriate moral education traditions based on the compatibility of the community's presuppositions to those of the tradition. If we look more specifically at the proposed defining presupposition of morality in action, this has even greater implications for practice.

Each tradition's view of a moral person, or the manifestation of morality, was distinct from every other tradition. While some of the multicultural education approaches found some commonality to each other, the degree to which morality in action was personified still varied. When using morality in action as a defining presupposition, educators have a picture of a potential outcome of moral education. This outcome could be construed as a goal or focal point, which then requires instructional strategies to accomplish the goal. Instructional strategies, in turn, imply the use of a learning theory.

Hence, while this study began as an analysis of theories of moral education, it now has the potential to offer strategies for practice. For example, if the view of a moral person includes one that strives for civic action and social change, educators can match an appropriate moral education tradition armed with the knowledge of which traditions hold this view. In addition, educators can then decide on appropriate strategies to develop and nurture skills that foster civic action and social change. Cognitive learning theories that concentrate on critical thinking skills and construction of knowledge assume their place as logical choices to achieve this end. On the other hand, if the view of the moral person includes one that highlights conformity to social norms, then a more direct behavioral learning theory or perhaps the social cognitive theory more adequately fit this need.

Yet another advantage to this progression—reflecting on presuppositions, selecting a compatible moral education tradition, and instituting appropriate learning strategies—is that by using this alignment, educators can respond to critics and those opposed to moral education on the grounds that it may be indoctrination. A careful, thoughtful analysis and implementation following this course of action could diffuse such criticisms and answer the call for the field of education using research to inform practice.

### Critique of the New Framework

Despite the existence of several analytic frameworks (e. g. Chazan, Egan, Elias/Frankena, Nash, and Nucci), a new analytic framework was developed and applied to ten notable moral education traditions. The new framework evolved into the form presented in this study, but a host of opportunities exist to challenge it, revise it, apply it

to other moral education traditions, and test its usefulness. While this manuscript represents the conclusion of this study, it also invites comments and criticisms that offer promise to improve it. As I acknowledge the possible limitations of this new framework, I also offer the rationale for developing it in the midst of existing frameworks.

### *Limitations*

The new framework addressed presuppositions that accounted for many of the issues present in the study of moral education traditions. The overarching center of value considered the source of moral authority, while the other presuppositions addressed people, society, tradition, and moral action—all important components regarding issues in morality. While the new framework identified a transcendent center of value which would encompass religious, spiritual, and cosmic concepts, it does not address the role of religion in any great depth. To theorists such as Nucci (2001), morality cannot be considered in any manner separate from religion. Although there are educators who would disagree and believe that morality and religion should be separate (Spring, 2001), the absence of this component could be viewed as a limitation.

Another possible limitation to the framework is its dichotomous and triotomous form of questions. Are people inherently good or bad? Should society be homogeneous or heterogeneous? The temptation could be to answer these questions in an absolute manner, which could result in an over simplistic view. Rarely are the answers to these questions black and white. Instead, one must allow for the possibility of a range of “goodness,” “rightness,” and homogeneity or heterogeneity. The tendency might be to expect an absolute “yes” or “no” answer to the presuppositions. This could significantly limit the interpretation of one’s underlying beliefs.

Finally, because this study has risked the conclusion that the defining presupposition is “Morality in Action,” the inclination might be to ignore the other presuppositions in favor of moral action. To do this would diminish the part played by the presuppositions about people, society, and tradition in arriving at a picture of a moral person. Morality in action must be interpreted within the context of all other presuppositions. To do otherwise could limit the definition of a moral person to only the outward display of actions devoid of the underlying assumptions that influence the view of a moral person.

#### *Advantages of the New Framework*

The new analytic framework shares many components to those of Chazan, Egan, Elias/Frankena, Nash, and Nucci. This serves to validate the framework as a useful tool that deserves attention. The framework is more expansive and more inclusive than the others in that it involves many aspects of moral issues surrounding people, tradition, moral authority, and the view of the moral person. In addition, the framework includes the nature of society as an important component in the study of morality. While the other frameworks contributed collectively to the validity of the new framework, the addition of society represents the improvement to the existing works.

Another benefit to this framework is its potential to be evaluated and studied through survey research. The manner in which the presuppositions are presented in dichotomous or trichotomous choice lends itself to the development of a survey questionnaire. This questionnaire could be used to prove whether a progression of presuppositions naturally point to a distinct moral education tradition. The questionnaire could possibly substantiate the claim of an identifying presupposition and its relative presuppositions. The makings for future research are inherent in the format of the framework.

## Future Research

The analytic framework has been applied to ten notable moral education traditions. Other traditions were not analyzed as part of this study. The ethics of care, the numerous character education philosophies, and the various religious education traditions are likely candidates for application of the framework. In addition, the framework can be applied to any specific curriculum product just as easily as it has been applied to major philosophies of moral education.

In addition to applying the framework to various moral education traditions, the next logical step would be to test the ability of the framework to predict moral education traditions. The following two questions emerge as questions to research after the dissertation:

1. Can presuppositions one holds about the center of value, people, society, tradition/culture, and morality in action drive one's choice of moral education curriculum?
2. Can exposing these presuppositions in various moral education traditions contribute to more informed decisions regarding moral education curriculum practice?

These are questions that could be answered through the survey research ideas noted in the previous section. To summarize, the implication of answering these research questions might be that if one follows a logical progression of presuppositions, certain moral education traditions are bound to result.

Another area of future research addresses the distinction between morality and social convention. Nucci (2001) suggested that social norms may be more in line with social

convention than morality. The question bodes asking: Is there a difference between morality and social convention? If so, the presuppositions outlined in the framework may require revision or some may be determined inadequate or unnecessary.

## Epilogue

As long as there are people and social groups, there exists a need to define morality. As long as schools remain the primary institution for education, the curriculum will be infused with moral education. That moral education may exist as a part of the hidden curriculum or may emerge as purposeful moral education curriculum. My belief is that moral education has a place in schools, and because of this, the moral education curriculum should be selected with thought and care. This study holds the promise to aid in that informed practice of curriculum choice through use of the analytic framework. When applied as a tool of reflection, the resulting answers to presuppositions will act to illuminate the most appropriate fit of curriculum to a school population.



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