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# The Psychology of Morality

Diane Sunar
*Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey*, dsunar@bilgi.edu.tr

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## Abstract

Five questions regarding the nature of the moral sense, the origin of conscience, the development of morality, variability in the moral sense, and the relation of morality to behavior are examined from the point of view of four theoretical approaches (psychoanalytic theory, social learning theory, cognitive–developmental theory, and evolutionary psychology). In addition, some concepts and findings from outside the four approaches are also touched upon. The moral sense is shown to be complex, comprising cognitions, feelings, and behaviors. The theoretical approaches disagree regarding the issues of whether conscience directly reflects social teaching, or is constructed by the developing individual. They also disagree on whether moral development is incremental or stagewise. Explanations of individual, gender, and cultural differences in morality differ across the four approaches. None of the approaches explains the relation of behavior to morality; rather, application of social psychological theories is suggested. More recent developments are briefly reviewed, supporting the view that the evolutionary approach and its extensions have become dominant in the field in recent years. Focus on social relations rather than individuals, emphasis on emotions rather than reason or action, pluralist views of the bases of morality, and functions of morality in group competition are highlighted as aspects of the newer approaches.

# Introduction

Questions of human morality have been among the most vexing in all of psychology. The moral sense is so ubiquitous that its lack is regarded as a pathological condition, but its bewildering complexity and variability across persons, situations, and cultures has thwarted efforts to construct a comprehensive psychological theory of morality. This essay will attempt to summarize the main theoretical approaches and issues vying for place as explanations of morality, and will touch briefly on some of the important empirical findings.

**Definitions**

There is no single agreed-upon definition for the term "moral" in the psychological literature. However, as a practical point of departure, let us make use of an adapted version of a dictionary definition: morality consists of the rules of conduct based on conscience or the sense of right and wrong. This definition immediately presents us with a number of psychological (and sociological) questions.

1.  What kind of "sense" is the moral sense? What does it consist of?
2.  How do we know right and wrong? Where does conscience come from? That is, where do we get our knowledge of the rules and our feelings about them?
3.  Does our moral sense change over time? If so, how and why?
4.  Do all people have the same "sense" of right and wrong? If not, how does it differ, both across individuals and across cultures? What accounts for the variation?
5.  To what extent do individuals behave according to their sense of morality?

It is in the attempt to answer these and related questions that psychological theories of morality have been formulated. In general, four approaches have dominated the field of morality: (1) Freud's psychoanalytic theory; (2) learning theories, including social learning theory; (3) cognitive-developmental theory; and (4) evolutionary psychology. Some workers in the field, however, are not closely identified with any of these approaches. The following will summarize the main answers that have been proposed, along with some of the principal arguments for and against them, taking each of the above questions in turn. It should be noted that questions regarding the closely related concept of altruism are not addressed in this article.

# Aspects of Morality

Asking what kind of "sense" the moral sense is leads directly to further questions, such as, is it knowledge of the rules; or is it feelings about right and wrong actions; or is it using the rules to guide actual behavior? The fact that each of these questions appears to require an

affirmative answer implies a complex structure for conscience, a structure comprising (at least) cognitive aspects such as knowledge and reasoning, moral feelings, and action or behavior. While all the major theories of morality try to address all these aspects to some extent, each of them takes a different aspect as seemingly the most basic. The psychoanalytic theory of the superego focuses to a large extent on the moral feelings of anxiety, shame, and guilt, generally ignoring cognitive and behavioral aspects (Freud, 1924a, 1924b). Social learning and behaviorist approaches place greatest emphasis on behavior, its consequences (direct or vicarious), and its stimulus conditions, to the relative exclusion of thinking and feeling (e.g., Bandura, 1977). Cognitive developmental theory is concerned mainly with moral reasoning, to the relative neglect of feeling and action (e.g., Piaget, 1932; Kohlberg, 1969). Evolutionary hypotheses, to the extent that they take into account subjective states of the person, focus on feelings as cues to action; however, this approach has so far concentrated on the adaptive value of prosocial action and the possible mechanisms by which both prosocial tendencies and social control tendencies may have been selected through evolution (e.g., Trivers, 1971). An important exception to the tendency to focus on a single aspect is the work of Hoffman (2000), whose theory ties multiple aspects of morality together using the concept of empathy, and is not easily classifiable into any of the other approaches.

In some ways, the psychoanalytic approach has been a cornerstone for other types of research, in that the capacity for moral feeling, particularly guilt, has been regarded as a crucial indicator of the existence of conscience. However, the theoretical basis of conscience in the working out of the Oedipal conflict has left the theory open to attack by anthropologists who question the universality of the Oedipal conflict (e.g., Malinowski, 1961/1927); by learning theorists who see no need to posit unconscious motivational processes as the basis of moral learning; and by feminist theorists who reject Freud's assertion that males develop a stronger conscience than females because of differences in the way they experience castration anxiety. On the other hand, by grounding conscience in a specifically sexual conflict, psychoanalytic theory is closer than other psychological theories to popular conceptions that focus especially on sexual morality.

Social learning theorists have demonstrated convincingly that children imitate social models' prosocial and aggressive behaviors, and there is abundant evidence for the conditioning of anxiety. However, the learning approach has had difficulty in accounting for other moral feelings (shame and guilt) or for age-related changes in moral reasoning and judgment. On the other hand, learning theory postulates no essential content for moral rules, and is thus comfortable with the extreme diversity of rules encountered across cultures.

Cognitive developmental theories, particularly those of Piaget (1932) and Kohlberg (1969), have shown that moral reasoning, based on the concepts of equality and reciprocity, changes in predictable ways across the years of childhood and youth. Considerable cross-cultural research indicates that the sequence of stages proposed by Kohlberg is invariant, although the existence of all his stages in all cultures is highly questionable (Snarey, 1985). This theory, however, has difficulty explaining moral feelings,

and evidence for a relationship between stages of moral development and actual moral behavior is weak.

Evolutionary psychologists can point to evidence from a variety of sources, from ethological studies (e.g., de Waal, 2006) to computer simulations (Axelrod, 1984), that reciprocity in prosocial behavior confers selective advantages in a group-living species, particularly when combined with a tendency to punish defections. Since evolutionary psychology posits that feelings are the primary means of inducing adaptive behavior (Johnston, 1999), it is open to explanations involving moral emotion and motivation, although to date a full account has not been offered. The modular theory of mind espoused by many evolutionary psychologists is also potentially compatible with some of the ideas of cognitive-developmental theory, but once again, an explicit connection between these approaches has yet to be drawn.

As noted above, Hoffman's (2000) approach accords relatively equal weights to aspects of feeling, cognition and behavior, and may be regarded as an attempt to integrate the most important insights of the four theoretical approaches. Hoffman's key concept of empathy, which he regards as having an evolutionary origin, provides a basis for both moral feelings and moral reasoning when combined with cognitive elements supplied by social experience, particularly inductive disciplinary encounters.

## The Source of Morality

Theorists of several persuasions unite in asserting that conscience originates outside the individual in societal influences. Psychoanalysis pictures the origin of the superego as a process of incorporation, almost literally a "swallowing" of the parent's morality by the child. Although the child's motivation for adopting adult morality is seen to lie in the internal conflicts of the Oedipal stage, the moral sense itself is thought to be imported from the outside.

Learning-based approaches likewise posit environmental pressures, in the form of models, reinforcements, and punishments, as elements that govern the acquisition of conscience. Both psychoanalysis and learning theories share the term "internalization" as a description of the origin of conscience, and both contrast internalized conscience with control of behavior by outside agencies, such as parents or police. To a large extent this model of internalization is also shared by most sociologists and anthropologists, whose concept of socialization includes the acquisition of morality under the tutelage or pressure of socializing agents such as parents, teachers and religious leaders. Even social constructionist theorists, who emphasize the uniqueness of cultural meanings, implicitly assume that the individual's morality stems from the culture.

Cognitive-developmental theory takes exception to this dominant model, arguing that the child essentially creates his or her own conscience on the basis of experience with relationships and role-taking opportunities. This approach maintains that, just as the child's thinking and use of logic develop through several stages, so moral reasoning moves through stages that are progressively more complex and inclusive in scope. For cognitive-

developmental theory, the child does not simply take in or internalize an external morality, but rather produces his/her own moral understanding by constructing and re-constructing concepts of reciprocity and equality. Thus, in contrast to the internalization theorists, Kohlberg is able to posit a post-conventional or principled morality in some individuals which may transcend the conventional morality presented to them by their social surrounding.

Evolutionary psychologists see morality as an adaptive facultative trait – or, more likely, a set of such traits – activated by particular kinds of social conditions and experiences. In this sense they are close to the cognitive-developmental position but in even more distinct opposition to the internalization model. Their assertion that a capacity for morality is part of the evolutionarily selected nature of humans has occasioned a great deal of excitement among researchers, but as of this writing much remains to be clarified in terms of specifying what sorts of conditions can be expected to lead to which outcomes and why. Much of the burgeoning research has focused on interpersonal, situational and cultural differences in manifestations of the moral sense, some of which will be summarized in the final sections below.

Hoffman's model appears to be eclectic in respect to the question of the origin of conscience. In his account of moralization, he makes use of both internal cognitive and emotional dynamics in the child as well as inductive reasoning and other disciplinary techniques applied by parents, and although he makes frequent use of the concept of internalization, he also credits the child's inherent and developing capacities for empathy and reasoning as important factors.

## Development of the Moral Sense

All of the approaches under discussion here agree that conscience develops over time; but, as is true in other domains of development, one of the most persistent debates is over the question of whether morality develops in an incremental, additive fashion or in a series of distinct and incommensurable stages.

The concept of stage-wise development is embraced by a majority of the theoretical approaches. Psychoanalytic theory sees the formation of the superego as a watershed event in the development of personality, so that the child is a fundamentally different entity after the superego develops. Thus a different set of stages (pre- and post-superego) is superimposed on and partially coincides with the psychosexual stages that are thought to lay the basis for adult personality. As noted above, cognitive-developmental theory proposes a set of stages in the development of moral reasoning, ranging from the "premoral" through the "conventional" and possibly through "postconventional." Hoffman offers a set of stages for the development of empathy and also refers to internalization in stage-like terms.

Each of these stage theories, however, has a unique view of what the stages consist of, how they are different from one another, and at what ages they emerge. Freud's superego development is seen as occurring in early childhood, certainly by the age of

seven, and the change consists essentially in the child's internalizing the rules of morality, so that what had previously been a conflict between the individual and society – the conflict between gratification of the individual's selfish desires and the needs of social order – becomes a conflict within the individual.

Piaget described the major moral stage transition as taking place in late childhood, and it consisted of moving from a "heteronomous" view of social rules to an "autonomous" one, in which the child could adopt others' points of view and see the rules as his/her own. Kohlberg extended this early formulation to include adolescence and early adulthood, and maintained that each stage consisted of a unique conceptualization of the requisites of social interaction, with each successive stage exhibiting greater cognitive complexity and a greater range of perspectives taken into account.

Accounts of moral development based on learning theory do not make use of the stage concept but, on the contrary, see the learning of morality as essentially similar to any other type of learning. That is, the incremental accumulation of incidents of social modeling, reward, punishment, and classical conditioning of anxiety eventually add up to the acquisition of morality. From this point of view, there is no necessary direction of learning other than a progressively closer approximation to the demands of the social surrounding. Although in practice changes in morality might not be expected in adults, theoretically speaking, changes in moral learning could take place at any time in life in response to new contingencies of reinforcement.

Evolutionary psychology stands alone in maintaining that even preverbal infants show the beginnings of a sense of morality and fairness (e.g., Bloom, 2013) and indeed that a number of species of social animals likewise display altruism and a rudimentary sense of fairness (de Waal, 2006). In humans, however, the moral sense is expected to change and develop over the life course, depending on the culture, its socialization techniques and reward contingencies.


# Differences in the Moral Sense


The problem of differences in the moral sense is actually several different problems – individual differences, gender differences, and cultural differences, to name only the most frequently discussed. Not every theoretical approach tries to account for all of these types of difference, but each of them is the subject of lively debate.

**Individual differences**

Individual differences have been conceptualized in terms of severity of conscience (Freud), degree of internalization (Hoffman), stage attainment (Piaget and Kohlberg) and tendency to violate social rules (Trivers and other evolutionary psychologists).

Freud's somewhat paradoxical proposal was that severity of conscience is inversely related to the severity of punishment experienced by the child, explaining this phenomenon on the basis of greater motivation to incorporate the rules represented by a

more loving, less punishing parent. Much later, cognitive dissonance theorists took up this theme, suggesting that "insufficient external justification" for obeying the rules leads the child to produce his/her own internal justification, i.e., a belief in the rightness of the rules and his/her obedience (see, e.g., Aronson, 1999).

Learning theory approaches have no need of a special explanation for individual differences in morality: each person has a unique learning history, which in turn will produce variation across individuals in terms of morality.

Hoffman's approach ties most individual differences in moral internalization and capacity for guilt to differences in disciplinary style of the parents (and to some extent other socialization agents). In particular, he sees a power-assertive, punitive style as inimical, and an inductive style of discipline as conducive to moral development. When using inductive discipline, the parent calls the child's attention to the negative consequences for others of the child's bad behavior, mobilizing both empathy for others and recognition of responsibility for his/her own actions. This in turn facilitates the child's development of guilt and self-regulation.

Cognitive-developmental theory attributes most individual differences in morality to differences in stage attainment. Such differences could be due to age or to the (lack of) role-taking opportunities that have been encountered by the individual.

Since evolutionary psychology conceptualizes morality as a set of facultative traits, differences across individuals would be explained as primarily a result of differences in the environmental, including cultural differences, and circumstances encountered, possibly in a cumulative fashion. Ironically, this view leads the two most opposite theories, evolutionary and learning psychology, to take very similar positions on this question, at least on a superficial level, although evolutionary psychology does posit some constraints on the possible forms that moral rules may take.

**Gender differences**

Gender differences are clearly predicted only by Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which maintains that the greater intensity of castration anxiety experienced by males leads them to develop a stricter conscience and greater capacity for guilt. However, this prediction has not fared well in empirical research. Using criteria such as obedience, confession of transgression, apparent guilt, and atonement for transgression, observations of young children have typically produced the opposite result: young girls show more signs of internalization of conscience than young boys.

Another debate over gender differences in morality was sparked by findings from some studies using Kohlberg's moral reasoning interviews with adolescents and adults that males tended to be placed in higher stages than females. Gilligan (1982) asserted that this tendency actually reflected female use of what she called a care perspective, in contrast to the justice perspective embodied in Kohlberg's theory and measurements. Later research has shown that both males and females make use of both perspectives, depending on the circumstances. Also, surveys of the literature have shown that males and females do not generally have different placements on Kohlberg's stages; if anything,

there is a tendency for females to have higher scores on some measures of moral reasoning (see, e.g., Moon, 1986). However, the identification of the care perspective has added a new dimension to psychological concepts of moral reasoning, and it has been important in some of the cross-cultural debates.

**Cultural differences**

Cultural differences in the rules of morality are so large and pervasive that cross-cultural psychologists debate whether they are differences of degree or of kind. Shweder and his colleagues (see, e.g., Shweder, Mahapatra & Miller, 1990) have denounced Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory as applying only to Western societies with individualistic social forms and liberal values. Along with other researchers, they have demonstrated that some of the criteria for moral judgment employed in some collectivistic cultures outside of western cultural traditions are not anticipated in Kohlberg's scoring system and may, they contend, erroneously lead to artificially lower placements for respondents who use them (see also Snarey, 1985). These criteria bear a close resemblance in some cases to the "care" ethic proposed by Gilligan, but also may emphasize duty or tradition.

**Universal aspects**

The critique offered by social constructionists is more fundamental than simply a criticism of a particular theory; its main point is that each culture is unique, with its own meanings and moral system, so that comparison is in a real sense impossible. Constructionists stand alone on this point, however. All other theories of morality have at least some universalistic elements.

Psychoanalytic theory posits little in the way of universal moral content, other than a prohibition on incest. However, the mechanism of internalization, rooted in the fundamental conflict between the desires of the individual and the requirements of social life, is seen as universal. As noted above, this assumption has been challenged by ethnographers.

Social learning theory also posits no particular moral content, but the processes of internalization (learning) are regarded as essentially the same in all humans. Cognitive developmental theory, in contrast, implies that both the processes of moralization and the bases of moral judgment, as they reflect basic and universal psychological processes, should be similar in all cultures. The wide cultural differences that are empirically observed are explained either on the basis of a distinction between morality and convention (Turiel, 1983) or on the basis of restricted role-taking opportunities in isolated cultural groups (Kohlberg, 1969).

Evolutionary psychology also predicts underlying patterns of cross-cultural similarity, such as the norm of reciprocity which is found universally (Gouldner, 1960). In addition, this approach makes a number of predictions about the possible forms of rules governing sexual behavior, in this respect bringing it closer to psychoanalytic theory than to the other approaches. The modular model of mental processes allows the evolutionary approach to deal with multiple aspects of morality, including fairness or justice, care and sexual

behavior within a single theory. This affords it an inclusiveness not found in any other approach. A growing body of findings in social neuroscience, exemplified by Damasio's (1994) identification of some aspects of moral judgment and self-regulation in terms of moral values with specific brain areas, lends indirect support to the evolutionary assumptions.

# Behavior and Conscience

Evidence on the question of the extent to which conscience governs behavior comes more from social psychology than from work inspired by any of the theories of morality. An early study by Hartshorne and May (1929) showed clearly that preadolescent children are in full command of moral knowledge – that is, they know the rules of morality quite well – but that their adherence to the rules depends heavily on the circumstances, in terms of incentives, anonymity, personal goals, and the like. Work done within the cognitive-developmental framework also shows only weak connections between moral reasoning and behavior (with the possible exception of persons at Kohlberg's highest stage; see Kohlberg, 1969 and Haan, Smith, & Block, 1969).

Social institutions, including families, appear to share some of the assumptions of learning theory, believing that good examples, rewards for good behavior, and punishment for bad behavior will serve to increase compliance to the rules of morality. There is some laboratory evidence for these assumptions, particularly with regard to prosocial behavior and aggressive behavior. On the other hand, the persistence of naughtiness in children despite punishment, of crime despite prisons or even capital punishment, and religiously-defined sin despite social ostracism or expectations of eternal damnation suggest that other contingencies also need to be taken into account. Perhaps chief among these is the very definition of temptation: the direct or indirect reward value of the non-compliant behavior in comparison to the reward value of compliance.

As noted above, cognitive dissonance theorists have shown that self-regulated compliance with rules is associated with "insufficient" external justification. Batson and his colleagues (see Batson, 1991) and Hoffman (summarized in Hoffman, 2000) have shown that performance of prosocial acts, or refraining from harmful acts, is facilitated by activation of empathy for the other party. Zimbardo (1970) and others have shown that anonymity or deindividuation sharply reduces the person's adherence to social or moral rules that are ordinarily followed under other circumstances. Self-awareness theory has shown that moral rules are more likely to be followed to the extent that they are made salient, even in indirect fashion by making the person more self-aware in general (e.g., Duval & Wicklund, 1972). Several of these findings are congruent with the more general conclusion of social cognitive theorists that consistency between behavior and attitudes or values depends to a large extent on accessibility of the attitude, whether it is due to priming, frequent use, centrality, or some other factor.

In summary, knowledge of moral rules, or even ability to reason about moral action, appears to have less predictive value for behavior than situational factors such as

immediate reinforcement contingencies, the social situation (including the social visibility of the act and the behavior and expectations of others), feelings such as empathy, guilt, and self-esteem, and the cognitive salience of moral values.

# Recent Developments in the Psychology of Morality

Since the publication of seminal works by Hamilton (1964) and Trivers (1971), which demonstrated mathematically that altruism among kin and reciprocal altruism among non-kin, respectively, could be selected for, the evolutionary approach to morality and its extensions have received far more research attention than earlier theories. This work has concentrated in the main on two facets of morality: the (innate) bases of morality, and the relative roles of emotions versus rational thought in moral judgment.

## Bases of morality

Beginning with his critiques of Kohlberg's cognition-based model of moral development, Shweder suggested that distinctively different cultures may exhibit distinctively different moralities. For example, while the individualistic culture of the U.S. may emphasize individual rights and autonomy, the more collectivistic culture of India may emphasize duty and purity. Formalizing this idea, Shweder and colleagues (Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park, 1997) proposed three moral "ethics" that together comprise the domain of morality: autonomy, community and divinity. These ideas were further developed by Haidt and colleagues (e.g., Haidt, 2007) as "Moral Foundations Theory", proposing five (or six) dimensional foundations for moral judgment: harm, fairness, ingroup loyalty, authority, purity and (possibly) liberty. A related approach was suggested by Fiske (1992; Rai & Fiske, 2011), arguing that morality *is* relationship regulation, and that (probably innate) relational models, labeled as communal sharing, authority ranking, equality matching and market pricing, determine whether moral motives are dominated by desires for unity, hierarchy, equality, or proportionality, respectively. In opposition to these three closely related theories, Gray and his colleagues (e.g., Gray & Schein, 2016) argue that there is only one real basis for moral judgment, namely actual or potential harm.

## Emotions versus reason

One effect of the introduction of pluralist views, in combination with the evolutionary emphasis on feelings as guides to action, was expansion of the "moral emotions" category to include not only self-blaming emotions such as shame and guilt but also other-blaming emotions such as contempt, anger and disgust. The latter were matched to Shweder's community, autonomy and divinity as the "CAD triad" by Rozin, Lowery, Imada, and Haidt (1999). This has been followed by intense investigation of disgust as a moral emotion, exploring individual, situational and cultural differences. Related to this approach is Haidt's (2001) notion that moral judgment operates more as social intuition than as rational judgment ("the emotional dog and its rational tail").

Using evidence from brain imaging that moral judgments based on emotion and those based on reason are characterized by distinctive neural activation patterns, Greene has tried to reconcile the opposing sides of the debate by suggesting, in parallel to cognitive scientists such as Tversky and Kahneman (see Kahneman, 2012), that both "fast" (emotional, intuitive, instinctive) and "slow" (rational) processes operate in moral judgment; which process prevails may be influenced by many individual, situational and social factors. Greene's (2014) proposed utilitarian solution to the dilemma brings him, in some ways, close to Gray's harm-based monist position and requires cultivation of the "slow," rational process.

**Looking Ahead**

Regardless of how or whether consensus is reached on the issues being actively debated at present, it seems possible to predict some overall trends that probably will not be reversed. First, despite the tendency of psychologists to revert to investigations of individual differences, human morality will continue to be recognized as a species-specific adaptation that evolved in the context of social living and is activated in social relations. Thus, it is likely that research on the psychology of morality will continue to be dominated by ideas and theories stemming from evolutionary psychology, and that, compared to the past, the study of morality will focus less on personality and individual development and more on social relationships.

On the other hand, individual differences in preference for or use of particular bases of morality are being actively researched as correlates of various social psychological constructs, such as authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, need for cognition and political ideology, to name a few. This trend is likely to continue and expand, contributing to the integration of moral psychology into social psychology.

Also, it is likely that issues within evolutionary theory, such as individual-level versus multilevel selection, will impact moral psychology, particularly through theories of cultural evolution and group competition. Similarly, while popular opinion has historically tied morality to religion, social scientific research has tended to consider morality and religion as separate phenomena. In coming years it is likely that sociological analyses of religion (e.g. Durkheim, 1915/1965) and morality will be brought into closer juxtaposition; Graham and Haidt (2010) offer a first step in this direction, which may also be enriched with ideas from theories of cultural evolution (e.g., Richerson & Boyd, 2005; Wilson, 2002) and notions of costly signaling (Smith & Bird, 2005).

It is an open question whether there will be attempts to integrate the insights of older theories of morality into a new model grounded in evolutionary psychology, but such integration might lead to a deeper understanding of sexual morality, on the one hand, and moral development of the individual on the other.

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# About the Author

Diane Sunar received her Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley. Her research interests and publications have clustered around stereotyping in power relationships; the psychology of justice and morality; child rearing practices and their correlates; and early childhood intervention. She teaches at Istanbul Bilgi University and Bogazici University.

# Discussion Questions

1) What are the implications for child rearing and educational practices of assumptions about whether the origin of conscience is essentially external or internal?

2) Most psychological investigations of morality have focused on issues of rule following, exchange, fairness, and the welfare of the self and others, generally ignoring issues of sexual morality. In contrast, popular conceptions of morality tend to focus strongly on sexual issues. How can social concerns with the regulation of sexuality be integrated with psychological approaches to the study of morality?

3) Discuss similarities and differences among the moral feelings or emotions of guilt, shame, anxiety, obligation, and responsibility.

4) Discuss the relationships between and among the "self-blaming" emotions such as shame and guilt and the "other-blaming" emotions such as contempt, anger and disgust.

5) To what extent is empathy a personal disposition, and to what extent can it be fostered by situational factors?

6) What kinds of evidence would help us to decide between incremental and stage models of moral development?

7) Differences in the moral sense between individuals *within* the same culture tend to be interpreted in terms of "higher" or "lower" levels of internalization, development, or the

like; however, differences in moral conceptions or practices *between* cultures tend to be interpreted relativistically. Can these two approaches be reconciled?