

THE RELATIONSHIP OF BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS  
TO LEVEL OF MORAL REASONING

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## PREFACE

This study is concerned with measuring the level of moral reasoning in a prison and a nonprison population. The purpose of the study is to examine some of the characteristics or background factors present in those convicted of criminal acts in order to determine if a pattern of relationships exists with respect to the level of moral reasoning used by those individuals and to evaluate this information in terms of its usefulness to those working with delinquent members of society.

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## CHAPTER I

### PROBLEM DEFINITION

#### Introduction

The reasoning behind human moral manifestations has intrigued philosophers since the time of Plato. Some argued that morality was invented by the strong in order to rule the weak, while others maintained that it was put forth by the weak to limit the strong. In either case the moral rules of a given society serve to protect that society from the damaging interests of its individuals. Morality implies values and a conformity to standards set by a culture, a yardstick by which to measure right and wrong. These ideas of right and wrong are not fixed or permanent; what is right for one age and in one set of circumstances may be all wrong at another time or in a different setting. Infanticide, polygamy, abortion, homosexuality, and war are all examples of practices that have shifted in this respect. Frequently standards will persist long after the original reasons for deciding upon their propriety have vanished, and a widespread need for change is necessary before these principles can be altered.

Just as morals and standards have shifted, virtue, or moral excellence, has also changed. A Babylonian at the time of Hammurabi, an Englishman of the age of Henry VIII, and an American of our own day would probably all agree to humanity as being a virtue and inhumanity as being evil; but their judgments of humane acts could be quite divergent. The philosophic foundations of morality have also tended to shift, with two

fundamental divisions vying for dominance. These divisions date back, possibly, to the difference between Plato and Aristotle or to the Stoics and the Epicureans: does intuition or utility regulate moral decisions? The moralists of the intuitive school contended that we have an inborn tendency for perceiving that some actions or qualities are better than others and should be cultivated. By nature mankind senses what is right and feels an obligation toward that right. Utilitarian moralists took a behavioristic approach, opposite to that of the intuitives. They maintained that humans are born with no knowledge of right or wrong, but derive these feelings from trial and error, from exploring different types of behavior and experiencing the resultant consequences. Utilitarians put forth the goal of producing the greatest good for the greatest number.

Our philosophic heritage has gone back and forth between utility and intuition, each philosopher emphasizing elements of the theories that suited his orientation or the time in which he was living. Men such as Plato, Bacon, Rousseau, Kant, and Nietzsche stressed the inborn characteristics of mankind, or the intuitive sensing of right and wrong; Aristotle, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, Spencer, and others felt that humanity responds to the results of its actions; and a trial and error method produces the definitions of these qualities. Arguments can be put forth to support either utility or intuition, and the discussion is still strong today. As humans we have some genetic and biologic predispositions that set us apart from other animals, and scientists are continually finding new information that leads to biological explanations of behavior. On the other hand behaviorists of the Skinnerian school argue tenaciously that responses to stimuli and positive or negative reinforcements govern

our actions. Perhaps both utility and intuition affect our moral outlook to some extent.

### Morality and Socialization

The Latin source of the word, moral, is translated as "of manners or customs." Manners and customs result from repeated, similar behavior; they are a defined way of reacting to given situations. An individual operating alone, and without recourse to other human beings, would react to conditions in his environment in a way that would produce the best feeling for himself at the time. These reactions would result in comfort or self-preservation, and as such could become habitual or customary. In usage, however, morality has a broader meaning. Behavior, and even values, can involve custom and habit but not be concerned with morality; some things are done out of tradition or convenience, and for no other reason. Morality implies a concept of right or wrong, and at times a concern for the welfare of others; but it does not include all human standards or interactions. Hogan (1973, p. 219) defined moralities as "systems of rules that are external to people, designed to guide social or interpersonal behavior, and which may to some degree be codified and spelled out." A system of morality would not necessarily serve the interests of the individual, or even be equitable to him, if his interests were harmful to, or not agreed upon, by others. Moral behavior, like other behavior, can become habitual and traditional; and the moral rules governing a society will largely be followed by everyone out of conviction, habit, or convenience. Even those labeled as criminal will abide by a majority of the rules of a society most of the time.

Morality is a part of the socialization process in which the child



learns of and becomes a participating member in his culture and considers its rules and values binding upon himself. Gertrude Selznick (1963, p. 93) has stated that "man's biological nature makes socialization both possible and necessary." Humans have the ability to learn and use language, potentials that cannot be realized without socialization. Hogan (1973) felt that we have an innate tendency toward socialization, contrary to Freudian ideas that mankind must repress inclinations toward lawlessness in order to become social.

Some theorists have argued that man first existed in a solitary state, each individual seeking his own safety and comfort in his own way. Every person was then pitted against all others in his efforts toward survival. In order to maximize safety for himself man agreed to live with others, to accept authority, and to set up a code of laws and rules by which all would live. George Herbert Mead (1937) disagreed with this philosophy. He felt that the individual arose from society, and not the reverse. Man was the creation and not the creator of society; the self cannot exist outside of social experience. Cooley (1902) also suggested that society is necessary for the development of the self. According to Cooley the child, at a very early age, learns to imitate adult behavior as seen around him. The reactions of others toward him produces within the child a concept of self, or a "looking-glass-self." The perceived judgment of others is the only way in which the self can arise. In this manner, also, the moral values are formed, and mankind learns to live with the rules that govern right and wrong conduct.

Lord Patrick Devlin (1971) has stated that in our society we have both a private and a public moral code. The private moral code covers those things that we do as individuals, and the public code governs

issues, such as monogamy, which we follow because we feel that they are right, not only for each individual, but for the entire society. A common morality is part of the bondage that keeps a society together. Fuller (1964) also examined two distinct moralities. He called these duty and aspiration. The morality of aspiration is that of "The Good Life, of excellence, of the fullest realization of human powers" (p. 5). The morality of duty sets forth the rules for living, basic to society. Fuller compared morality to a continuum or yardstick. On one end he placed the basic demands of living together in a society and on the other, the highest goals of human achievement or aspiration. Fuller felt that there was a crucial point on this continuum below which survival needs, duty and obligation, and concern for right or wrong are dominant and above which we find the "challenge of excellence," the height of virtue, and concern for the betterment of mankind. The author went on to say that at some point on this continuum the pressure of duty stops and the challenge of excellence begins, and "the whole field of moral argument is dominated by a great undeclared war over the location of this pointer" (p. 10). Fuller maintained that law is concerned primarily with the morality of duty; and while it is not always possible to determine if an individual has failed in his goals of aspiration, if he fails in duty then all of society becomes aware.

As the individual becomes social he evolves into a moral being, concerned with defining right and wrong behavior and codifying this behavior so that it applies to all. As society becomes more complex, these moral definitions are more intricate and subject to conflict in their application. Distinctions develop between individuals and groups, so that the same rules do not apply in all situations; and the emergence of a

personal moral code becomes necessary.

### Morality and Moral Development

Another aspect of morality concerns the underlying cognitive structure by which mankind formulates decisions. Different people perceive their social surroundings in dissimilar ways, and these individuals may reach a common moral decision but arrive at this decision through several different channels and give divergent reasons to back their judgments. For example, three people may be presented with a temptation to steal, and all three decide against the act. The first person decides not to steal because of the likelihood of being caught and punished. The second makes his decision because the law is against it, and he believes that the law must be obeyed. The third decides against stealing out of respect for the rights of others and the consequences of theft to society. All three have made the same decision, yet the reasons for their judgments are quite different. Behind each ethical decision there exists an unique way of analyzing the situation and an intellectual structure that makes the judgment possible. This basic framework underlying moral decision making has been the object of considerable research determining the feasibility of a reasoning pattern or a developmental sequence relating to morality.

The work of Piaget (1948) is considered to be the starting point in the cognitive-developmental approach to morality. This is the approach that morality is internalized as a result of the individual's cognitive growth in ability to perceive and interact with his surroundings. As the child grows and acquires more knowledge, he views his world in an increasingly more sophisticated light. He has acquired a background of

knowledge from specific happenings and is able to generalize this knowledge into common rules, not responding to each separate situation but applying universal criteria for decision making. Moral development thus depends upon cognitive development, and the individual must be able to deal with abstract concepts before he can advance in moral reasoning. The higher levels of moral reasoning require a greater ability to conceptualize and use abstract concepts.

Piaget had studied the intellectual development of the child and concluded that children go through specific stages in cognitive growth and that these stages are in part related to the age of the child. He reasoned that some concepts are too difficult for younger children to grasp, no matter how well they are explained; therefore the child must go through a hierarchy of stages in the development of reasoning. Piaget felt that there were four such stages from birth through maturity. One of the dividing lines between these stages, according to Piaget, was the ability to tell if an operation were reversible. Without this concept a child would not be able to understand subtraction, for example. Piaget called this the ability to "conserve" or to determine that a quantity or volume of a substance remains the same when transferred to a different sized container. A child who can conserve will be able to discern that a liquid in a tall, thin glass is equal in amount when poured into a short, fat glass; a child who cannot conserve will say that there is less liquid in the short glass. This concept is gradually assimilated by the child and is usually a part of his intellectual structure by about age seven (Mussen, Conger, and Kagan, 1969).

From his experiments with moral judgment Piaget (1948) postulated that the reasoning implicit to moral decisions had a developmental

progression related to total cognitive growth, and that it also evolved through four stages. During the first stage the child is egocentric and does what, in his view, is best for himself. At the second stage rules become important and are at first considered to be sacred and not to be broken. Later, during the third stage, rules are regarded as a mutual agreement, subject to alteration. The fourth stage is reached at about age twelve when the rules are codified and apply to society as a whole. Piaget's studies did not extend past this age group, but Kohlberg (1958) used adults in his research and expanded the stages to six.

Kohlberg divided moral reasoning into three levels, each level having two stages. The first level he called the Pre-Conventional Level. This is where the child responds to rules of right and wrong but bases his decisions on the consequences of the acts or on the power of those making the rules. During Stage 1 of this level the child is concerned with punishment. Whether an act is considered good or bad depends upon its results, not upon its underlying moral value. At Stage 2 satisfying one's own needs is considered important, but the needs of others are considered also. This is not in terms of justice for others but of expectations for similar treatment in return. At the second or the Conventional Level loyalty and conformity to the social order are important. Meeting the expectations of others becomes desirable, not to avoid punishment but because it is the right thing to do. During Stage 3 of this level the child or adult wants to please others and learns to judge them by their intentions rather than by the results of their actions. Stage 4 is the "law and order" position where the individual is concerned with duty and respect for authority and the social order. At the Post-Conventional or Principled Level, the third level, moral values are perceived to be

derived from sources other than tradition or the authority of individuals or groups holding these values. They are socially shared values, maintained because they are just and correct. In this level Stage 5 recognizes arbitrary rules or standards agreed upon by the majority and designed for the well-being of all. Individual rights and the rights of others are respected; and laws are utilitarian, subject to change if necessary. At Stage 6 the individual defines what is right in terms of ethical principles of conscience and conforms to avoid self-condemnation. As with Piaget's stages Kohlberg proposed that these form a hierarchy with each succeeding stage dependent upon and being of a higher order than the one before it; they represent a sequence in development, with older children and more mature adults achieving higher stages, and the higher stages expressing a more sophisticated approach to decision making.

Kohlberg (1968) gives the following examples of how reasoning will change at various stage levels, or how individuals holding the same value will use different motives to reach a decision.

- A. Motive for rule obedience or moral action.
  1. Obey rules to avoid punishment.
  2. Conform to obtain rewards, have favors returned, and so on.
  3. Conform to avoid disapproval, dislike by others.
  4. Conform to avoid censure by legitimate authorities and resultant guilt.
  5. Conform to maintain the respect of the impartial spectator judging in terms of community welfare.
  6. Conform to avoid self-condemnation.
- B. The value of human life.
  1. The value of human life is confused with the value of physical objects and is based on the social status or physical attributes of its possessor.
  2. The value of human life is seen as instrumental to the satisfaction of the needs of its possessor or of other persons.
  3. The value of human life is based on the empathy and affection of family members and others toward its possessor.

4. Life is conceived as sacred in terms of its place in a categorical moral or religious order of rights and duties.
5. Life is valued both in terms of its relation to community welfare and in terms of life being a universal human right.
6. Belief in the sacredness of human life as representing a universal human value of respect for the individual (p. 28).

Kohlberg found that most people will use a single stage for about half of their thinking, regardless of the problem involved. They will use some reasoning above and some below their dominant stage but will have moved forward in sequence; no one reasons at Stage 4 unless he has first gone through Stages 1 through 3. Individuals progress through these stages at varying rates and may stop developing at any level. Studies done in several countries found Stage 4 to be the one used by most adults, with a slightly higher use of Stage 5 in the United States (Kohlberg, 1969). The Post-Conventional Level, or the level of autonomous reasoning, is reached by a relatively small number, although many will make some judgments using these stages. There is some evidence that Stages 5 and 6 may not be a part of the invariant sequence but alternate viewpoints in mature reasoning (Kohlberg, 1968; Hogan, 1970).

The cognitive developmental approach to morality is one that is concerned with the underlying structures in moral reasoning, independent of any single act or decision. It is a concept that can be applied across various cultures, races, religions, and age groups, because it implies that reasoning is generic. Moral judgment is not value- or norm-oriented, since it is incorporated in the same basic structure that generates these principles. However, this approach to morality can shed some light on values and norms, as it is basic to their development.

## Statement of the Problem

The correctional system is vitally concerned with values and standards, because it deals with individuals who in some way have violated the criteria governing them. There has been some feeling that criminal or deviant behavior is a manifestation of a faulty morality and perhaps of a lower level of moral reasoning. Studies with adolescents seem to support the contention that delinquents tend to use lower levels of reasoning than do nondelinquents (Fodor, 1972a; Hudgins and Prentice, 1973). The question arises as to whether the lower level of reasoning is itself responsible for the increase in delinquent acts, or do other factors in the individual's background that contribute to the cognitive structure underlying moral judgment form a pattern that could relate to both delinquency and lower moral development.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine some of the characteristics or background factors present in those convicted of criminal acts in order to determine if a pattern of relationships exists with respect to the level of moral reasoning used by those individuals and to evaluate this information in terms of its usefulness to those working with delinquent members of society.

## Hypotheses Investigated

The objectives of the study were to investigate the following hypotheses.

1. Since moral reasoning is considered to be a developmental phenomenon, the use of higher levels of reasoning should correlate



positively with such demographic variables as educational level, and favorable socioeconomic background; it should correlate inversely with those factors, such as large family size, that could adversely influence development. Elements, such as a low skill level, that could result from a lesser developmental level should also accompany a lower level of moral reasoning.

2. A prison community is made up of individuals coming from less advantaged backgrounds, and this is frequently true of minority groups as well. For this reason both prisoners and minorities were predicted to indicate a lower level of moral reasoning. However it was further predicted that this difference would be less apparent when the data were controlled for background characteristics that could affect development.

3. It is possible that different types of crime are indicated by different levels of moral reasoning. Use of alcohol and marijuana does not constitute the preconceived effort to deprive others of their rights or property, as does burglary and forgery, and as such should indicate greater use of post-conventional reasoning.

4. Strong religious commitment might encourage less thinking through of religious issues and more acceptance on faith alone, and this possibly is related to over-all cognitive growth. Therefore it was predicted that those answering "yes" to all or most of the questions on religion would show a lesser use of post-conventional moral reasoning.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Much research has been done involving the stage-sequence theory of moral development discussed in the preceding chapter. Some alternate but similar hypotheses have been proposed, such as the "conceptual-systems" model of Harvey, Hunt, and Schroder (1961) and Loevinger's (1966) ego-development theory; however most of the interest has been centered on the ideas and formulations of Piaget and Kohlberg, leading to the wide acceptance of Kohlberg's six developmental stages as being a valid framework for explaining the reasoning process underlying ethical decisions. Some of the literature deals with verifying the theory and testing its component parts; this was done both with Piaget's work and with that of Kohlberg in an attempt to duplicate the original studies or to test the theory with a different methodology. Additional studies have dealt with the relationship of moral reasoning to opinions or behavior and with the predictive capacity of the theory for other variables.

#### Testing the Theory

##### Piaget's Stages

Part of Piaget's thesis dealt with the way children learn the values and opinions that lead to the ability to reason at a given level. Aside from being a maturational function, Piaget postulated that moral reasoning also develops as a result of peer-group experiences. Reciprocity

and moral autonomy are necessary features of the shift from the egocentrism of the young child to the cooperative relationship found with older children, and learning to cooperate with others is basic to the type of interaction where common goals and rules are important (Piaget, 1948). Einhorn (1971) indicated that cheating represents a nonreciprocal application of the rules and a lack of cooperation, and as such should be found more prevalent with children who have not yet reached the stage of cooperative play. This author examined two groups of children, three- and eight-year olds. The children were placed in self-competing test situations in groups of three, and were given an opportunity to cheat without appearing to be seen. Some of the groups were highly cohesive (formed with children who were close friends), and others were not. It was found that the five-year-old children cheated significantly more than the eight-year-olds regardless of group type and that with eight-year-olds, the degree of cheating was inversely related to the degree of group cohesiveness. The author concluded that children practice moral principles out of mutual affection rather than fear of sanction. These children had learned that their behavior could harm others, just as they themselves could be adversely affected by dishonesty from friends.

Selman (1971) found that the ability to take the role of another was related to the level of moral reasoning and necessary for reasoning at the conventional level. A child must be able to infer how another person will feel and react in a given situation and sense how his own actions will affect that person before he can make conventional moral judgments.

Piaget felt that the child's ability to cooperate with others, to interact in a reciprocal manner, and to take the role of another was related to his ability to judge right or wrong by the intentions of the

actor and not by the amount of good or damage done by the act or by the authority of the one judging that act. In his experimental model Piaget used pairs of stories consisting of a well-intended deed producing a large amount of damage and an ill-intended deed producing little damage. With the children in the sample he found nine years to be the average age for subjective responsibility, or use of intent in judging the deed (Piaget, 1948).

Several researchers have questioned this age discrimination as well as Piaget's methodology. It was felt that children could recognize intent at a much earlier age if the stories were presented differently and that children might not judge good and bad acts equally. McKechnie (1971) manipulated the structure of the stories and found that younger children could use intent as a criterion for judgment if the consequences of the acts were the same in both stories or if the consequences were small. It was found, too, that the children could evaluate bad behavior at an earlier age than good behavior and that lying was the first area in which a subjective response was produced.

Jensen and Hughston (1973) also reported children being more sensitive to negative acts. In their study good or bad behavior was followed by either a reward or punishment. The children, all preschool aged, were able to judge bad behavior as being bad regardless of whether that behavior was punished or rewarded; however they sometimes judged good behavior to be bad when the act was punished.

In another study seventy-five percent of the subjects were found to be using intent at age six (Armsby, 1971). This author changed the structure of his stories to differentiate more clearly accidental from purposive behavior, and he also manipulated the consequences of the acts.

Subjectivity was found to be influenced by degree of damage, with fewer children utilizing intent when the damage was greater. Similar results were reported by Buchanan and Thompson (1973), who used a study formulated to allow the children to assess damage and intent simultaneously.

An age difference in the use of intent for positive- and negative-consequence conditions was also established by Costanzo, et al. (1973). These authors, however, found that younger children used intent in moral evaluations when the outcome was positive but not when it was negative, an opposite reaction.

Chandler, Greenspan, and Barenboim (1973) discovered that when presented with videotaped stories, younger children were more apt to consider intent than when the traditional verbal method was used. Three-fourths of the seven-year-old children judged on the basis of intent when viewing the stories on videotape as opposed to one-third of those who received them verbally. A study by Magowan and Lee (1970) indicated that children gave more immature responses to stories originating from foreign cultures or unfamiliar situations. The authors suggest that this may be an indication of imperfections in the testing procedure. It is possible, however, that in order to progress in development an individual must be able to generalize from previous separate experiences and form an over-all criterion for basing decisions. This may be more difficult with unfamiliar or foreign examples or when the situations are explained verbally rather than visually presented as in real life.

Piaget considered the use of intent to be related to what he called the ability to "conserve"; he felt that a child must be able to think logically before he can consider intent in moral judgments. Hardeman (1972) tested children for both moral reasoning and logical thinking and

found no direct correlation between the two characteristics. A significant relationship was noted at the extreme ends of the scale, however. In other words subjects did not increase in logical thought as they increased in moral reasoning, but those who were nonconservers had a tendency toward low moral reasoning scores. The suggestion was that the ability to conserve may be a prerequisite to the ability to judge intent in moral reasoning. Studies by Glassco, Milgram, and Youniss (1970), and by Hardeman (1972) also found that the ability to conserve was related to moral development and the child's readiness to use the concept of intent in judgments.

Various elements in the child's personality as well as his overall cognitive growth have been examined as possible influences on moral development. Schleiter and Douglas (1973) reported that teachers of a group of young children were not able to separate those who used intent in moral judgment from those who did not on the basis of verbal skill exhibited in the classroom; however there was a correlation between high moral judgment and mature cognitive and emotional behavior. The teachers did not rate the children using a higher level of reasoning as easier to control or better behaved. With a group of pre-school children, however, teachers rated those testing highest in moral judgment to be less aggressive in the nursery school setting.

The research testing Piaget's theory of moral judgment has tended to support his hypothesis that this type of reasoning is developmental and related to other areas of growth within the individual. Different stories produced slightly different results and varying ages for stage changes, but the overall picture is one of a stage-sequential progression in reasoning. Since Piaget felt that acquiring the concept of

intent constituted a major shift in development, this engendered much investigation, again tending to support his hypothesis.

### Kohlberg's Stages

Kohlberg himself has done extensive research with his theory, and he is still revising his methods of testing and determining stage level as well as reexamining stage content. The main implication of a stage sequence forming a hierarchy was verified in several studies. Kohlberg (1958) found that older subjects do indicate greater use of more advanced stages; and when subjects were tested over a period of time, they did tend to advance in stage usage (Kohlberg and Kramer, 1969). Turiel (1969) found that this advance was one stage at a time. Rest (1973) determined that a group of high school seniors understood all stages below the one at which they tested, and those who partially used a higher stage usually comprehended that stage also. In studies designed to upgrade moral reasoning Blatt (1969) found, too, that gains were made to the subsequent higher stage.

Kohlberg assessed the moral development of different cultures and different ethnic groups and concluded that the theory is not culture-based. Middle-class urban boys from the United States, Taiwan, Mexico, and Turkey all seemed to go through the same stage-sequential reasoning in making decisions on moral issues (Kohlberg, 1969). Tomeh (1971) found differences in codes of moral behavior between American and Middle Eastern college students but concluded that these differences were in terms of social structure and that the organization of moral thought was the same for both groups.

## Relationship of Moral Development to Other Variables

The existence of a relationship between moral reasoning and moral behavior is not a part of Kohlberg's theory, and differing moral decisions should be possible at any level using the same type of reasoning. However Kohlberg (1969) does feel that there should be some connection between moral reasoning and moral action, and various behaviors and attitudes have been examined with respect to this contention. Most of these studies have sampled adults, who have presumably neared the end of their cognitive growth and have developed at least a trend of thought that will determine personality type from an ethical standpoint. College students have been mainly utilized in this respect, as they are more readily available for testing. These subjects, however, do not necessarily represent a cross-section of the population; as a greater proportion of them probably reach a post-conventional level of reasoning. With this research the emphasis seemed to be on the resulting actions of various stages of development and how these actions affect the community. Elements such as political ideals, personality traits, and religious convictions were examined in light of level of moral reasoning.

Due to an increase in student activism during the past few years, political ideology has been widely studied on college campuses. A recent study done by Fishkin, Keniston, and MacKinnon (1973) indicated that conservative individuals exhibited more conventional moral reasoning, while radical ideology was found among those who used either pre- or post-conventional reasoning. Conservatism correlated highly with Stage 4 reasoning or the "law and order" orientation. The authors indicated that post-conventional thought was not associated with agreement with radical



ideas as much as it was associated with disagreement with conservative ideas; pre-conventional reasoning, however, was directly related to approval of radical thought. Moral reasoning, as Fishkin, et al. see it, underlies the concepts for understanding politics and is thus tied to political ideology.

Sullivan and Quarter (1972) reported some psychological correlations of post-conventional moral reasoning. They found these individuals to hold radical political views, strong intellectual interests, a high degree of independence, a concern for others, and a low amount of practicality.

Hogan (1970), in his investigation of the relationship between moral reasoning and personality structure, used what was called "the ethics of social responsibility" and "the ethics of personal conscience" as determinants for reasoning. He found that those who advocated the ethics of social responsibility, or Kohlberg's Stage 5 reasoning, were "good natured, thoughtful, and well socialized, but somewhat conservative in their political orientation" (p. 205). Those who advocated the ethics of personal conscience, or Stage 6 reasoning, were "progressive, rebellious, unconventional, and with pronounced tendencies toward social activism" (p. 205). The author indicated that neither stage should be considered to be of a higher developmental level, but alternate progressions from Stage 4. Some personality types will choose Stage 5 and others Stage 6, both being necessary to a well-run society. Hogan and Dickstein (1972) related the ethics of social responsibility to a suspicious attitude toward other people and a belief in the instrumental value of the law. They related the ethics of personal conscience to a tendency to blame and distrust institutions and a doubt as to the effectiveness of the law in

promoting human welfare.

The attitudes a person holds toward moral values and the violation of these values is another area that has engendered some concern. Fodor (1972b), in a study of adolescent boys, reported no significant relationship between cheating and level of moral development. Cheating, however, seems to be a wide-spread practice. Smith, Ryan, and Diggins (1972) examined cheating among college students and found that seventy percent of the males and sixty-three percent of the females admitted to recent cheating on an exam; ninety-three percent of the total group felt that this was a normal part of life.

Several studies have examined religious training and religiosity in connection with the level of moral reasoning and found that there does not appear to be a correlation between these factors (Armsby, 1971; Wright and Cox, 1971; Viljoen and Grabler, 1972).

Kurtines and Greif (1974) evaluated some of the research done with moral judgment and behavior and concluded that although there is an indication that the two may be related, the data are not adequate to support this contention. They report that many of the studies were concerned with a narrow stage range; and in this sense, the different stages are not predictive of behavior. The relationship of moral reasoning to behavior is of interest because it is in this area that a number of practical applications of the theory become apparent, particularly in connection with deviancy or delinquency.

#### Moral Development and Deviant Behavior

The behavior expressed by the majority in a society usually falls within the bounds of conduct set by that society; and although each

individual may at times exhibit some abnormal behavior, most will confine those actions to rare occasions or to situations that are not readily discernable. Delinquency is defined as behavior which a society does not accept and for which the response is some type of punishment or correction. It is of interest to look at the moral development of delinquents and those exhibiting other types of abnormal behavior in order to determine some of the ways these people differ from the majority of the population.

Some experimenters have assessed the moral judgments of the parents of delinquent individuals and compared them with their children and with other parents. Hudgins and Prentice (1973) compared delinquent and non-delinquent adolescent boys and their mothers, attempting to control these groups for age, intelligence, ethnic background, social class, and family structure; all were from lower- or lower-middle-class families. The results indicated that the mothers of both groups used higher moral reasoning than did their children and that the mothers of nondelinquents used higher reasoning than mothers of delinquents. Delinquent sons and their mothers combined indicated a lower level of reasoning than did the non-delinquent group. The delinquent boys primarily used Kohlberg's Stages 1 and 2, while nondelinquents primarily used Stage 3; none used Stage 4 reasoning. Most delinquent mothers used Stage 3, and most nondelinquent mothers used Stage 4 reasoning. Forty percent of the delinquent mothers used a single stage in reasoning a majority of the time compared with seventy percent of the nondelinquent mothers, indicating that the latter were more stable in stage usage, a typical adult position.

In a study by Fodor (1972a) delinquents were again found to exhibit a lower score in moral judgment. The author reasoned that since Stages 3

and 4 were concerned with the social influence of others and Stages 5 and 6 had a more autonomous orientation, as subjects moved up in reasoning level, they should be more inclined to resist attempts to change their decisions. This was found to be true; and since the delinquents were reported to indicate lower levels of moral reasoning, perhaps this helps to explain the influence of peer pressure with these individuals.

Prentice (1972) worked with a group of adolescent delinquents in attempting to raise their level of moral reasoning. These were thirteen-year-old boys with three or more delinquent offenses, selected at random from a juvenile court. Most were below average in intelligence and educational level and had a low use of intent for defining moral decisions. The subjects were divided into three groups; two were exposed either to live modeling or verbal descriptions of stories using intent, and the third was a control group. The two experimental groups showed an increase in moral judgment level, while the control group did not; however a follow-up nine months later found no difference between the three groups in number of additional offenses. This could suggest that other, external elements influence delinquent behavior as much or more than the level of moral development; however use of intent occurs at about Stage 3, which is still below the average for adult reasoning, and it is possible that some elements of principled reasoning would be more important for reducing delinquency.

Fodor (1973) contrasted psychopathic and nonpsychopathic delinquents and found the psychopaths as a whole to have a lower level of moral development. Most of the latter group reasoned at Stages 1 and 2, while half of the nonpsychopaths were at Stages 3 or 4. All subjects were institutionalized, and the psychopaths were so judged by counselors using

previously validated criteria. The psychopathic personality was defined as being asocial, self-centered, and free of guilt, all characteristics that would better fit a pre-conventional reasoning pattern.

A similar study compared sociopathic children with normal children, matching them for mental age, social class, and IQ, and found the sociopathic group to use less mature moral reasoning (Campagna and Harter, 1975). In this study the sociopathic subjects were institutionalized boys from a state-operated treatment center for various types of psychopathologies, and the control subjects were normal school children. In an earlier writing Kohlberg (1958) had reported evidence of a correlation between antisocial behavior and pre-conventional moral reasoning, and these authors confirmed the findings. The children in the study were preadolescents, at the age where the shift to conventional reasoning is taking place; normal children were making the shift, while the sociopathic group was not. It was suggested that since the onset of sociopathy usually occurs at about this age, possibly there is a connection between sociopathic behavior and arrested moral development.

The research with moral development and deviant behavior has been concerned primarily with children or adolescents; very little is known about adult deviancy in this respect. With children and adolescents growth and development are still largely taking place, but with adults this is not the case; and this group may furnish information that will be of value in better understanding human conduct.

## CHAPTER III

### DATA COLLECTION AND SCORING PROCEDURES

#### Subjects and Sampling Methods

One of the problems inherent in measuring any characteristics of delinquent individuals is that of separating the actual criminal from the noncriminal. Most offenders are never apprehended, and a large proportion of crimes committed go unreported (Sandhu, 1974). It is therefore probable that the criminals available for testing do not represent a cross section of offenders, and it is also possible that a control population will include some who have committed crimes. Any judgments made, therefore, must be on the basis of those convicted of crimes rather than on those committing them; although it is assumed that those who have been convicted have in general committed more crimes.

Two main subject categories were utilized in the study, a prison and a nonprison population; and since low-income people and minority groups are overly represented in a correctional institution, efforts were made to weigh the control sample in this respect. The small number of subjects available in either group made random sampling infeasible; and with both populations all available participants were utilized. It is assumed, therefore, that those taking part in the study constitute an adequate representation of their segment.

### Prison Population

Two prison facilities were sampled, both a part of the Oklahoma penal system. Thirty-seven men were tested at the Oklahoma City Community Treatment Center (CTC); and from these, thirty usable questionnaires were obtained. The Community Treatment Center is a minimum-security institution used primarily as a work-release or pre-release center. Many of the residents were on work-release and eligible for parole in a few months; others were trustees. Most had previously been in a maximum-security institution. The average population of the Center is approximately one hundred men, and they are housed in an old motel with several buildings and surrounding grounds. The men are allowed to go from one building to another, and the area is not fenced. Since many of the inmates work during the daytime, the questionnaires were completed in the evening. This was done on three separate occasions during the summer of 1975. Two of the sessions were in lieu of a required group counseling period, and the third was a regularly scheduled "speaker's night" arranged by one of the residents. Each of the sessions was followed by a discussion period in which the men had an opportunity to question and talk about the dilemmas. Participation was on a voluntary basis, and the men were told that they need not put their names on the papers. Some did, however, or made some identifying mark in order to receive feed-back on the study.

Women were tested at the Women's Treatment Facility (WTF), also in Oklahoma City. This was done in September of 1975. Twenty-seven women completed the questionnaire; and of these, twenty-three were usable. In this case testing was done in the afternoon, as fewer of the women were on work-release. Again, participation was voluntary and anonymous; and although the women were told that they could remain after the testing for

questions or discussion, none did. The Women's Treatment Facility houses minimum-security offenders and is designed for a capacity of around seventy with an average population of from forty-five to fifty. The building is a medium-security structure with locked doors, opened at the entrance desk. Women are housed in the one building and can move freely within it.

### Nonprison Population

The largest segment of nonoffenders was taken from the Community Action Foundation (CAF) in Stillwater, Oklahoma. The Community Action Foundation is one of a number of such agencies instigated by President Lyndon Johnson's war on poverty. The function of these agencies is to give technical and financial assistance to low-income people in an effort to help increase their earning power. Since the agency, as far as possible, hires from low-income neighborhoods and gives preference to minorities, it was felt that this group would generate individuals with a racial and socioeconomic background more similar to that of the prisoners. Around fifty questionnaires were left at the agency to be distributed. These were given to staff members, committees working with the agency, or people seeking the agency's services. Additional written instructions were included with these tests. Twenty-three questionnaires were returned, and fifteen of them were usable.

An additional nonoffender segment consisted of six correctional staff members and three other individuals who expressed an interest in the project. For evaluation purposes these three were included in the staff group as they were similar in most respects. In the total nonprison group, nine were male and fifteen were female. In all there were



fifty-three prisoners and thirty-two nonprisoners.

## Instrumentation

### Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in the study consisted of two parts. The first section, given in Appendix A, comprised demographic and attitude information designed to tell something about the subject's family and economic background, educational and skill level, religious involvement, alcohol and drug habits, and arrest record. The questions on community-of-origin size and occupational category were taken in part from the College Student Questionnaire (Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N. J.), and the questions on religion were derived from Bhushan's (1970) dimensions of religiosity. Bhushan identified three components of religiosity: theoretical, the individual's belief in God; practical, his faith in observing rituals or duties such as prayer or in his belief in life after death; and emotional, the individual's feeling of devotion, dedication, and pleasure in religion. These elements were considered in formulating the questions for the study. Some of the other questions, such as the ones on socioeconomic background, educational and skill level and family size, were intended to give a measure of those elements that could contribute to or hinder cognitive growth and development.

The second part of the instrument consisted of the Defining Issues Test (D.I.T.) designed by Rest, et al. (1974) to give an objective measure of moral reasoning. Prior to the development of this test the level of moral reasoning had been derived from The Moral Judgment Scale, a subjective measure which Kohlberg (1958) had perfected as a result of work done in Chicago with boys from age ten to sixteen. To identify these

stages Kohlberg used nine hypothetical dilemmas, some derived from Piaget's earlier studies. The Moral Judgment Scale initially was administered on an individual basis with each dilemma being presented by itself and the subject asked to respond by telling what action should be taken in each story situation and giving a justification for this choice. From these justifications the interviewer determined the type of reasoning involved. A complicated system of scoring would yield the dominant stage at which the subject reasoned or the percentage usage of stages. This system presented a highly subjective method of deriving a test result, and a great deal of practice was necessary before the interviewer became competent.

In developing the D.I.T. the authors reasoned that while making a moral decision an individual is not isolated but able to observe and interact with others. Therefore it would be reasonable to expect that a valid decision could be made on the basis of what alternatives were available. The D.I.T. consists of six stories, or dilemmas, each followed by twelve issue statements relevant to the problem presented in the story. The subject rates the issues using a Likert scale of importance ("most," "much," "some," "little," "no"). Next the first four choices of the most important issues are ranked (most important, second most important, etc.). The statements in the test were designed to depict different stage positions, and it was reasoned that an individual would choose those issues representing the level of reasoning that seemed most rational to him. Correlations with other measures indicate that the D.I.T. relates to the subject's value positions and general comprehension; also it appears to measure development, as different age groups were used in the sample, and the scores increased appropriately with age and IQ. Also noted was a

high test-retest correlation ( $r = .81$ ). The authors list three methodological advantages to their instrument.

It is highly structured, so that the information from each subject is comparable; it minimizes variance in stage scores due to individual differences in verbal expressivity; and it is objectively scored (can be computerized), thus saving time and minimizing scorer bias (p. 492).

Written instructions were given with the test, and these were explained verbally to the prison groups. The sample story was also explained, and the prisoners were encouraged to ask questions if they did not understand any directions. It was pointed out that some statements in the test were meaningless and should be marked "no importance" (meaningless statements are included with each story, but presumably the subject would also find as meaningless those higher stage issues which he did not comprehend).

Rest (1974) indicated a high correlation on three of the six stories with the entire test and suggested their usage when response time is limited. Since the test alone takes about an hour to complete, it was felt that the total questionnaire might be beyond the attention span of some of the participants. For this reason the shortened version was used in the study. The three stories used and the instructions are given in Appendix B.

### Scoring

In scoring the test only the four ranked items were to be used, weighted from one to four in ascending order of their importance to the respondent. Every issue statement exemplifies a stage in development, and directions for relating each response to its level of development are given in Appendix C. The results of the D.I.T. are in terms of P score,

or the degree to which the subject used principled moral reasoning (Kohlberg's Stages 5 and 6). Dominant stage usage also can be calculated, but Rest has found that the P score is a more useful and reliable index for correlating moral judgment with other variables. A conversion table for converting total number of points assigned to each stage to a standard score is given in Appendix D. This conversion is based on the original sample (Rest, et al., 1974). A standard score of +1.000 indicates usage of that particular stage one standard deviation above the average. If a subject had one score exceeding +1.000, he was classified of that type; if two or more exceeded that number, he was classified as the type of the highest number, the others being subdominant.

The D.I.T. divides Stage 5 into 5A and 5B, or the "morality of social contract" and the "morality of intuitive humanism." Stage 6 is called the "morality of principles of ideal social cooperation." In addition to the meaningless statements, or "M" items, Rest has included an antiestablishment point of view, or "A" items. These are "a point of view which condemns tradition and the existing social order for its arbitrariness or its corruption by the rich for the exploitation of the poor (Rest, 1974, pp. 2-3). The author feels that this orientation may be a transitional stage between conventional and principled reasoning (Stages 4 and 5). These types also can be converted to standard scores as indicated in Appendix D.

Rest suggested that some responses may be invalid due to the respondent misunderstanding directions, not taking the test seriously, or marking at random. Some indications of invalid responses were inconsistencies between rating of issues and ranking of the first four choices or giving the same rating to most issues in a story. In scoring the

tests for the current study, it was apparent that a large proportion of the subjects were inconsistent in ratings and rankings. A few obviously were checked at random or were marked with most issues of "no importance," and these were discarded; but it was felt that the majority took the test seriously. In some sessions most of the participants stayed after the examination period to discuss the dilemmas and ask questions, and their comments suggested that they had been interested in the issues involved. It was noted that many of the subjects, instead of ranking, had counted the number of "great importance" items and entered that number in the rank of the most important. The number of "much important" items would then appear as the rank of the second most important, and so on. In looking at the ratings, however, most appeared to fall into a probability pattern with the responses forming a bell-shaped curve around a particular stage, the type of result that could be expected from a normally-rated test. Rest had indicated that a reading level of at least age thirteen was necessary for the issue statements and that some ninth graders could not rank. Since a prison population has a larger number of people who have a low educational level or have had difficulties in school, it was felt that possibly these individuals did not understand how to rank. Also, after the first session, different methods of explaining the procedure and more attention paid to ranking had not improved the results.

An alternate system of scoring was therefore devised, using a graduated weighting of issues as they were rated; and it is felt that this system is an adequate method of deriving both dominant stage and P score. Correctly-ranked tests were analyzed, and it was found that the alternate method of ranking correlated highly with the traditional method ( $r = .88, p < .005$ ). In this system of scoring every item judged as

"great importance" was given a weight. If the total equalled four or more, this number was divided into ten (the sum of weights for the four rankings); and the resulting weighted score was given to each item marked "great importance." Thus if a subject listed five items as "great importance," each of these received a weight of two. If a subject rated only one item as "great importance," that item received a weight of four and the rest of the items were divided into six. Next, if two items were rated "much importance," these were divided into five (the sum of the second and third most important) and received a weight of two and one-half. All items rated "some importance" were then divided into one. In this way ranking was done for the individual.

It was suggested that tests in which two stories had more than nine items rated the same be discarded. Since a shortened form was used, and since an alternate scoring method was adopted, the criteria for this study was to discard any test that had nine or more items rated the same on only one story. With the questionnaires used in the study, it is then assumed that the instruments and the adapted scoring method gave an accurate and adequate measure of the respondent's background and level of moral reasoning. It is further assumed that the subjects accurately represented their feelings and honestly answered the questions.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### Statistical Measures

Data accumulated through the procedures described in Chapter III were statistically analyzed in relation to P score, or the degree of principled moral reasoning used by the respondent. Dominant stage usage, antiestablishment orientation, and meaningless answers were also evaluated. The t-test was used to determine the significance of differences in means with a .05 level of confidence accepted as the basis for indicating a statistically significant distinction. A two-tailed test was employed throughout. The product-moment correlation coefficient was used to correlate P score with age and dominant stage usage, and to evaluate background characteristics.

#### Areas Investigated

Several variables were examined, both in terms of the entire population and broken down into categories and groups. As was mentioned in Chapter III, the total sample included seventy-seven subjects, fifty-three prisoners and twenty-four nonprisoners. By sex they were evenly distributed; thirty-nine were males and thirty-eight were females, although a slightly larger percentage of the prisoners were male (fifty-seven percent) and more nonprisoners were female (sixty-three percent). The dependent variables, P score, dominant stage usage, antiestablishment

orientation, and meaningless statement usage, were all examined in light of the independent variables, demographic and attitude information. However the main interest was in the relationship of P score to the other variables.

### Classifications

The two main categories of subjects, prisoners and nonprisoners, indicated some differences in principled moral reasoning. The offenders had a mean P score of 6.89, and that for nonoffenders was 10.54. This difference was significant ( $t = 3.61$ ,  $df = 75$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The maximum possible P score for the shorter version of the test was twenty-seven. A score of twenty was the highest in the current study, and this was achieved by one of the male prisoners. The range of scores for each group can be seen in Table I.

With those who could be typed as to dominant stage usage, the mode was Stage 3 for both categories. The prisoners had a median stage of 3.4; and the nonprisoners, 4.5. Nineteen percent of the prisoners were non-types, or did not show exceptional usage of any one stage, and this figure was thirty-three percent for the nonprisoners. Rest (1974) indicated that from ten to twenty percent of the sample could be expected to be non-types; the prisoners fell within this range, but the nonprisoners did not. No reason was given for the percentage that could not be typed, so it is difficult to tell why the one group exhibited this characteristic to an above-average degree.

Table I gives the mean P scores for the four groups. The two prison segments and the Community Action Foundation did not differ significantly among themselves, but they all showed a significant difference when



TABLE I  
DIFFERENCES IN MEAN P SCORES BETWEEN GROUPS OF  
PRISONERS AND NONPRISONERS

	N	Mean P Score	Standard Deviation	Range	t
CTC <sup>1</sup>	30	6.93	4.22	1-20	2.62*
WTF <sup>1</sup>	23	6.83	3.55	2-15	4.76***
CAF <sup>1</sup>	15	8.73	4.11	1-14	2.88**
Staff	9	13.56	3.71	8-18	

<sup>1</sup>CTC, WTF, and CAF are compared with staff for values of t.

\*p < .02.

\*\*p < .01.

\*\*\*p < .001.

compared with the staff group.

### Independent Variables

Several demographic variables were examined with respect to P score and dominant stage usage. These were: sex, age, race, number of children, family background, educational level, skill level, cigarette use, alcohol and drug use, arrest record, and misspelled words. Attitudes on religious involvement and decisions as to story dilemmas were measured also.

Sex. No significant differences in P score were found with respect to sex, although in all groups males scored slightly higher than did females. With the prison population a reversal of this was noted in dominant stage usage; as women showed a slight, but nonsignificant, higher stage usage.

Age. The median age for each classification is shown in Table II. The male prisoners were rather evenly distributed as to age, and about one-third were under twenty-five. With the women prisoners one-half were in this age range. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient indicated no significant correlation between P score and age, both with the total sample and when prisoners and nonprisoners were separated. This is consistent with the reasoning underlying the developmental theory, since a correlation should be found only with those groups who are still in the process of cognitive growth. Adults presumably have leveled off in development and will probably show a variety of levels of achievement, not related to age.

In order to look at how the various groups differed, the subjects

TABLE II  
 MEDIAN AGE OF SUBJECTS BY CLASSIFICATION AND GROUP

	Median Age	Range		Median Age
CTC	31	20-46		
			Prisoners	27.5
WTF	25	20-47		
		-----		
CAF	28	24-47		
			Nonprisoners	28
Staff	28	22-48		

were divided into three age categories: twenty-five and under, twenty-six to thirty-five, and over thirty-five. With this trichotomy some differences became apparent. In the total population this was not noted; but when the data were examined by group type, some trends developed. This is shown in Figure 1, where it can be seen that all but the male prisoners indicated a higher use of principled morality in the middle age-range. These differences were not significant; however, when the population was broken down to this extent, some of the cell totals were quite small. Dominant stage usage increased with age in each of the two prison groups and decreased with age in the nonprison categories. Again the numbers in each cell were small and differences were not significant.

Race. In the total sample forty-three described themselves as white (fifty-six percent), and thirty-four said that they were black or other minorities (forty-four percent). There was a significant difference in P score between these two groups with the Caucasians showing a mean of 8.91 and the minorities, 6.91 ( $t = 2.00$ ,  $df = 75$ ,  $p < .05$ ). With both the prison and nonprison categories the Caucasians had a higher P score than did minorities, although this was significant only with the nonprisoners ( $t = 3.58$ ,  $df = 22$ ,  $p < .01$ ). When broken down into group types the data generally followed the same pattern with the exception of the women prisoners where minorities showed a higher mean P score. The only significant difference was that of the staff group ( $t = 2.56$ ,  $df = 7$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This information is shown in Table III. Higher dominant stage usage accompanied a higher P score in all groups except the men prisoners who had lower dominant stage usage with the higher P score.

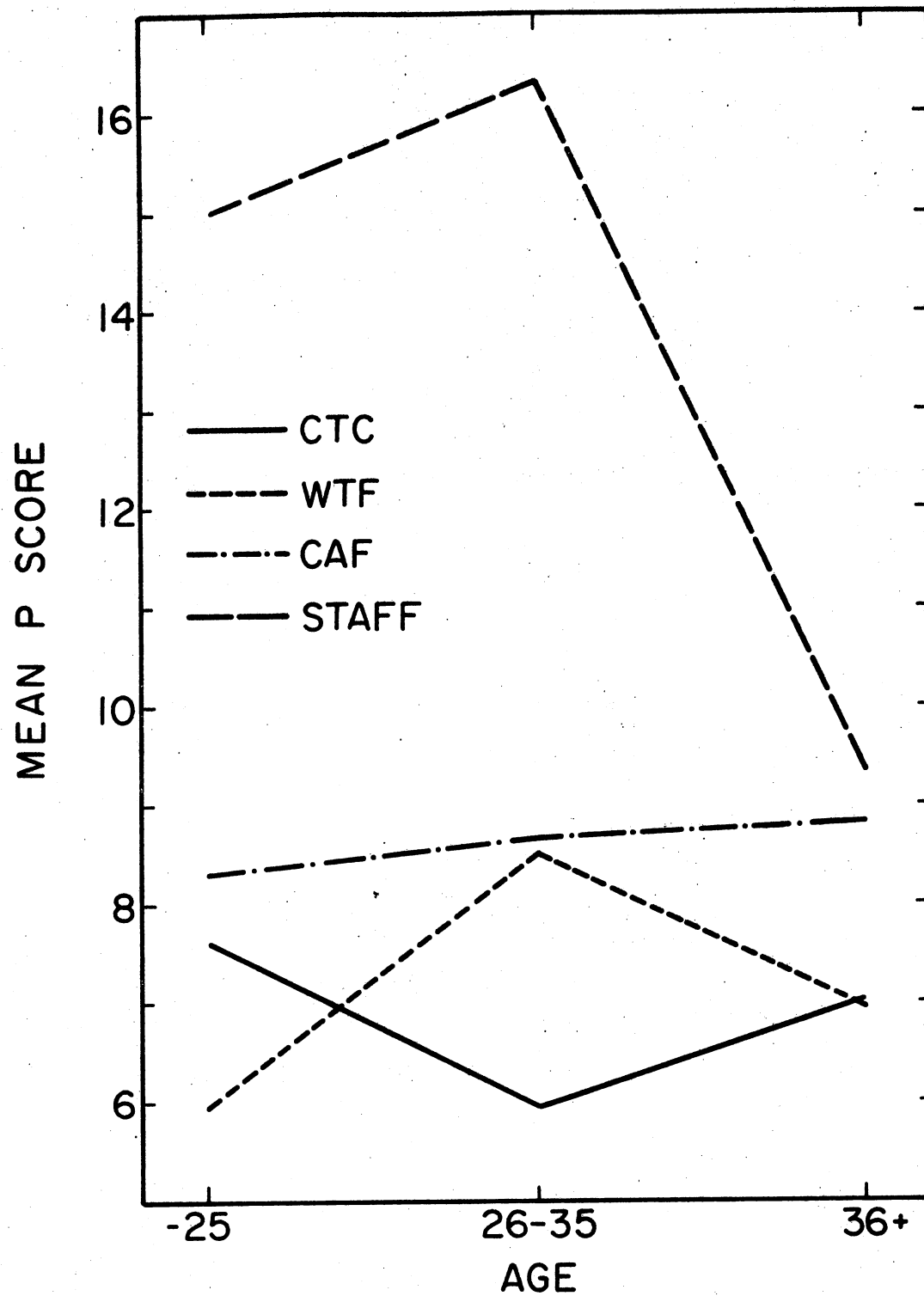


Figure 1. Age Trends in Mean P Score by Group Type

TABLE III  
DIFFERENCES IN MEAN P SCORE AS A FUNCTION OF RACE

	Caucasian			Minority			t
	Mean P Score	Standard Deviation	Range	Mean P Score	Standard Deviation	Range	
CTC N	7.72 18	4.79	2-20	5.75 12	2.99	1-10	1.27
WTF N	6.54 13	3.82	2-15	7.20 10	3.33	2-11	-0.43
CAF N	11.00 5	2.74	7-14	7.60 10	4.33	1-13	1.59
Staff N	14.86 7	3.02	10-18	9.00 2	1.41	8-10	2.56*

\*p < .05.

Children. It was found in looking at all subjects that those with no children or with only one child exhibited a higher mean P score than those with larger families. This mean was 10.54 as opposed to 7.09 for the larger families ( $t = 3.28$ ,  $df = 74$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The separate groups indicated a like trend, although this was not significant, again due possibly to small cell totals. Marital status made no difference in mean P score except with female prisoners where married women had a lower average score than those single or divorced. This was significant only at the .10 level.

Family Background. Subjects coming from city backgrounds showed a higher mean P score than rural or small-town individuals. This trend was apparent with all types and categories although significant only in the larger sample. The mean P score for those with rural backgrounds was 7.04, and for urban backgrounds, 8.54 ( $t = 2.34$ ,  $df = 73$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Subjects who came from families that had been supported by welfare or other state agencies showed a lower mean P score than parentally-supported individuals. However, the difference was not significant. Fifteen percent of the male prisoners came from welfare backgrounds, forty-four percent of the female prisoners were in this category, as were seven percent of the Community Action Foundation group. None of the staff group had a welfare background.

Individuals with parents who were white-collar workers tended to have a higher P score than did those from blue-collar families, although the difference was not significant. Of the total sample twenty-four came from white-collar backgrounds. Fifteen prisoners had white-collar parents, giving them a slightly better than average background in this respect.

A mean P score of 9.56 was found with those coming from small families; those from larger families showed a mean score of 6.81. This difference was significant ( $t = 2.82$ ,  $df = 74$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The same trend was apparent in all sub-groups and categories. With the nonprison category this difference was quite large and significant showing a mean P score of 13.30 for small-family backgrounds as opposed to 8.57 for those from larger families ( $t = 2.87$ ,  $df = 22$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Birth order had some affect on level of moral reasoning although significant only at the .10 level. Youngest children were found to have the highest P score with first, middle, and only children following in that sequence. The largest category comprised middle children, both with prisoners and with nonprisoners.

Education. Amount of schooling made a significant difference in average P score also. Those with some education beyond high school had a mean P score of 10.38, while those who had completed the twelfth grade or less showed 6.60 ( $t = 3.96$ ,  $df = 75$ ,  $p < .001$ ). When analyzed by categories, this difference was apparent only with the nonprison classification, the prison category showing little difference. In the nonprison group the mean P score for those with some college was 11.75, and for those with a high school education or less, 4.50 ( $t = 3.57$ ,  $df = 22$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Seventeen percent of the prisoners had had some college as compared to eighty-three percent of the nonprisoners. The fact that prisoners indicate little difference in P score associated with a higher educational level suggests some interesting questions. This group has seemingly derived less from a like amount of schooling. Were these individuals on the low end of the continuum in achievement, or have some other factors intervened in their developmental process making them



more inclined toward criminal behavior?

Skill Level. A significant difference was noted between respondents with white-collar and blue-collar skill levels. Those who were trained for white-collar jobs had a mean P score of 9.98, while those with only blue-collar training showed a mean P score of 6.43 ( $t = 3.03$ ,  $df = 75$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The trend was apparent in all sub-groups with the exception of the women prisoners who showed a reverse, with blue-collar skills indicating a higher P score. Twenty-six percent of the prisoners listed white-collar skills compared with eight-eight percent of nonprisoners. The fact that women listed a higher skill level may have been partly due to the fact that any typing skills were considered as white-collar, and these are stereotypically female occupations. Although men frequently can use a typewriter, they do not list this as a job skill; and for them it is not necessarily a job asset.

Cigarettes, Alcohol, and Drugs. Heavy cigarette smokers showed a mean P score lower than that of light or nonsmokers, although the difference was not significant. Of the prisoners, seventy percent were heavy smokers, with only twenty-five percent of the nonprisoners in that category.

In the total sample fifty-eight percent said that they used alcoholic beverages. Fifty percent of the prisoners used alcohol, as did seventy-eight percent of the nonprisoners. Only slight differences in P scores were apparent in all categories and groups. With the prisoners the abstainers showed a higher mean P score, and the reverse was true with the nonprisoners.

Use of marijuana was admitted to by forty-five percent of the total

sample with no difference in P score between users and nonusers. Of the prisoners forty-eight percent admitted to having smoked marijuana, and of the nonprisoners, thirty-eight percent. When the data were broken down into groups, varying trends emerged. These are shown in Table IV.

Twenty-one percent of the total admitted to using hard drugs with no significant difference in P score. As with marijuana use, the trends were divergent, and these are given in Table V. The male prisoners also showed a reversal in dominant stage usage; that is, the higher P scores were accompanied by lower dominant stage usage.

Arrest Record. Age of first arrest was not significantly related to use of principled moral reasoning, although a slightly higher score was noted for those first arrested at age eighteen or under. About half of the prisoners were eighteen or younger when first arrested. With the nonprison sample one person admitted to being arrested as a juvenile and three as adults. In the total sample forty-one percent confessed to a juvenile "run-in" with the law, and fifty percent of the prisoners answered "yes" to this question. Of the Community Action group only one admitted to a juvenile confrontation with the law, but with the staff section this figure was forty-four percent. No significant differences were noted in P scores. The number of adult convictions did not seem to alter the P score either. Of the male prisoners who responded to this question, sixty-four percent had more than one adult conviction; with the women prisoners this figure was fifty-two percent. Two of the Community Action group listed adult convictions and none of the staff.

Type of crime committed made some difference in mean P score, but this was not significant. Those committing crimes against property or person scored slightly higher than those with alcohol and drug-related

TABLE IV  
DIFFERENCES IN MEAN P SCORE AS A FUNCTION OF MARIJUANA USE

	Used Marijuana			Not Used Marijuana		t
	Mean P Score	Standard Deviation	Percent	Mean P Score	Standard Deviation	
CTC N	8.13 15	5.18	52	5.64 14	2.71	1.60
WTF N	5.10 10	1.73	43	8.15 13	4.06	2.22*
CAF N	7.60 5	5.08	33	9.30 10	3.71	0.74
Staff N	15.75 4	2.22	44	11.80 5	3.90	1.79

\*p < .05.

TABLE V  
DIFFERENCES IN MEAN P SCORE AS A FUNCTION OF DRUG USE

	Had Used Drugs			Had Not Used Drugs		t
	Mean P Score	Standard Deviation	Percent	Mean P Score	Standard Deviation	
CTC N	9.37 8	6.50	28	6.00 21	2.77	1.99*
WTF N	5.62 8	2.56	35	7.47 15	3.91	
CAF N				8.73 15	4.11	
Staff N				13.56 9	3.71	

\*p < .10.

offenses. (This was a mean P score of 7.2 for property and person offenses and 6.3 for alcohol and drug-related offenses.) More prisoners were incarcerated for crimes against property or person (seventy-eight percent) than for alcohol and drug-related crimes.

Spelling. Most of the questions were answered by checking an appropriate blank, but a few required that a word or two be written in. Even with those few instances it became apparent that some respondents had difficulty with spelling, therefore spelling was included as one of the variables. One or more misspelled words were noted on over thirty-seven percent of the questionnaires; and these individuals exhibited a lower mean P score, although the difference was significant only at the .20 level. Of the prisoners, sixty percent of the men misspelled one or more words; and with the women this was thirty-five percent. In the non-prison category only twelve percent made spelling errors, and these were all in the Community Action group.

Religion. Sixty-three percent of those responding considered themselves to be religious. These indicated a lower average P score, although the difference was not significant. All but one respondent attested to a belief in God although three omitted that question, and all but six answered that they believed in prayer. These six had a higher mean P score, but this was significant only at the .10 level. Seventy-three percent claimed a belief in life after death, and seventy-four percent said that they enjoyed attending church. Those who liked going to church had a mean P score of 7.30, and those who did not, 10.26, a significant difference ( $t = 2.34$ ,  $df = 71$ ,  $p < .02$ ). Seventy-nine percent of the total listed a religious preference, however two Buddhists were excluded

from this category. Those who claimed no denomination had a higher mean P score, although the difference was not significant. The data are shown on Table VI. Percentages of "yes" responses to religious questions by group type are given in Table VII. As can be seen, there is an inverse relationship between P score and percentage of positive responses to all religious questions with the exception of belief in God. These percentages were added and the mean computed giving a religious index for each group. These also show an inverse relationship to P score.

Story Decisions. No significant differences in mean P score were apparent in connection with decisions made as to what should be done with each dilemma. Table VIII shows the percentage making each judgment in the three stories and the concomitant P scores. It is of interest to note that the prisoners and nonprisoners were about equal in the percentages making each moral decision.

#### Other Dependent Variables

Dominant stage usage in most instances was found to correspond with P score; that is, the higher stage usage was found with higher P scores. In situations where the reverse was true this was mentioned.

The antiestablishment orientation was used by thirty-two percent of the sample, both as a dominant and as a subdominant stage. Twenty-eight percent of the males and thirty-seven percent of the females chose antiestablishment statements at a rate at least one standard deviation above normal. For the various groups these figures were: male prisoners, thirty-three percent; female prisoners, thirty-nine percent; Community Action Foundation, four percent; and staff, none. Its usage tended to increase with age although not significantly. Caucasians also tended

TABLE VI  
 DIFFERENCES IN MEAN P SCORES AS A FUNCTION  
 OF RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES

	Mean P Score Yes	Mean P Score No	Percent Yes	t
Religious Person	7.73	9.15	63	1.28
Belief in God	8.05	7.00	99	--
Belief in Prayer	7.67	11.17	92	1.86*
Belief in Life After Death	7.67	8.16	73	0.42
Enjoy Church	7.30	10.26	74	2.54**
Denomination	7.74	9.20	79	1.11

\*p < .10.

\*\*p < .02.

TABLE VII  
 PERCENTAGES OF "YES" RESPONSES TO RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS  
 AND CORRELATIONS WITH MEAN P SCORE

	Reli- gious Person	Belief in God	Belief in Prayer	Belief in Life After Death	Enjoy Church	Denomi- nation	Percent- age Mean
CTC (6.93) <sup>1</sup>	59	96	89	65	78	71	76
WTF (6.82) <sup>1</sup>	68	100	100	86	81	90	88
CAF (8.73) <sup>1</sup>	73	100	100	71	67	87	83
Staff (13.55) <sup>1</sup>	44	100	67	62	56	67	66

<sup>1</sup>Mean P score.



TABLE VIII  
 DIFFERENCES IN MEAN P SCORES AND PERCENTAGES AS A FUNCTION OF  
 TYPES OF JUDGMENTS ON STORY DILEMMAS

		Prisoner		Nonprisoner	
		Percent	Mean P Score	Percent	Mean P Score
Heinz	Yes	45	6.54	48	10.54
	Undecided	23	7.33	26	12.67
	No	32	7.06	26	10.00
Prisoner	Yes	15	7.50	12	10.67
	Undecided	23	7.33	12	10.00
	No	62	6.57	75	10.61
Newspaper	Yes	24	7.33	22	10.80
	Undecided	8	5.50	26	10.83
	No	69	6.77	52	11.08

toward a higher use of antiestablishment statements; this again was not significant.

Meaningless statements were used to some extent in all groups, and at about the same rate (fifty-seven percent for men prisoners, sixty-one percent for women prisoners, forty percent for Community Action, and fifty-six percent for staff). No trends were apparent in relation to any of the other variables. It is not known why these statements were picked. Perhaps they sounded important to the respondent. One staff member with a high "meaningless" score had chosen a few words out of the statements and then restructured them into a more meaningful form. Rest (1974) had originally included these statements in order to check those who were trying to test high; however he has found that this was not a valid indicator.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Hypotheses Tested

The data described in the preceding chapter indicate that the level of moral reasoning fluctuates in relation to different variables. When the differences in P score were analyzed, some patterns became apparent; and these are discussed in light of the hypotheses investigated in the study.

#### Developmental Variables

The hypothesis that level of moral reasoning would correlate with those variables that were felt to have an influence on cognitive development was found to be true. Favorable and unfavorable factors produced differences in principled moral reasoning, some of which were not statistically significant, but all of which were in the direction of the favorable background characteristics. These are summarized in Table IX. The choice of characteristics was of course subjective, and others could have been included. Some items that were in the questionnaire could be analyzed only in terms of the entire population, as too few responses were available. For example, only one percent of the total sample had spent time in an orphanage or foster home. Because of the nature of the areas involved, rural background, in this study, was considered to be less favorable. The size of the major city from which much of the sample

TABLE IX  
 MEAN P SCORE AS A FUNCTION OF BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

	N	P Score	Standard Deviation	t
<u>Number of Children</u>				
None or One	22	10.54	4.67	3.28 p < .01
Two or More	54	7.09	3.94	
<u>Number of Moves</u>				
One to Three	39	8.13	4.50	0.20
Four or More	38	7.92	4.41	
<u>Home Location</u>				
Urban	48	8.54	4.75	2.34 p < .05
Rural	27	7.04	3.83	
<u>Home Background</u>				
Family	67	8.07	4.26	0.25
Foster or Orphanage	10	7.70	5.72	
<u>Support</u>				
Family	65	8.20	4.38	0.80
Welfare	12	7.08	7.78	
<u>Parental Occupation</u>				
White Collar	24	8.92	5.13	1.20
Blue Collar	46	7.61	3.84	
<u>Family Size</u>				
One to Three	34	9.56	5.00	2.82 p < .01
Four or More	43	6.81	3.53	
<u>Educational Level</u>				
Some College	29	10.38	4.06	3.96 p < .001
High School or Less	48	6.60	4.05	
<u>Number of Job Skills</u>				
Two or More	25	8.44	4.57	0.57
None or One	52	7.83	4.39	
<u>Job Skill Level</u>				
White Collar	25	9.88	5.30	3.03 p < .01
Blue Collar	30	6.43	2.99	

was taken is not large, and rural communities in Oklahoma are often relatively poor. Data from a large metropolitan center would possibly indicate the opposite trend. The fact that level of moral reasoning is related to characteristics in the individual's background that are conducive to cognitive development lends support to the general theory of moral reasoning. Since these characteristics appear in varying amounts in the composition of different individuals, this may contribute to the range of ultimate levels of development.

The second hypothesis, that both prisoners and minorities would indicate a lower level of moral judgment, was also substantiated. The prisoners were significantly lower in use of principled moral reasoning than were nonprisoners. When the prisoners were compared with the Community Action group, which was considered to be more similar in background, these differences were still apparent but not significant. This supports the second part of the hypothesis, that the difference between the two groups would be less when controlled for background characteristics adversely influencing development. Table X gives the percentage in the four groups that were found to exhibit each of these characteristics. The percentage mean yields an index of background characteristics for each group, and from this it can be seen that the Community Action Foundation more closely resembled the two prison samples than it did the other nonprison group. The differences between the percentage indices of the Community Action Foundation and the two prison groups were not significant, but the Community Action sample differed significantly from the staff segment ( $t = 2.39$ ,  $df = 18$ ,  $p < .05$ ). In the total sample the number of unfavorable characteristics exhibited by each subject showed an inverse correlation with P score ( $r = -.46$ ,  $p < .001$ ), again indicating

TABLE X  
 PERCENTAGES OF BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS BY GROUP TYPE

	Blue- Collar Parents	Welfare Back- ground	Have Two or More Children	Four or More Moves in Childhood	Rural Back- ground	From Large Family	Low Number of Job Skills	Low Job Skill Level	Education Level Below College	Mi- nor- ity	Percent- age Mean
CTC (6.93) <sup>1</sup> N=30	74	13	82	63	34	47	67	91	77	40	59
WTF (6.83) <sup>1</sup> N=23	58	30	69	82	27	65	78	50	91	43	59
CAF (8.73) <sup>1</sup> N=15	80	6	80	13	60	73	67	18	27	67	49
Staff (13.56) <sup>1</sup> N=9	33	0	22	33	22	33	44	33	0	22	24

<sup>1</sup>Mean P score.

that P score is not as much related to an inclination toward crime as it is to a combination of background characteristics that are not optimal for development.

As was predicted, minorities also showed a significantly lower level of moral reasoning. Table XI gives the percentages of background characteristics for both Caucasians and minorities, and it can be seen that the minorities exhibit a lower background index, although there is not as great a difference as between prisoners and nonprisoners. However these characteristics were not weighted; and it is possible that quality of education was not the same for both groups, particularly with some of the Black subjects who may have attended segregated schools. If this were considered, the index number might be altered somewhat.

This background index can be computed for other variables, and Table XII is an example of this for sex. In each instance it can be seen that there is an inverse relationship between P score and the index number, with a smaller difference in indices accompanying a smaller difference in P scores.

#### Types of Crime

The hypothesis that different types of crime would show significant differences in moral reasoning was not supported; in fact, the trend was opposite to that predicted. It may be that consideration of the rights of others is less important in determining principled moral reasoning than is cognitive functioning, and in that case there should be little difference between the two groups in level of moral reasoning. If cognitive functioning were the sole determinant in level of moral judgment, it is possible that in the current study crimes against person or

TABLE XI  
 PERCENTAGES OF BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS BY RACE

	Blue- Collar Parents	Welfare Back- ground	Have Two or More Children	Four or More Moves in Childhood	Rural Back- ground	From Large Family	Low Number of Job Skills	Low Job Skill Level	Education Level Below College	Mi- nor- ity	Percent- age Mean
Caucasian (8.91) <sup>1</sup> N=43	49	19	65	49	32	44	67	50	60	--	48
Minority (6.91) <sup>1</sup> N=34	74	11	76	50	38	71	68	52	56	--	55

<sup>1</sup>Mean P score.



TABLE XII  
 PERCENTAGES OF BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS BY SEX

	Blue- Collar Parents	Welfare Back- ground	Have Two or More Children	Four or More Moves in Childhood	Rural Back- ground	From Large Family	Low Number of Job Skills	Low Job Skill Level	Education Level Below College	Mi- nor- ity	Percent- age Mean
Male (8.38) <sup>1</sup> N=39	33	10	71	56	34	44	59	72	59	41	48
Female (7.66) <sup>1</sup> N=38	55	21	74	42	38	68	76	35	66	47	52

<sup>1</sup>Mean P score.

property represented more premeditation and thought, while alcohol- and drug-related crimes were not purposive in nature. Most of the drug-related crimes were not purposive in nature. Most of the drug-related crimes were for possession rather than sale of drugs, and the alcohol-related crimes were for driving while intoxicated. During the discussion periods following the testing, some of those who were convicted for possession of drugs indicated that they did not feel that they had done anything wrong. One eighteen-year old who was in prison for sale of drugs said that he felt that sale of marijuana was not wrong because smoking it was a common practice, but sale of LSD was wrong because it could be harmful. In this case lack of intent to do wrong could indicate a lower level of cognitive functioning.

#### Religious Commitment

The hypothesis that a strong religious commitment would be associated with a lower P score was found to be true. With the exception of the question on belief in God where comparison was with only one respondent, all "yes" answers accompanied a lower mean P score. These differences were not all significant, but the trend was apparent (see Table VI). The total population seemed to be religiously oriented with the mean percentage of "yes" responses showing an inverse relationship to P score. Our society is one that espouses religious involvement, and this is particularly true in the section of the country from which the sample was taken. An individual indicating a negative response to commonly held beliefs would probably have given some thought to his position, and for this reason it was suggested that on the average these unconventional beliefs would be associated with a higher cognitive ability.

### Summary of Findings

The findings of this study indicate that those convicted of criminal offenses tend to use a lower level of moral reasoning in making decisions on social issues. However it appears that this is not because the level of reasoning is related to criminal behavior itself but because other elements are present in the makeup of these individuals that contribute to a lower level of development. Background characteristics that do not encourage optimum cognitive growth are present with those groups, both criminal and noncriminal, that indicate a lower level of moral judgment. Prisoners were found to differ from nonprisoners in several respects. As far as unfavorable background factors were concerned, these appeared in their makeup to a greater extent. More prisoners than nonprisoners were from welfare families, and all of those who spent time in an orphanage or foster home were offenders. More offenders had frequent childhood moves, a larger number of children, a lower number of skills and skill level, and less education. This group indicated a higher use of cigarettes and drugs but used alcohol to a lesser extent than did nonprisoners. Their attitudes toward religion and their decisions on story issues did not differ significantly from those of nonoffenders.

The background characteristics that indicated a significant difference in mean P score were those associated with family size, home location, and educational and job-skill level. The factors relating to job skills and education are a direct reflection of ability to reason abstractly and to generalize, as advanced schooling and white-collar jobs require a more sophisticated cognitive ability. It could also be reasoned that family size reflects cognitive ability, since family planning requires a degree of responsibility and foresight and the ability to

project future obligations. Rural living on the average could engender more poverty and thus fewer opportunities for cognitive growth and development. All of these factors, therefore, would relate to the ability to generalize knowledge and information and to reason on an abstract level.

The level of moral reasoning, then, is neither an indicator of criminality nor a predictor of criminal involvement, but a measure of the cognitive level of the individual. It tells us something about how he thinks and what resources he uses to make decisions, but it does not indicate which decisions he will make.

The question arises as to the usefulness of determining the level of moral reasoning with delinquent individuals. Does this measure have any practical applications for a correctional program? It would appear that there could be some advantages both in giving the test and in analyzing and using the results. Prior to the current testing it was felt that prisoners might have negative reactions to the two dilemmas involving theft and prison; however, during the discussion periods it was found that the opposite was true; and these were the stories that held the most interest. The questions and comments generated during the sessions made it apparent that the instrument itself could be of value in promoting discussion and encouraging the exchange of ideas on ethical problems. As an example, one of the prisoners commented that the Heinz story, in which a man stole a drug in order to save his dying wife, was very much like the situation that resulted in his own prison sentence. He said that he had resorted to theft in order to feed his family. The discussion that followed included whether Heinz had explored all possibilities and what alternatives there were for him other than theft. Another man suggested

that in this story an additional moral issue should be considered, that of killing someone. He said that he would not go into a situation, such as stealing from the druggist, without being prepared to defend himself. Discussions of this type offer a good way to explore new ideas and increase the capacity within which reasoning takes place.

Knowledge of the level at which a person formulates his judgments could also be helpful in a counseling situation. It would be useless, for instance, to approach an individual concerning his role in or obligation to society if that person reasoned at the pre-conventional level and were not able to comprehend anything other than his own needs and the prospects of punishment. The ability to effect a change in another depends in part upon being able to understand that person's viewpoint and alter his outlook from the foundation with which he operates.

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APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC AND ATTITUDE INFORMATION

## INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete the following questions as accurately as you can. There is no need to put your name on the questionnaire, as the answers will be computer evaluated in order to get an average for the entire group. While you should feel free not to answer any question that you wish, it is hoped that you will answer all of them.

1. Sex:  Male  
 Female
2. What was your age on your last birthday? \_\_\_\_\_ years
3. Race:  American Indian  
 Black  
 White  
 Other (please specify \_\_\_\_\_)
4. Marital status:  
 Single (never married)  
 Married  
 Common Law marriage  
 Divorced
5. How many children do you have and what are their ages? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many times did you move while you were growing up? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the size of the community in which you spent the most time while you were growing up? Please check the most appropriate answer. (If you lived in a suburb of a city, please answer in terms of the size of the entire city.)  
 An isolated home on a farm or other rural area.  
 A town of less than 1,000 people.  
 A town of 1,000 to 2,500 people.  
 A town of 2,500 to 10,000 people.  
 A city of 10,000 to 25,000 people.  
 A city of 25,000 or more people.
8. Did you spend any time in a foster home? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no  
If you answered yes above, how many years did you spend there? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Did you spend any time in an orphanage? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no  
If you answered yes above, how many years did you spend there? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Who supplied the support for your family while you were growing up?  
 Father  
 Mother  
 Welfare or State agency  
 Other (please specify \_\_\_\_\_)

11. Check the occupational category that best fits the individual indicated in question 10.
- Unskilled worker, laborer, farm worker, household help
- Semiskilled worker (machine operator, etc.)
- Service worker (fireman, policeman, barber, etc.)
- Skilled worker or craftsman (carpenter, electrician, plumber, etc.)
- Salesman, bookkeeper, secretary, office worker
- Owner, manager, partner of a small business; lower-level government official, military commissioned officer
- Professional requiring a bachelor's degree (engineer, elementary or secondary teacher, etc.)
- Owner, high-level executive in a large business or high-level government agency
- Professional requiring an advanced college degree (doctor, lawyer, college professor, etc.)
12. How many brothers and sisters do you have? \_\_\_\_ brothers \_\_\_\_ sisters
13. What is your position in this group? If you are the oldest, answer 1st; if you are the second oldest, answer 2nd, etc. \_\_\_\_\_
14. What is the last grade in school that you completed? Please circle one.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 College 1 2 3 4 Grad. School 1 2 3 4 \_\_\_\_
15. Have you been in the military service? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no
16. Please list any job skills that you have acquired. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. Do you consider yourself to be a religious person? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no
18. Do you believe in God? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no
19. Do you believe in prayer? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no
20. Do you believe in life after death? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no
21. Do you enjoy going to church? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no
22. What is your religious preference?
- Catholic
- Jewish
- Protestant (please specify denomination) \_\_\_\_\_
- None
23. On the average, about how many cups of coffee do you drink per day?
- None.
- One to three cups.
- Four to six cups.
- Seven to nine cups.
- Ten or more cups.

24. About how many cigarettes do you smoke in an average day?  
\_\_\_\_ None.  
\_\_\_\_ Some, but less than 1/2 a pack daily.  
\_\_\_\_ From 1/2 to a full pack daily.  
\_\_\_\_ From 1 to 1 1/2 packs daily.  
\_\_\_\_ From 1 1/2 to 2 packs daily.  
\_\_\_\_ More than 2 packs daily.
25. Do you drink alcoholic beverages? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no  
If so, what do you like to drink? \_\_\_\_\_
26. Have you used marijuana? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no
27. Have you used hard drugs? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no  
If so, please specify what kinds. \_\_\_\_\_
28. At what age were you first arrested? \_\_\_\_\_
29. How many times as a juvenile did you have a "run in" with the law?  
\_\_\_\_ Never.  
\_\_\_\_ A few times.  
\_\_\_\_ Many times.
30. How many adult convictions have you had? \_\_\_\_\_
31. What was the nature of the conviction that was responsible for your being in this institution? \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B

THE DEFINING ISSUES TEST\*

\*Each use of this test must be cleared through the author, Dr. James Rest, University of Minnesota.

## OPINIONS ABOUT SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The remainder of the questionnaire is aimed at understanding how people think about social problems. Different people often have different opinions about the question of right and wrong. There are no "right" answers in the way that there are right answers to math problems. We would like you to tell us what you think about several problem stories. The papers, again, will be fed to a computer to find the average for the whole group, and no one will see your individual answers.

The following is a sample story used as an example. Read it, then turn to the next page.

Frank Jones has been thinking about buying a car. He is married, has two small children and earns an average income. The car he buys will be his family's only car. It will be used mostly to get to work and drive around town, but sometimes for vacation trips also. In trying to decide what car to buy, Frank Jones realized that there were a lot of questions to consider. On the next page there is a list of some of these questions.

If you were Frank Jones, how important would each of these questions be in deciding what car to buy?

PART A. (SAMPLE)

On the left hand side of the page check one of the spaces by each question that could be considered.

GREAT importance	MUCH importance	SOME importance	LITTLE importance	NO importance	
___	___	___	___	✓	1. Whether the car dealer was in the same block as where Frank lives.
✓	___	___	___	___	2. Would a <u>used</u> car be more economical in the long run than a <u>new</u> car.
___	___	✓	___	___	3. Whether the color was green, Frank's favorite color.
___	___	___	___	✓	4. Whether the cubic inch displacement was at least 200.
✓	___	___	___	___	5. Would a large, roomy car be better than a compact car.
___	___	___	___	✓	6. Whether the front connibilities were differential.

PART B. (SAMPLE)

From the list of questions above, select the most important one of the whole group. Put the number of the most important question on the top line below. Do likewise for your 2nd, 3rd, and 4th most important choices.

Most important	<u>5</u>
Second most important	<u>2</u>
Third most important	<u>3</u>
Fourth most important	<u>1</u>



## HEINZ AND THE DRUG

In Europe a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost to make. He paid \$200 for the radium and charged \$2000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about \$1000, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz got desperate and began to think about breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.

Should Heinz steal the drug? (Check one)

- Should steal it
- Can't decide
- Should not steal it

## HEINZ STORY

On the left hand side of the page check one of the spaces by each question to indicate its importance.

GREAT importance	MUCH importance	SOME importance	LITTLE importance	NO importance	
—	—	—	—	—	1. Whether a community's laws are going to be upheld.
—	—	—	—	—	2. Isn't it only natural for a loving husband to care so much for his wife that he'd steal?
—	—	—	—	—	3. Is Heinz willing to risk getting shot as a burglar or going to jail for the chance that stealing the drug might help?
—	—	—	—	—	4. Whether Heinz is a professional wrestler, or has considerable influence with professional wrestlers.
—	—	—	—	—	5. Whether Heinz is stealing for himself or doing this solely to help someone else.
—	—	—	—	—	6. Whether the druggist's rights to his invention have to be respected.
—	—	—	—	—	7. Whether the essence of living is more encompassing than the termination of dying, socially and individually.
—	—	—	—	—	8. What values are going to be the basis for governing how people act towards each other.
—	—	—	—	—	9. Whether the druggist is going to be allowed to hide behind a worthless law which only protects the rich anyhow.
—	—	—	—	—	10. Whether the law in this case is getting in the way of the most basic claim of any member of society.
—	—	—	—	—	11. Whether the druggist deserves to be robbed for being so greedy and cruel.
—	—	—	—	—	12. Would stealing in such a case bring about more total good for the whole society or not.

From the list of questions above, select the four most important:

Most important \_\_\_\_\_

Second most important \_\_\_\_\_

Third most important \_\_\_\_\_

Fourth most important \_\_\_\_\_

## ESCAPED PRISONER

A man had been sentenced to prison for 10 years. After one year, however, he escaped from prison, moved to a new area of the country, and took on the name of Thompson. For 8 years he worked hard, and gradually he saved enough money to buy his own business. He was fair to his customers, gave his employees top wages, and gave most of his own profits to charity. Then one day Mrs. Jones, an old neighbor, recognized him as the man who had escaped from prison 8 years before, and whom the police had been looking for.

Should Mrs. Jones report Mr. Thompson to the police and have him sent back to prison? (Check one)

Should report him

Can't decide

Should not report him

ESCAPED PRISONER

GREAT importance	MUCH importance	SOME importance	LITTLE importance	NO importance	
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	1. Hasn't Mr. Thompson been good enough for such a long time to prove he isn't a bad person?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	2. Everytime someone escapes punishment for a crime, doesn't that just encourage more crime?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	3. Wouldn't we be better off without prisons and the oppression of our legal system?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	4. Has Mr. Thompson really paid his debt to society?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	5. Would society be failing what Mr. Thompson should fairly expect?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	6. What benefits would prisons be apart from society, especially for a charitable man?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	7. How could anyone be so cruel and heartless as to send Mr. Thompson to prison?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	8. Would it be fair to all the prisoners who had to serve out their full sentences if Mr. Thompson was let off?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	9. Was Mrs. Jones a good friend of Mr. Thompson?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	10. Wouldn't it be a citizen's duty to report an escaped criminal, regardless of the circumstances?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	11. How would the will of the people and the public good best be served?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	12. Would going to prison do any good for Mr. Thompson or protect anybody?

From the list of questions above, select the four most important:

- Most important \_\_\_\_\_
- Second most important \_\_\_\_\_
- Third most important \_\_\_\_\_
- Fourth most important \_\_\_\_\_

## NEWSPAPER

Fred, a senior in high school, wanted to publish a mimeographed newspaper for students so that he could express many of his opinions. He wanted to speak out against the war in Viet Nam and to speak out against some of the school's rules, like the rule forbidding boys to wear long hair.

When Fred started his newspaper, he asked his principal for permission. The principal said it would be all right if before every publication Fred would turn in all his articles for the principal's approval. Fred agreed and turned in several articles for approval. The principal approved all of them and Fred published two issues of the paper in the next two weeks.

But the principal had not expected that Fred's newspaper would receive so much attention. Students were so excited by the paper that they began to organize protests against the hair regulation and other school rules. Angry parents objected to Fred's opinions. They phoned the principal telling him that the newspaper was unpatriotic and should not be published. As a result of the rising excitement, the principal ordered Fred to stop publishing. He gave as a reason that Fred's activities were disruptive to the operation of the school.

Should the principal stop the newspaper? (Check one)

Should stop it

Can't decide

Should not stop it

## NEWSPAPER

GREAT importance	MUCH importance	SOME importance	LITTLE importance	NO importance	
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	1. Is the principal more responsible to students or to parents?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	2. Did the principal give his word that the newspaper could be published for a long time, or did he just promise to approve the newspaper one issue at a time?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	3. Would the students start protesting even more if the principal stopped the newspaper?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	4. When the welfare of the school is threatened, does the principal have the right to give orders to students?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	5. Does the principal have the freedom of speech to say "no" in this case?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	6. If the principal stopped the newspaper would he be preventing full discussion of important problems?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	7. Whether the principal's order would make Fred lose faith in the principal.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	8. Whether Fred was really loyal to his school and patriotic to his country.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	9. What effect would stopping the paper have on the student's education in critical thinking and judgment?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	10. Whether Fred was in any way violating the rights of others in publishing his own opinions.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	11. Whether the principal should be influenced by some angry parents when it is the principal that knows best what is going on in the school.
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	12. Whether Fred was using the newspaper to stir up hatred and discontent.

From the list of questions above, select the four most important:

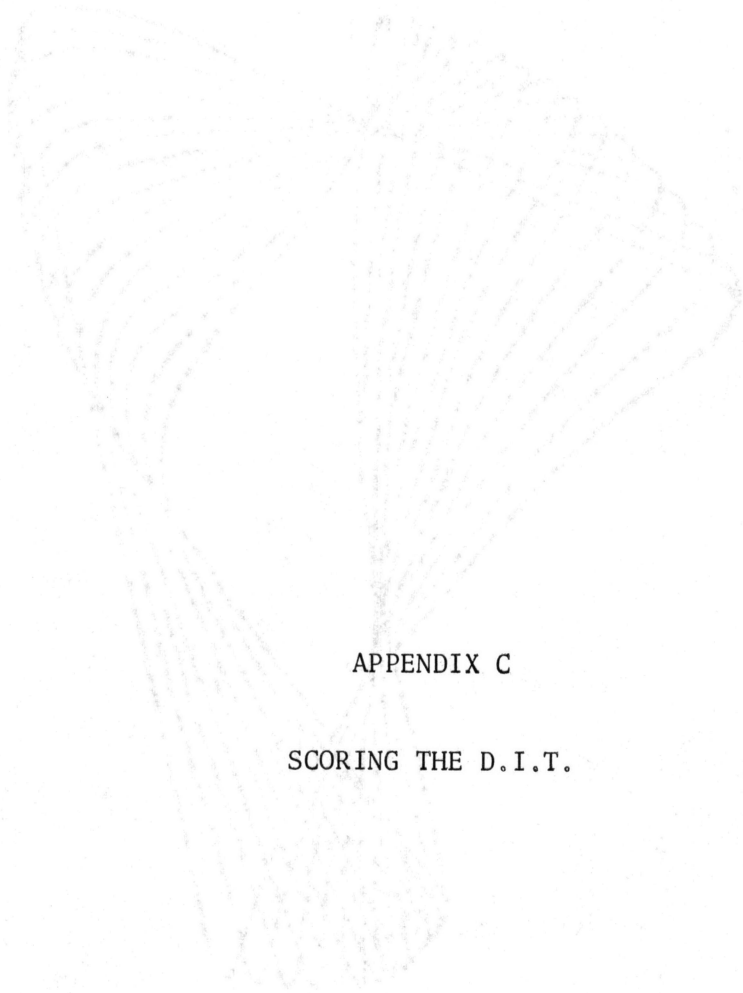
Most important \_\_\_\_\_

Second most important \_\_\_\_\_

Third most important \_\_\_\_\_

Fourth most important \_\_\_\_\_





APPENDIX C

SCORING THE D.I.T.

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

Theris Bond

100% COTTON FIBRE

## DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES FOR ISSUE STATEMENTS

Story	Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Heinz		4	3	2	M	3	4	M	6	A	5A	3	5A
Pris.		3	4	A	4	6	M	3	4	3	4	5A	5A
Newsp.		4	4	2	4	M	5A	3	3	5B	5A	4	3

## DATA CHART

Story	Stage	2	3	4	5A	5B	6	A	M	P
Heinz										
Pris.										
Newsp.										

## Directions:

1. Using the four ranked items, find the developmental stage for each, give the most important question a weight of four, and enter that number in the data chart below the stage it exemplifies; give the second most important a weight of three, the third a weight of two, and the fourth a weight of one, and enter these also. (There may be more than one entry in a box.)

2. After all stories are scored, total each column.

3. Add the totals for 5A, 5B, and 6. This is the P score.

APPENDIX D

CONVERSION OF STAGE TOTAL TO STANDARDIZED SCORE

## CONVERSION OF STAGE TOTAL TO STANDARDIZED SCORE

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Stage Totals	Minus	Divide By
Stage 2	2.065	1.832
Stage 3	4.809	2.838
Stage 4	7.509	3.451
Stage 5A	7.922	3.550
Stage 5B	2.859	1.734
Stage 6	2.243	1.746
A	1.234	1.215
M	1.356	1.208

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