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The true believer and the moral agent : alternative images of feminist action.

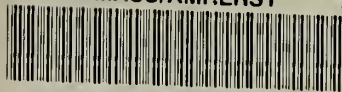
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THE TRUE BELIEVER AND THE MORAL AGENT:
ALTERNATIVE IMAGES OF FEMINIST ACTION

A Dissertation Presented

By

Susan Friedman Risch

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

February, 1975

Political Science

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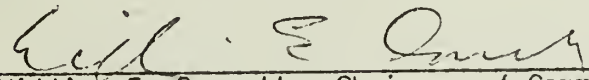
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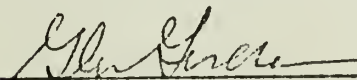
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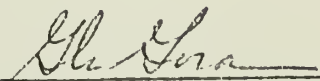
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Professor William E. Connolly of the Department of Political Science, the University of Massachusetts for his inspiration and continuous encouragement, and for his thoroughness as advisor and critic. Thanks also to Professor Glen Gordon of the same department and to Professor Lewis Killian of the Department of Sociology for their comments on rough drafts.

This dissertation would have been far more difficult to complete without the support and criticism of Jean Elshtain and Shirley Haslip, also of the Department of Political Science. Their friendship, their encouragement, their familiarity with resources and their concern for the issues were vital to my work.

Finally, I want to thank Michael for helping me in the hardest way possible, by living with me through most of this very trying period.

The Moral Agent and the True Believer:
Alternative Images of Feminist Action

Massachusetts (February 1975)

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Directed by: Dr. William E. Connolly

The dissertation is an investigation into several of the epistemological problems involved in the study of human action. I have assumed that what a person does - as opposed to what happens to her - involves a conceptual component. This assumption has lead me to three questions: 1) how are political concepts linked to political action; in particular, what is the relation between moral concepts and political action; 2) how do persons acquire political concepts; 3) what is the significance of some political concepts being essentially disputed.

I have attempted to show that political concepts are linked in one direction to explanatory theory - concepts such as 'liberation' involve an explanatory theory of what a liberated life would look like and what inhibits liberation - and in another direction to the passions. I have explicated two contending theories of concept acquisition - the inductionist approach in which persons learn those concepts and rules already embedded in social practise, and the cognitive develop-

mental approach which attempts to explain the acquisition of critical consciousness. I have linked these contending images of concept acquisition with contending conceptions of the justificatory term 'liberation.'

I have termed these alternative approaches to political action the True Believer and Moral Agent models. Each carries within it a contrast model which serves to highlight desirable and undesirable features of human action. The True Believer contrast model is the model of rational liberal politics - a politics of self-interest constrained by the rules of liberal democratic procedures. The Moral Agent contrast model is heteronomous political action, or action guided by an uncritical acceptance of existing norms and rules.

Finally, I have applied these alternative images of political action to the Women's Liberation Movement in an attempt to both illustrate the importance of conceptual disputes in politics, and to demonstrate the manner in which our understandings of what can be a rational basis for human action can blind us to alternatives to which other understandings are open. I have attempted to show that the problem of interpretation is not a problem for political analysts alone, but also for Movement activists. If analysts do not share the concepts deployed by actors as justifications for action, those actions will remain opaque. And for actors, rational political discourse will be impeded to the extent that conceptual frameworks are not shared.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over fifty years ago Sigmund Freud asked the question "What do women want?" Freud raised this question during an earlier period of feminist activity, and although he has subsequently been held responsible for the counter-reformation which followed upon the heels of nineteenth century feminism, his question remains a vital one. Today, in this second wave of American feminism, we need to ask once again: "What do women want?"

At root this is an epistemological question: how can we know what motivates other people's actions? My assumption is that what we do is to bring to bear our understanding of what we think can motivate any person in our attempts to understand what a specific person has done or says she will do. We bring to bear on any specific action we encounter our understanding of what we think persons' interests, reasons, purposes, wants, intentions, etc. can be.

I also assume that every attempt to understand political motives must come to grips with at least the following elements:

1) Because political action is often justified by an appeal to moral concepts (e.g., interests, justice, equality, freedom),¹ every attempt to understand political action must reach some understanding of what these concepts mean and how

1. Both perspectives I develop are theories of action as opposed to behavior; i.e., both treat persons as rule-followers. The difference between them rests on their understanding of how persons learn and follow rules. I have excluded other possible modes of explanation, in particular a thorough-going behaviorist explanation.

persons acquire them. Human action always includes a conceptual component; distinguishing between what a person does and what happens to her involves us in investigation of the reasons that lie behind the activity. In a limited sense, "thinking makes it so," or at least possible. What a person does in part depends on what she believes is possible for her to do. Her beliefs are the conceptual tools she brings to bear on her own understanding of the circumstances in which she finds herself and in which she must decide and act. Action, then, is delimited in part by the concepts which one can deploy in understanding, reasoning about and deciding among alternatives. I shall argue that the concepts we use, especially our moral concepts, are embedded in our social relationships, are bound up in the way persons interact and thereby learn to view each other and themselves. I shall also argue that different theories of concept acquisition pick out different features of the same concepts.² The example I shall use in the final chapter of this dissertation is the Feminist concept of 'liberation'. I shall want to show that 'liberation' is an essentially disputed concept,³ and that this dispute revolves around different explanations

2. There is another side to human activity which analysts like Freud have pointed to - the unconscious side. Indeed, our conscious reasons may be rationalizations of our unconscious ones. I want to be clear that the notion of action does not exclude unconscious motives, that the focus on justification in this dissertation does not preclude rationalization.

3. William E. Connolly, "Essentially Contested Concepts in Politics," Amherst, Massachusetts, 1973 (Mimeographed.)

of human development, different images of human flourishing which flow out of the two perspectives on action I shall develop. We need to see how different conceptions of 'liberation' are rooted in different understandings of what can be a political motive, in different understandings of persons and their possible interests, and in different images of social life.

Human action implies consciousness, a knowing agent. It is tied to our understanding of persons and their reasons, wants, interests, purposes. If persons are social and historical creatures, if their reasons, wants, interests are rooted in their social life, then actions embody a social and historical dimension. Both the idea of the person and of the activities in which persons engage change with time and place. Human action takes place within history and at the same time human beings make history through their actions. Our reasons, wants and purposes are both rooted in social life and guide our efforts to change that life.

4. I am indebted to several writers for helping me to clarify this aspect of action. In particular, I have found the following most useful: Stuart Hampshire, Thought and Action (New York, Viking Press, 1959); Alasdair MacIntyre, "A Mistake about Causality in Social Science," in Peter Laslett and W.G. Runciman, ed., Philosophy, Politics and Society, second series, (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1962), and Against the Self-Images of an Age (New York: Schocken, 1971); R.S. Peters, The Concept of Motivation (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958); Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Science of Man," Review of Metaphysics 25 (September, 1971):3-51, and "Neutrality in Political Science," in Laslett and Runciman, ed., Philosophy, Politics and Society, third series; Peter Winch, The Idea of a Social Science (New York: Humanities Press, 1958); G.H. Mead, Mind, Self and Society (Chicago: University Press, 1962).

If there is some relationship between social life and individual consciousness, we need to understand how it is that persons in the same society come to have different ideas, including moral ideas. How do persons change their minds, develop new interests, and new reasons for action? How is critical thought possible?

2) Because moral concepts have reference to the idea of injury, political action always draws upon an explanatory theory which fleshes out this idea and establishes whether and how the injury can be remedied. Understanding the explanatory theory adopted by political agents is essential to understanding their actions.

3) Political action also includes an affective element. Although action involves reasons, we need to have other kinds of commitments in order to carry through on our reasons for action. (I want to be careful to point out that having both reasons and affective commitment does not entail action.) To understand political action, then, requires that we understand the relationship between reason and passion.

What I shall do in this dissertation is to illustrate how two contemporary perspectives on political action treat these issues. These two perspectives are what I am calling the True Believer and Moral Agent images of political action. Each of these perspectives assumes that there is some relationship between social life and political consciousness.

Each is concerned to show how persons change their minds, develop new interests and new reasons for action. And each establishes the kinds of interests which can form the basis for rational political action.

These alternative perspectives are neither mutually exclusive nor are they exhaustive of the possible explanations of political action. They are meant to be suggestive of the thesis that political action can be and is conceived of in quite different ways and that there are serious implications in these differences.

The True Believer perspective is derived from Eric Hoffer's work but it is also found in the work of such widely respected social scientists as William Kornhauser and Gerhard Lenski. It rests on what I call the induction approach to socialization, an approach which posits a pre-existing social order into which persons must be inducted in order to become human. This socialization occurs in two stages - primary and secondary - each of which makes its special contribution to political motivation. Secondary socialization which occurs in multiple and open groups is especially important in the development of those egoistic interests and liberal moral-political reasons and rules which form the basis of autonomous, rational political action as conceived from this perspective. These interests, reasons and rules delimit what constitutes an injury and establish legitimate channels for redress of grievance. When these

multiple and open groups are absent, persons lack the clearly articulated interests and the liberal values which undergird rational politics. When society breaks down, persons lack standards; these are potential True Believers, non-autonomous persons who may seek meaning in political movements which encourage blind obedience rather than critical choice, authority rather than freedom, movements which satisfy irrational rather than rational 'needs'.

The True Believer perspective assumes either that action flows directly from the passions - under anomic conditions - or that egoistic reasons produce action guided by the rules of liberal politics - under ordered, pluralist conditions. The Moral Agent perspective posits a different range of social relations and of human motives.

Theorists in the Moral Agent mode have a clear interest in explicating the ways in which consciousness develops. They do not assume that persons either join a radical political movement because of irrational 'needs' or else engage in rational political actions utilizing norms already embedded in social practice as their justification. They assume that persons can develop ideal standards which establish new and rational 'needs' or 'interests' and which they may utilize to evaluate existing norms.

This perspective is heavily indebted to the work of Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg, especially to their theories of concept acquisition. Piaget's and Kohlberg's theories of

of moral development help us to understand how persons can be socialized not just to know the content of social rules, but to understand the purpose of these rules and therefore to be able to criticize those rules which help to constitute their social life. Persons can learn that rules are not immutable facts, that they can be altered in light of developing needs, wants and purposes, in light of developing interests and moral principles. As we shall see in Chapter II, this perspective allows us to see rational political interests which move beyond the egoism of the True Believer model toward what I shall call a 'social interest'. It provides ideal standards for evaluating existing social practises, standards which flow from the principle of respect for persons. New reasons for action need not be the product of a conversion induced by emotion, but may be the product of new cognitive abilities - abilities to take new factors into account in our reasoning - coupled with new emotional or affective commitments. Indeed, the perspective assumes that our cognitions, including our cognitions of what constitutes an injury to persons, can develop and that this development is internally linked to our emotional development. For example, perceiving injuries where once we saw none gives rise to feelings of resentment and indignation where once we felt none. Moreover, our perception of an injury often entails that we have certain feelings about persons.

I should like to be clear that when I refer to the True Believer or Moral Agent perspectives, I am also referring to contrast models either implicitly or explicitly built into each. Built into the fundamental assumptions of any theoretical model is an alternative conception of how things could be and ought to be. It is this alternative which sets off, or highlights the crucial features of the model being developed. This is what is called a contrast model. It is always used either implicitly or explicitly in political discourse; there is no way to avoid its use since every model and every argument contains within it a conception of its opposite.

The selection of a contrast model is possibly one of the most important choices one can make in political analysis and discourse, not only because the contrast model acts as a standard for evaluating the model under consideration, but also because it sets the limits within which phenomena can vary. Thus, for example, in his work on social stratification and class conflict, Ralf Dahrendorf argues the inevitability of class conflict because he cannot conceive of alternative social structures in which there would be no such conflict. He has no model of a classless society, a society in which there is no subordination-domination structure. Arguments favoring the establishment of such societies are delegitimized by the very terms in which his theory is couched. In a similar manner, models of political action can delegitimize

certain types of motives or miscategorize them in terms the model establishes.

In political analysis or argument, then, we need to be particularly clear about both the fundamental assumptions undergirding the argument and the range of possible alternatives which the model opens up. As we shall see in the next two chapters, the choice of a contrast model of rational action sets off and highlights the undesirable features of alternative modes of action. If, for instance, we accept the True Believer model and its built-in contrast, we delimit the range of rational political action in such a way as to delegitimize possible rational motives and actions picked out and highlighted by the Moral Agent model.

There are several important implications of the thesis that political action can be understood in different ways. First, the perspective one adopts undergirds a specific interpretation of social movements, both in terms of the social and psychological roots of these movements, and the demands made by movement adherents. It delimits a range of possible rational motives for political action and excludes other motives as either irrational or as not really addressing the problem. The perspective we adopt also establishes an image of the ways in which ideas are held and acted upon which has serious implications for our understanding of the openness and developmental possibilities of a political movement. In Chapter IV I shall attempt to

illustrate how these phenomena operate with respect to our understanding of the contemporary Women's Movement.

But it is not only theorists who bring to bear alternative conceptions of political action in their analysis of political movements; activists also bring different conceptions to bear in action itself. They fall subject to many of the same conceptual distortions and limitations as their counterparts in the social sciences, but theirs are obviously more important in terms of the development of movement strategies and tactics. Therefore, it is necessary that we look not only at different explanations of the Women's Movement, explanations which flow out of the theories of action developed in Chapters II and III, but also to look at the ways in which political agents deploy these same intellectual tools in shaping, understanding and justifying their actions. They will justify these actions in terms of conceptual distinctions which flow from different perspectives and this has serious political implications. It can lead to serious internal conflict which may produce schisms and defeat the Movement, but more importantly it can produce false moves, move persons in harmful or retrograde directions. The point is that persons can mistake their interests. Women can want things which in the long run may fail to satisfy their human needs. These wants can flow from several sources - from the dehumanization produced by oppressive conditions, from an undeveloped moral perspective, or from an inadequate explanatory

theory. In Chapter IV I shall attempt to show how different conceptions of female 'liberation' are more or less adequate in terms of their recognition of the relationship between 'needs' and oppression, the moral principle of respect for persons and explanatory theory. These conceptions are of 'liberation' as 'equality of opportunity', 'authenticity', and 'dis-alienation'. Understanding the distinctions between these concepts of 'liberation' is, I think, crucial to understanding the Women's Movement in its historical reality. Understanding the developmental relationship between these concepts and between these concepts and our theories of the rise of Feminism is vital to our ability to grasp the ways in which the Women's Movement has changed.

What I will do in the final chapter is to demonstrate how different women in the contemporary Women's Movement utilize different justifications for action because they are at different points in their cognitive development. This should not be taken to mean that they may not engage in the "same" actions for different reasons - e.g., both radicals and liberals may support the Equal Rights Amendment but for different reasons, one as a progressive reform (although this has been debated), the other as a final goal (although liberals have changed and moved on to new demands). Nor should it be taken to mean that any of the individuals selected as examples of these different levels of cognitive development have not or cannot move on to new positions. Feminism rises and falls with

historical and social changes which affect the emotive-cognitive repertoire through which persons experience their lives. Indeed, Feminism itself is one of the ways in which women's lives are affected. We should expect changes in the Movement ideology and we should not take what is presented in the final chapter of this dissertation as a static image of contemporary American Feminism.

This dissertation is not meant to be an impartial laying out of alternative explanatory frameworks. I am committed to the notion that some frameworks are more adequate than others, that some upon us up to perceiving alternatives to which others are profoundly closed. I shall argue that many contemporary social scientists and many political actors accept explanatory frameworks unselfconsciously, thus limiting their perceptions of alternative modes of thought and action. In comparing the Moral Agent and True Believer modes, I shall argue that the former is more adequate in just that sense that it allows us to conceive of more possibilities, that it allows us to understand developing meanings, alternative images of human possibility.

CHAPTER I I

THE TRUE BELIEVER

Perhaps the best way to lay out the True Believer model of political action is to let the model-builder himself, Eric Hoffer, identify the characteristic features of extremist politics.¹ I will quote at length from the profound short book, The True Believer, whose purpose is to show that all extremist movements, whatever their ostensible differences in ideology, time and place, "...draw their early adherents from the same types of humanity; they all appeal to the same types of mind."² The following passages pick out those characteristics of personality and of mind which distinguish these types of humanity from rational persons and describe the conditions under which True Believers are likely to emerge.

Basic Motivations - Irresponsibility and Frustration

'Not to reason why' is considered by all mass movements the mark of a strong and generous spirit.... People whose lives are barren and insecure seem to show a greater willingness to obey than people who are self-sufficient and self-confident. To the frustrated, freedom from responsibility is more attractive than freedom from restraint.³

There is in us a tendency to locate the shaping of our existence outside ourselves. Success and

1. It may be that Hoffer limits his description of extremism to mass conditions; however, I think it is more fruitful to treat his model as a description of "extremist" as opposed to "normal" politics. Then we can ask a serious question - can extremism occur in non-mass societies?

2. Eric Hoffer, The True Believer (New York: Mentor Books, 1958), preface.

3. Ibid., pp. 108-9. Note the built-in contrast model.

failure are unavoidably related in our minds with the state of things around us. Hence it is that people with a sense of fulfillment think it is a good world and would like to conserve it as it is, while the frustrated favor radical change.⁴

The exaltation of the true believer does not flow from reserves of strength and deliverance; he has been delivered from the meaningless burdens of an autonomous existence.⁵

Comparison with Rational Politics

There is a fundamental difference between the appeal of a mass movement and the appeal of a practical organization. The practical organization offers opportunities for self-advancement, and its appeal is mainly to self-interest. On the other hand, a mass movement, particularly in its active, revivalist phase, appeals not to those intent on bolstering and advancing a cherished self, but to those who crave to be rid of an unwanted self. A mass movement attracts and holds a following not because it can satisfy the desire for self-advancement, but because it can satisfy the passion for self-renunciation.⁶

Anomie and the True Believer

The milieu most favorable for the rise and propagation of mass movements is one in which a once compact corporate structure is, for one reason or another, in a state of disintegration.⁷

Ideas and Political Action - Security and Insularity

...the effectiveness of a doctrine should not be judged by its profundity, sublimity or the validity of the truths it embodies, but by how thoroughly it insulates the individual from his self and the world as it is....⁸

4. Ibid., p. 16.

5. Ibid., p. 117.

6. Ibid., p. 21.

7. Ibid., p. 45.

8. Ibid., p. 76.

Moral Ideas and Extremism:

The fanatic cannot be weaned away from his cause by an appeal to his reason or moral sense. He fears compromise and cannot be persuaded to qualify the certitude and righteousness of his holy cause. But he finds no difficulty in swinging suddenly and widely from one holy cause to another. He cannot be convinced but only converted. His passionate attachment is more vital than the quality of the cause to which he is attached.⁹

I. Assumptions undergirding the model

The True Believer model is a model of human action; it is an attempt to explain how persons acquire motives for what they do. As such, the model rests on the assumption that there is a relationship between social structure and structure of mind, that particular social conditions are linked with particular psychological states or motives - mass movements with fanatical, irrational memberships arise under social conditions of anomie; practical organizations based on rational motives develop under conditions of integration and order. Implicit in the model is a theory of development or socialization, a theory which undergirds the theorist's classification of action as mature and rational or immature and irrational. I think it is important to start with this theory of socialization and then move to investigate its implications for our understanding the role of the passions, moral judgments and explanatory theory in political action.

9. Ibid., p. 81.

I.a. The social conditions under which True

Believers and rational political agents appear

While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to go into the theories of alienation and anomie at any length, the True Believer model clearly rests on a theoretical base inherited from Durkheim rather than Marx. This means that the model relies on a picture of an integrated society - either organic or mechanical - where culture determines action in an orderly, predictable manner. There is little problem of mass unconventionality in such a society; rather there are cases of individual deviance. When such a society breaks down, however, persons are left in a state of psychological turmoil, and it is this turmoil which underlies the actions of the True Believer. More specifically, when a mechanically integrated society with a clear authority structure disintegrates, one had better hope than an organically integrated society with a clear division of labor within which persons and groups pursue self-interested goals constrained by social structures which set limits to their actions appears. Otherwise one will find the chaos of anomie and the anarchy of unlimited desire.

10. Robert Tinker argues that Durkheim's image of a moral order is one based on altruism and affective ties and is distinctly different from bourgeois egoistic morality. His notion of a moral order - one based on "equivalence and reciprocity in exchange relations" - is at variance with classical liberalism. But his organic conservatism is compatible with the view of authoritarian morality I am drawing here. For Durkheim, moral education "...must inculcate a spirit of self-discipline and obedience to the social

In both The True Believer and a later work The Ordeal of Change, Hoffer draws us a picture of anomic chaos and pluralist order.¹¹ Anomie, which results from massification, produces the True Believer, "...an immature individual... torn from the warmth and security of a corporate existence and left orphaned and empty in a cold world." In a sense, however, this orphanage is valuable since it forces the undeveloped person out of the social womb and into a chaotic existence where s/he needs to discover an autonomous self. "The crumbling of a corporate body, with the abandonment of the individual to his own devices, is always a critical phase of social development."¹² However,

order, so that, paradoxically, the true basis of a genuine personal autonomy is created." For Durkheim, as well as for liberals, morality is necessary since persons have insatiable needs which must be constrained. But for Durkheim morality is the natural order; amorality or anomie is a pathological condition under which persons act like some liberals' image of the egoist. For Durkheim, then, some liberals are mislead in believing that we need to provide persons with reasons for being moral; man is by nature a moral being insofar as he is a social being. Amorality is what requires explanation. Robert pinker, Social Theory and Social Policy (New York: Crane-Russak, 1971).

11. By pluralist order, I do not mean the sort of nurturant community described by Robert Paul Wolff in "Beyond Tolerance" (Robert Paul Wolff, Barrington Moore, Jr., and Herbert Marcuse, A Critique of Pure Tolerance [Boston: Beacon, 1968], pp.3-52) but that pluralism which serves as the touch-stone of mainstream American political science - the pluralist order in which one finds a clear division of labor, a separation between elites and masses, lower rates of participation in valued social projects among the masses with value placed on higher elite participation, broad disparities in income and power, etc.

12. Eric Hoffer, The Ordeal of Change (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 9.

The newly emerging individual can attain some degree of stability and eventually become inured to the burdens and strains of an autonomous existence only when he is offered abundant opportunities for self-assertion or self-realization. He needs an environment in which achievement, acquisition, sheer action or the development of his capacities and talents seems within easy reach. It is only thus that he can acquire the self-confidence and self-esteem that make an individual existence bearable or even exhilarating.¹³

Pure chaos is inimicable to human development. In order to arrive at the reasoned constraint which marks the mature political actor, persons need to experience the 'liberating' effects of plural structures with their varying roles and constraints. While this pluralism, or division of labor, produces conflicting interests and 'class' conflict, it also produces a rational conception of one's own interests and their limits. Moreover, knowledge that there are many standards, many interests, many rights and duties, produces tolerance, reasonableness, and an ability to see one's opponents' position in a bargaining situation. Finally, achievement of limited ends produces gratification and a willingness to abide by the rules of the game one plays.

Heffer's image of the social conditions under which human development takes place is compatible with the theory presented in a much more scholarly sociological piece, William Kornhauser's The Politics of Mass Society. There, Kornhauser identifies four types of social organization - totalitarian, communal, mass and pluralist - and he links

^{13.} Ibid.

each type with four concomitant forms of culture and four motivational schemes.

In communal society culture is fixed but differentiated by status; i.e., there are fixed standards of action which differ for each segment of society. Traditions support a motivational scheme based on clearly defined rights and duties; in turn, the diverse cultural structure is supported by the motives obligation and shame. Persons do not move from one status to another and do not learn motives which are linked to statuses into which they are not born; however, they do learn that each status depends on all the others and they share a sense of obligation to each other, feel shame when obligations are not met. These affective commitments derive from something greater than the individual her/himself and that is her/his sense of membership in a larger collectivity from which flow authoritative commands. This is a tradition-directed, other-directed, group-centered society, perfectly compatible with Hoffer's image of the corporate, mechanically integrated society.

Another form of fixed culture in which persons are also other-directed and group-centered is totalitarian culture. But totalitarian culture is uniform and so too is motivation with the exception of the motives of those few in positions of ultimate authority. Here we find not diversity and legitimacy, but monism and coercion. Totalitarian man is submissive; s/he is motivated by fear. S/he is separated from any

larger purposes and therefore separated from her/himself.

This mode seems most compatible with Hoffer's image of immature motivation, and indeed the True Believer is the result of a transition from communal to totalitarian society. However, Kornhauser's third variant - mass society and mass person - is more a capturing of this transition and of immature motivation. In mass society, unlike communal or totalitarian society, culture is fluid; like totalitarian society, however, it is uniform and like totalitarian man, mass man is self-estranged, anomic, suggestible and manipulable. Lacking uniform standards, having no direction, mass man searches for a collective identity which s/he may find in totalitarian movements. Her/his motives lie in "...overcoming the diffuse anxiety which accompanies the lack of self-confidence."¹⁴ S/he is an impotent leveller, a populist, the victim of mass culture, and s/he does not know her/his own interests.

The alternative to these rather undesirable variants of social life and political motivation is pluralist society and the clearly articulated interests which flow from it. By pluralism, Kornhauser means a structurally diffuse society with a diverse, fluid culture. There is much social differentiation, both vertical and horizontal; culture is fluid but non-anomic since there are standards, diverse though they may be. There are many standards to which persons can

¹⁴. William Kornhauser, The Politics of Mass Society (New York; Free Press, 1959), p. 108.

be exposed as they move vertically and horizontally across social divisions in a mobile society.

In a pluralist society...the inner cohesion of local groups and cultures provides a firmer basis for self-relatedness, and the diversity of groups and cultures permits the individual to form a distinctive self-image. Social and cultural pluralism invites the development of differentiated, autonomous individuals, for variety in institutions and values encourages individuals to compare different models of conduct and to integrate elements from several models into a distinctive identify.¹⁵

Persons have opportunities to play many roles and to develop an understanding of the various motives accompanying these roles. Indeed, the pluralism Kornhauser describes is the condition under which autonomous individuality develops. The motivational basis of this autonomy is self-reliance and guilt - self-reliance as the outgrowth of exposure to a variety of standards; guilt as the product of the inner-directed internalized commands of conflicting authorities (as contrasted to the outer-directed guilt of communal man).

This image of the mature individual in a pluralist, order is compatible with what I call the inductionist theory of socialization.¹⁶ This theory is particularly useful for our understanding the ways in which persons acquire the interests and character traits which undergird the self-reliant, autonomous, liberal political agent.

15. Ibid., pp. 109-110.

16. A paradigm case of this approach to socialization is Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality (New York: Doubleday, 1966).

The inductionist theory of socialization begins with primary socialization which usually takes place in the home. There the child develops certain character traits like ego-strength and self-control which make the constrained pursuit of self-interest possible, and also learns the realism which undergirds constrained egoism as parents constrain her/him from the pursuit of egocentric wants and introduce her/him into an understanding of what s/he can legitimately demand.

Secondary socialization occurs in a less highly charged emotional context, but it builds on both the basic personality developed in the home and the sense of guilt the child has acquired when s/he fails to conform to parental expectations. Persons learn role-specific character traits - punctuality, efficiency, sportsmanship and the like - traits which build on the self-control learned earlier. They are also given specific content to the reality principle by their participation in groups which give rise to specific self-interests. It is these interests that mature individuals bring to politics and which form the basis of rational political demands. Persons also develop a sense of self-esteem rooted in the social value placed on groups to which they belong.

Secondary socialization, then, results in persons who are firmly committed to the pursuit of private interests and to the defense of group interests since their own interests are so clearly implicated in the well-being of the groups to which they belong. Yet such persons do not cause society to fly apart. Why? Because pluralist societies are held

together by certain structural safeguards and by rules of the game which all members learn as part of their socialization.

These structural safeguards, as Kornhauser describes them, include a division of labor between elites and non-elites which permits elites to uphold standards of decency, civility, and tolerance in the face of non-elite's lesser development as autonomous, rational agents (Hoffer would undoubtedly take offense at this, yet he calls for a strict separation between working class and management in order to maintain a healthy tension). Elites are constrained by other structural safeguards - they are accessible (non-elites get to choose who their elites are to be), and they are plural (elites compete with each other for 'votes' and thereby constrain each other). Non-elites can get to be elites if they only try harder - there is equality of opportunity. This all assumes that a division of labor is necessary for the achievement of everyone's interests; i.e., that a division into elites and non-elites works to the benefit of all since elites are those best qualified - through the operation of equal opportunities - to perform valued social functions.

Another structural safeguard is the existence of numerous voluntary associations through which persons are linked to the larger society and through which they pursue and satisfy their self-interests. These associations serve

to protect non-elites from elites and give non-elites a sense of freely contracting into the social order. They are valued primarily as a means of social control both of elites by non-elites and as a means of dampening down irrational political demands on the part of non-elites. Participation in these associations is essential to the working of liberal democracy since "...non-participation results in lack of exposure to information and indoctrination concerning democratic values, and in the lack of habits of discussion, debate, negotiation, and compromise - modes of conduct indispensable¹⁷ to democratic politics."

Participation, then, is essential to our learning the rules of the game which help keep pluralist societies from degenerating into a war of each against all. These rules establish the legitimate means for the pursuit of self-interest and constrain persons from engaging in alternative means. These are the normative rules of a politics of bargain and compromise, norms of political conduct and political justification. For example, persons learn that it is legitimate to lobby a Congressman in pursuit of one's self-interest but not to offer him a bribe. They also learn that they can make appeals to moral ideals like equality of opportunity to redress a perceived imbalance in the distribution of desirable social positions, but that they cannot

17. Kornhauser, Politics, p. 73.

appeal to justifications like being one of God's chosen people.

I.b. Moral development

Politics, then, is more than the pursuit of self-interest. It is this pursuit through the use of legitimate means. Since some of these means are moral, it is important that we look briefly at the theory of moral development which undergirds the distinction theorists in this mode make between immature and mature politics.

The fundamental assumption upon which this theory of moral development rests is that persons' springs to action are self-interested (although self-interest is a social product). These egoistic interests are not naturally constrained since persons can seldom take into account the interests, needs, wants and purposes of others, first because they have direct knowledge only of their own needs, wants and purposes, and second, because they naturally put these above the interests, needs, wants and purposes of others, except in rare cases of altruism. Theorists in the True Believer tradition, therefore, assume that for persons to live together, their basically conflicting egoistic interests need to be controlled and constrained by the introduction of a moral code and its accompanying feelings of guilt.

In different social systems this constraint has different content, but essentially the ethical system begins as something

external to the individual; it stands on the social level, both apart from and in conflict with the individual motivational system.¹⁸ Ethical considerations act as constraints on persons' "natural" inclinations.

But ethical constraints do not remain entirely external. Socialization internalizes these controls; moral growth, on this view, consists of the building up of a repertoire of internalized controls through identification with parents and other authority figures. The development of a Superego presents great conflicts, however, because the Superego conflicts with pre-existing needs, wants and purposes. Since morality is learned in a situation of intense conflict - conflict between the demands of self and the demands of authority figures and therefore of the Superego - it becomes heavily laden with emotion, and particularly with guilt which is the controlling passion in moral behavior. The psychological basis of moral growth is fear, or anxiety over the loss of parental approval and love. This results in guilt whenever the individual disobeys the parent-authority.

This primary socialization produces an authoritarian morality. The moral attitudes of others, particularly those with whom the person has strong and conflicting emotional attachments, are introjected. In order to win praise, the child (and under anomic conditions, the fanatic) learns to anticipate the moral attitudes of others, those ego-ideals with

¹⁸. See Thomas Nagel, The Possibility of Altruism (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1970) for a discussion of this conflict.

whom s/he has emotional attachments. Failure to live up to these ego-ideals results in guilt and self-punishment - Kornhauser's communal 'shame' - emotions which provide the motivational basis for a morality of authority and conformity. This conventional morality is the introjected moral code of one's society. It is a morality of content, of duty and obedience. It rests on the need immature individuals have for authority, an authority provided by the social order.

Since this form of morality is so profoundly authority-oriented, when society breaks down - as in the case of massification - the individual is left with a repertoire of controls which are inappropriate to the new situation. This individual has no clearly defined interests which flow out of her/his specific group memberships, but only vague wants; and s/he has no legitimate means even for the pursuit of these wants. H/she is a potential True Believer. When social authority breaks down, such an individual may turn to new authorities for moral constraint. Conformity simply changes its content; the form remains the same.

Since there are no objective standards of morality, individuals have no rational basis for choosing between alternative moral codes. 'Choice' will be entirely emotional - that code which fills 'needs' - and through a conversion process, the new code takes on the same status of authoritative reality as the old. What is commanded by the new authority is what ought to be.

We have, however, looked only at the effect of primary socialization on moral development. In a pluralist society persons will have the opportunity to move beyond this authoritarian morality to a mature, inner-directed, autonomous morality. Secondary socialization means not only exposure to specific roles, but exposure also to non-familial social norms. In the family the rules for making decisions among conflicting wants are often too rooted in specific personalities and in their emotional relationships to each other to serve as guides in general social relationships. What persons need in order to engage in a rational politics constrained by moral considerations are impersonal, non-emotional rules for choosing among interests. These are the rules of the game of a politics of bargain and compromise among conflicting self-interested individuals and groups, and include moral-political justifications for action like the principle of equality of opportunity.

If authoritarian, immature morality is learned by immature individuals in relatively authoritarian social relations, mature, autonomous morality is learned by developing individuals in social situations where there are conflicting authorities and where persons have opportunities to experience the constraints of various authorities. As the individual is exposed to conflicting standards, s/he develops independent, mature judgment; increasing sociality and individualization result in autonomous morality; authoritarian morality gives way to a morality of obligation based on the

recognition of the rights and duties of plural statuses and roles. What is owed me and what I owe others is defined by our location in the social order. Since it is assumed that society is open and pluralist, and experienced as fair by its members, engaging in the life of that society is experienced as a benefit. When we do not meet our social obligations we feel guilt because we have failed to abide by standards and social arrangements which benefit us. Guilt, then, underpins the mature morality of autonomous individuals. (We have also learned specific character traits like honesty, fair-play, integrity, etc., which make it possible for us to live up to our obligations and to feel guilty when we do not.)

One further point needs to be made about morality in this model and that is that there is a rather sharp dichotomy drawn between egoism and altruism and therefore between justice and benevolence. Altruism is possible in personal relations where there is a great deal of emotional investment on the part of the participants, e.g., in relations between mother and child. But altruism is far less likely in social relations in general, and indeed is not necessary for a practical moral code. Practical, everyday morality does not require that we love our sisters; it only requires that we constrain our own actions by some consideration for their rights and what we owe them. Just action is tempered by our knowledge that our interests often conflict and that it is in our interest to be accomodating; it cannot be based on

the building of relationships in which we may all be said to have a mutual interest. Justice and benevolence are dichotomous - the former requires balancing of conflicting interests; the latter requires that we love our fellows.²⁰

II. Alternative images of political action

We are now ready to develop some of the points that have begun to emerge about the role of ideas and passion in political action. I shall lay out the True Believer model and its contrasting image of rational politics in terms of the role of passion, explanatory theory and moral ideas.

II.a. True Believer motivation: the primacy of passion

Starting out from the fact that the frustrated predominate among the early adherents of all mass movements and that they usually join of their own accord, it is assumed: 1) that frustration of itself, without any proselytizing prompting from the outside, can generate most of the particular characteristics of the true believer; 2) that an effective technique of conversion consists basically in the inculcation and fixation of proclivities and response indigenous to the frustrated mind.²¹

Hoffer's True Believer rests on the notion that under certain social conditions, particular passions arise which

20. Gerhard E. Lenski, Power and Privilege (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966). Note the following passage: "Pragmatic morality is the basis of all popular moral codes, and is based on the recognition that men need one another, and therefore condemns many kinds of harmful actions, especially those which threaten to undermine the social order. Ideal morality, by contrast, has never been accepted as the basis of any popular moral code, since it not only condemns harmful actions but requires that men love others and they love themselves and without regard to possible rewards." p. 30.

21. Hoffer, The True Believer, preface.

act as the springs to action regardless of the reasons or ideas which are used to rationalize action. This passion is 'frustration'- when individuals cannot develop selves with which they can live, when they cannot establish clear interests and discover the means for pursuing them, they are frustrated. Under anomic conditions individuals may respond by joining social movements which rid them of an unwanted, ill-defined self, or a self which cannot satisfy its cravings legitimately. The impact of affect on political behavior is overwhelming. We find here a language of the emotions - anxiety, frustration, self-hatred - and we are left with a sense that social movements serve to sharpen individual feelings of discontent, are expressions of individual anxieties and frustrations which happen to be felt by a great number of persons - albeit persons suffering the effects of the same social condition. The frustrated, the anxious, grab onto a movement to ease their emotional problems. The motivating drive is tension reduction, physical 'need' reduction, homeostasis, or some other 'cause' actually quite unrelated to reasoning, a cause which flows from within the individual, although conditioned by the social

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milieu. Indeed, we have moved away from a description of human action and toward a description of human behavior;

22. See R.S. Peters, The Concept of Motivation (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958) for a discussion of motives as causes.

extremist action begins to look rather more like something that happens to a person than something he or she does.

There are several important implications of this view of political action. Since it rests on implicit assumptions about the type of social order under which persons can develop as autonomous individuals with selves they can accept, it establishes a justification for particular social arrangements and actions designed to promote them. The underlying dissatisfaction which leads to extremist action, however, is with the self and not with society. To say this is to de-legitimize claims of the True Believer against existing social arrangements.

Motives spring from the depths of mental and emotional ill-being. This sense of sickness and irrationality comes out in Hoffer's lexicography of motivation; for example in his use of the term 'anxiety'. 'Anxiety' is the sort of attitudinal concept which is most closely akin to a pure emotion term; it has, in normal usage, no close or necessary connection to reasoning. Anxieties, primarily about oneself, give rise to 'needs' for change independent of any theory of or plan for social change, and any evaluation of social structures as they are presently constituted. Hoffer moves from the concept 'anxiety' to the concept 'frustration' without indicating any possible differences between the two notions, particularly the role of cognition and beliefs in the latter. Although both 'anxiety' and

'frustration' are seen as connected to social conditions, they remain at the level of irrational passion; as springs to action they flow from individual emotions rather than from any rational source which could be rooted in an understanding of those social conditions.

This focus on anxiety and frustration has repercussions in our understanding of the role of ideas in extremist action, both explanatory and moral ideas. Building on the assumption that passion is the spring to extremist action, the True Believer theorist constructs an image of the way ideas are held and acted upon which excludes the possibility that rational discourse can take place within a political movement and between movement adherents and their opponents. It also excludes the possibility that movement members might not all have the same motives for their actions. Since extremist ideas are parasitic on the emotions of 'sick' individuals, rational discourse is seriously impeded. Ideas serve emotional needs regardless of their content, and serve the same needs for all movement adherents. Again the key term is 'anxiety'; an idea's acceptability flows not out of its meaningfulness but out of its ability to satisfy psychological needs. Ideas are used to support those self-conceptions which reduce tension. Content and meaning are irrelevant so long as the idea system is closed, complete
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and security producing.

23. The way in which ideas are held and acted upon is very important to the development of a political movement. If

When people are ripe for a mass movement, they are usually ripe for an effective movement, and not solely for one with a particular doctrine or program.²⁴

Movements are interchangeable; ideology serves to obfuscate practical reasoning and isolate the individual from truth about her/himself and the environment. Indeed, this is exactly why the True Believer finds an ideology attractive:

...the effectiveness of a doctrine should not be judged by its profundity, sublimity or the validity of the truths it embodies, but by how thoroughly it insulates the individual from his self and the world as it is.²⁵

The Movement is a substitute for an unwanted self; the ego becomes attached to it in a total, passionate, extravagant and uncompromising manner.²⁶ Such attachments do not bode well for rational discourse and open-minded evaluation of counter-evidence and alternative considerations.

The True Believer becomes attached to new ideas through a conversion process. Persons who hate themselves search for a new identity. They come to the movement with a cognitive-emotive structure - that of mass man - which does not facilitate rational choice.²⁷ Rather it facilitates imitation

ideas are held rigidly they become dogma. If ideas are held in an open and self-conscious manner, the movement can change, members can be rationally persuaded to change.

24. Hoffer, The True Believer, p. 25.

25. Ibid., p. 76.

26. Ibid., p. 24.

27. See Milton Rokeach, The Open and Closed Mind (New York: Basic Books, 1960) for a discussion of these structures.

of any identity which appears to bring security. The closed mind is "open" to any and all influences from without which appear to meet the need for security, especially ideas which offer an excuse for failure and a promise of a better world to come.

Re-socialization to these new ideas occurs in a rigidly authoritarian structure which parallels the family in its emotionality.²⁸ This structure reinforces the "needs" of the converts for order and discipline. The ideas themselves are used as manipulative tools whose purpose is "...to instill in [movement] followers a facility for united action and self-sacrifice..." and produce a will-less particle whose passions can be channelled and directed by effective doctrine.²⁹

Doctrine, however, must come from somewhere and this is the function of the "men of words." The talkers and thinkers

... prepare the ground for the rise of a mass movement: 1) by discrediting prevailing creeds and institutions and detaching from them the allegiance of the people; 2) by indirectly creating a hunger for faith in the hearts of those who cannot live without it, so that when the new faith is preached it finds an eager response among the disillusioned masses; 3) by furnishing the doctrine and the slogans of the new faith; 4) by undermining the convictions of the 'better people,' those who can get along without faith -

28. See Berger and Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality for a discussion of "alternation."

29. Hoffer, The True Believer, p. 79.

so that when the new fanaticism makes its appearance they are without the capacity to resist it.³⁰

The thinkers create the tools of manipulation; they use ideas to play upon the emotional needs of the weak, the insecure and the frustrated.

But are these thinkers, then, not the source of some kind of rationality in mass movements? Indeed not, for to round the circle of passion, the thinkers themselves are motivated by frustration.

Whatever the type, there is a deep-seated craving common to almost all men of words which determines their attitude to the prevailing order. It is a craving for a clearly marked status above the common run of humanity.³¹

When the established order fails to satisfy this craving, when men of words have no meaningful work through which to satisfy their drive for status, they turn their frustrations outward and create ideas designed to undermine the hated, frustrating order.

However much the protesting man of words sees himself as the champion of the downtrodden and injured, the grievance which animates him is, with very few exceptions, private and personal.³²

These frustrated, 'alienated' intellectuals are primed for fanaticism. They do not seek to educate their followers but to indoctrinate them. "They do not want freedom of conscience, but faith - blind, authoritarian faith. They

30. Ibid., p. 128.

31. Ibid., p. 121.

32. Ibid., p. 122.

sweep away the old order not to create a society of free and independent men, but to establish uniformity, individual anonymity and a new structure of perfect unity."³³ With themselves at the helm! Furthermore, the ideas which these alienated intellectuals develop are non-rational since they are unconstrained by the considerations of practical politics, the politics of balance and compromise. Mass action is unconstrained by the give and take of conflicting ideas which flow out of plural structures. And mass man is open to any and all influences from outside, unprotected by the sheltering structures of an integrated society.

If ideas appeal to True Believers because of pre-existing emotional needs, so too do moral ideas. Concepts like justice, equality, freedom, etc., find root in the emotional needs of frustrated, self-hating individuals; they are used to justify - or rather to rationalize - the actions of fanatical intellectuals and their authoritarian followers.

...the man of words needs the sanction of ideals and the incantation of words in order to act forcefully. He wants to lead, command, and conquer, but he must feel that in satisfying these hungers he does not cater to a petty self. He needs justification, and he seeks it in the realization of a grandiose design, and in the solemn ritual of making the word become flesh. Thus he does battle for the downtrodden and disinherited and for liberty, equality, justice and duty.....³⁴

33. Ibid., p. 129.

34. Hoffer, Ordeal, pp. 39-40.

Moral ideas are used manipulatively as goads to action and as rationalizations of less worthy motives. They are parasitic on the passions. Sometimes the language of political action is altruistic but this too is deceptive. The extremist is rarely, if ever, concerned about others. This is a person whose rawest emotional needs are out there on the surface, whose motives for action are entirely self-oriented, if not rationally self-interested (as this model defines rationality). While altruism appears to take such a large part in the motives of political fanatics, their self-renunciation is a false altruism. It is not an out-pouring of love for one's fellow man, but the rationalization of one's frustrations with an inadequate self turned outward and made 'good' by identification with the humanistic goals of the movement. These are sick, unwhole persons who substitute the movement for their incomplete selves. "Their chief desire is to escape that self - and it is this desire which manifests itself in a propensity for united action and self sacrifice," in what appear to be humane causes.³⁵

Finally, since there are no objective standards of morality, but instead socially relative moral codes, individuals cannot be said to have a rational basis for choosing among alternative moralities. 'Choice' is more a matter of conversion; the new code takes on the same status of reality as the old since it is learned under similarly emotion-laden

35. Hoffer, The True Believer, p. 58.

circumstances. What is commanded by authority is what ought to be.

But we need to ask whether there is any relationship between these moral ideas and the explanatory theories which True Believers appear to accept as a package. It does seem that there is; once certain emotional predispositions exist, for example a passion for equality,³⁶ certain explanatory theories are precluded. Thus the values which flow out of emotional needs can preclude acceptance of contradictory ideas or beliefs. The relationship between facts and values, however, is unidirectional. Evidence cannot be brought to bear on basic value commitments, commitments rooted in the emotions.

II.b. The contrast model: rational political action

Hoffer draws a sharp contrast between the mass movement adherent and the autonomous, rational political agent. This contrast is developed most clearly in The Ordeal of Change in which he contrasts the immature individual in anomic society who lacks opportunities for self-advancement with the mature, autonomous individual in an integrated society which provides avenues for personal advancement. This latter individual is responsible, independent in judgment, a pragmatist and a realist, complete, self-assured, and self-reliant. S/he accepts the burden of autonomy, a burden which only the strong can carry.

36. Ibid., p. 37.

An autonomous existence is heavily burdened and beset with fears and can be endured only when bolstered by confidence and self-esteem.³⁷

Reasonable politics are pursued by free individuals not easily manipulated by extremist appeals. This free individual is rooted in a social structure which gives her/him "...leeway to tinker, ³⁸ [to] follow his hunches and run risks on his own." He or she is free to test ideas against 'reality.' S/he is a distinct individual with a will and judgment of her/his own. (All this obviously sets off a critique of the True Believer who renounces self and personal responsibility, de-individualizes her/himself in a corporate body, imitates rather than originates, is gullible, propagandizable, etc.)

Hoffer clearly assumes that rational politics is politics in the pursuit of self-interest.³⁹ The key terms in Hoffer's model of rational political action are autonomy and self-interest, terms which I think Gerhard Lenski's discussion of persons as egoists helps us understand. In several important ways, Lenski's Power and Privilege is radically different from Hoffer's (and Kornhauser's) work. Lenski is indebted to an intellectual tradition flowing more from Hobbes than from Durkheim, a tradition which encourages him to abstract the individual out of social life and to attribute to this individual universal needs, wants

37. Hoffer, The True Believer, p. 25.

38. Hoffer, Ordeal, p. 22

39. Hoffer extends rational self-interested politics to 'class' politics. In a pluralist society the clear separation of classes permits each class to pursue its rational self-interest. But one wonders why this does not degenerate into

and purposes. Hoffer and Lenski differ in their view of man's relation to society and therefore in their conception of what comprises a moral order and why persons obey this order. But, despite their indebtedness to different theoretical traditions, they reach similar conclusions about what rational political action and mature morality look like.

The philosophical egoism upon which Lenski constructs his synthesis of radical and conservative theories of social stratification and change is worth our consideration since it also undergirds Hoffer's conception of rational politics and can be taken as the foundation of the True Believer contrast model. Lenski's thesis is that the spring to human action is the person's interest in his/her own happiness - defined as the accumulation of what is valued. But things that are valued are in scarce supply. Since "this is the normal feature of the world of nature," persons are in constant competition to obtain these scarce resources, to fill their insatiable appetites. It "...follows logically that a struggle for rewards will be present in every human society,"⁴⁰ an assumption which is compatible with Hoffer's thesis (adapted from Durkheim) that some divisions of labor do result in conflict over available re-⁴¹wards or "class conflict." We find in Hoffer a tempering open class war. Class war does not erupt because each class recognizes its usefulness to the whole, and is constrained by appeals to justice and decency.

40. Lenski, Power and Privilege, p. 32.

41. Hoffer, Ordeal, pp. 65-67.

of Lenski's view, a move away from universalizing this feature of human action, and a rooting of it in particular social conditions.

Lenski moves from his assumption that persons are fundamentally self-interested to a theory of social organization. Because persons need each other in order to pursue their self-interests, they organize a social life. This image of social life is clearly laid out in the following discussion of games.

Children's games afford far more insights into the nature of social organization than is usually recognized. In particular, they demonstrate the process by which institutions with their elements of cooperation and morality and their concepts of right and justice can emerge from the actions of an originally unorganized aggregation of individuals each selfishly seeking to maximize his own personal satisfactions. To achieve this maximization individuals are forced to work (and play) together, but they find that this can be rewarding only if the activity takes place within the framework of a system of rules which, above all else, protects the cooperative activity itself. This can only be done if certain basic rights are guaranteed to all of the essential participants....This may seem to entail some sacrifice on the part of the stronger or abler participants, but really it does not, since the only alternative is the cessation of the cooperative activity and all its benefits. Thus, for them, as for the other participants, adherence to the rules can be accounted for merely as a form of enlightened self-interest.⁴²

Again this position is tempered in Hoffer, who would not agree that persons join or form societies for utilitarian reasons, or that persons even need reasons for doing what they are already doing - i.e., participating in an ongoing

⁴². Lenski, Power and Privilege, p. 27.

social life. Rather, utilitarian persons are the product of particular modes of social life. Some social groups give rise to our self-interests; others - especially "political" groups - are used by us to pursue these interests. Lenski's view of society is constructed out of an immutable human nature, and Hoffer would certainly find fault with this. However, I believe that, given pluralist social conditions, Hoffer would agree that persons are motivated as Lenski suggests - i.e., to satisfy their self-interests while constrained by that enlightened egoism which undergirds rational political action.

One of the egoistic needs which Lenski picks out as vital to political action is the insatiable need for self-esteem:

...the same psychological process which causes men to need this limited degree of respect also creates a demand for more. The desire for status gives rise

43. Lenski's image of human action rests on the notion that drives, motives, instincts, interests, etc., flow out of the person; they are internal to persons and cause action. Lenski draws no conceptual distinction between "instincts" and "drives" - e.g., avoidance of pain, tension, hunger, thirst - on the one hand, and "reasons" and "motives" - e.g., interests, beliefs, etc. - on the other, either in terms of how they relate to action - as "cause" or as "justification" - or in terms of their relationship to evaluations. The spring to action is conceived of as a push from inside. This assumption establishes a particular status for motives as causes for action which individuals have and it delimits the range within which motives can vary - between irrational, emotional pushes and egoistic self-interested reasons. In a sense, Lenski's model yields an accurate picture of human motivation; a person must have a motive in order to be motivated; egoism is true insofar as the springs to action must be one's own. Lenski, however, moves from this truism to argue that motives originate in the self, an argument which leads us away from seriously asking whether

to an insatiable appetite.⁴⁴

And Hoffer, while rooting this desire in particular social conditions, agrees that this need is a vital element in political motivation.

[The] autonomous individual constitutes a chronically unbalanced entity. The confidence and sense of worth which alone can keep him on an even keel are extremely perishable, and must be generated anew each day. An achievement today is but a challenge for tomorrow. And since it is mainly by work that the majority of individuals prove their worth and regain their balance, they must keep it up continuously. Hence, the ceaseless hustling of an individualist society.⁴⁵

But an individualist society is not all that radically individualistic. Persons in such societies are motivated by a need for self-esteem, and it is the social groups with which we are identified which provide a great part of that self-esteem. It is upon this group based esteem that Lenski constructs a theory of conscious social change which attempts to link the direction of change - from egalitarian to stratified and vice versa - with surplus and scarcity. This is Lenski's theory of status inconsistency.

At first it appears that Lenski has constructed a theory of social change which eliminates human consciousness altogether. But he is not so naive as to do that. Both social change and social maintenance require the deployment of persons' emotions and reasons are somehow related to their social life.

44. Lenski, Power and Privilege, p. 38.

45. Hoffer, Ordeal, p. 28.

of ideas. For example, ideas can be used to manipulate and control persons, to justify the status quo; or ideas can be used to make claims on the distributive system, to promote social change by mitigating the workings of the distributive "laws." In fact, Lenski goes so far as to argue that ideas can be used "...to manipulate the social situation of others, or their perception of it, by the exercise of one's resources and rights, thereby increasing the pressures on others to act in accordance with one's own wishes."⁴⁶

What Lenski has done is to sneak a notion of false consciousness into what is basically a technological theory of social change through the back door. But what is most interesting is his explanation of how false consciousness can be converted to "real" consciousness, how some persons can become aware that existing ideologies can be utilized to justify demands for social change.

Recognition of one's real interests seems to be based on the way in which our group memberships provide us with self-esteem. If rational pluralist politics is made possible by the mutual constraint of competing plural social groups comprised of members seeking their self-interests, and if these groups are open to all, we

46. Lenski, Power and Privilege, p. 57.

need to understand what happens when persons belong to groups which support conflicting demands and expectations, and in particular groups which carry differing rewards. One possibility is that these persons will be cross-pressured and become politically immobilized, a position which Hoffer would probably support. But Hoffer has ignored the possibility that groups may be differentially valued by society and therefore satisfy individual needs for self-esteem differently. If this is the case, then persons who are members of differentially esteemed groups have a clearly defined rational interest in pushing for rewards in terms of that group which is more highly valued.

This is Lenski's theory of status inconsistency. Given a choice, persons who experience inconsistent statuses will rationally choose to ignore that classification which demeans them and to focus on the classification which raises their prestige, wealth, power, etc.⁴⁷

As we shall see in Chapter IV, the theory of status inconsistency is considered especially appropriate to the case of women in modern industrial society. Women are perceived as making demands not as women but as members

47. Lenski may still have to come to grips with the cross-pressure thesis. Under what conditions do status inconsistencies promote political action, and under what conditions do they immobilize?

of the middle class; i.e., as educated professionals, or would-be professionals, or as citizens. Since women have won the vote and since few still opt for professional life, Lenski feels free to write that "...for the vast majority of women, the battle for equality has been won."⁴⁸

Whether Lenski's perception of women's position in contemporary society is accurate depends on whether the category "woman" is perceived as a group which carries with it social significance; i.e., significance in terms of the social distribution of rewards and benefits. And whether women will perceive inconsistencies in their present statuses depends also on whether this category carries significance for them. It is obvious that Lenski does not think the category significant; it is not so obvious that women agree.

We cannot assume that women wish to have their position in a sex-caste system ignored, nor can we assume that women believe that they are recognized only in their higher statuses. Furthermore, we cannot assume that all women who participate in the Women's Movement are motivated by a simple desire for higher status in the

48. Lenski, Power and Privilege, p. 426.

within the existing status system. If vertical mobility were all women sought, one might well wonder why women do not simply follow Lenski's suggestion and marry men of higher status, thus continuing to be rewarded by society for ascribed status.

There is a final point which needs to be teased out and that is the point that persons experiencing status inconsistencies cannot couch their demands for change in any language they choose. To be rational, the demands must be couched in the language of ideal-democratic ideologies (as long as agents are located in democracies). The nature of the demands serves as the criteria of rationality. A demand is rational if it utilizes existing rules of the game - in the case of the United States, the liberal-democratic moral-political rule of equality of opportunity - to maximize egoistic interests.

The theory of status inconsistency is an attempt to account for rational political activism and the use of political ideology in terms of persons' need for self-esteem.

49. There seems to be an inconsistency in Lenski's recognition of democratic ideologies as valid and his thesis that inequality is inevitable. Democratic ideologies do seem to imply egalitarianism. But if we see that Lenski's version of democratic egalitarianism is the ideology of equality of opportunity (implying the equal opportunity to be better than others), the inconsistency is resolved. Persons make demands for equality of opportunity, which once met - met by the strict demand for equality at the beginning of the race for status with no consideration of the resulting inequalities of condition - leave no grounds for criticizing any resulting inequalities.

"Men's reactions to the phenomenon of status inconsistency" is Lenski's way of getting at conscious, rational demands for social change which seem to fly in the face of a distributive law which predicts increasing inequality with greater surplus.

The theory is based on the postulate that individuals strive to maximize their satisfactions, even, if necessary, at the expense of others. This means that an individual with inconsistent statuses or ranks has a natural tendency to think of himself in terms of that status or rank which is highest and to expect others to do the same. Meanwhile others who come in contact with him have a vested interest in doing just the opposite, that is, in treating him in terms of his lowest status or rank.⁵⁰

And so we have a rational politics of social change, a politics revolving around whether others will acquiesce to our demand for equal opportunities to be recognized and to achieve in those positions which carry higher rewards.

We need only accept Lenski's assumptions about human motivation and man's insatiable appetite for status to find his description of the politics of change convincing. Persons who experience inconsistent statuses are likely to make demands for change because they have an interest in shifting the focus of rewards and respect from stratification systems in which they are not esteemed to ones in which they are. This is not a demand for equality, but for ignoring some systems of inequality in favor of others. "Egalitarian" ideologies appeal to such persons so long as they redress

50. Lenski, Power and Privilege, p. 86.

the balance of inequality in their own favor. Others have an interest in maintaining the status quo and will oppose such shifts. Thus one might expect to find college educated Blacks pressing for equal opportunities to become business executives, and middle class intellectual women pressing to become Democratic political candidates - with a certain amount of white male resistance to both.

The theory of status inconsistency is a model of rational politics which we can contrast to the True Believer model of irrational politics. It may well be that True Believers also experience inconsistent statuses - e.g., Hoffer's intellectual True Believers do have high educational status but low prestige in the social order they reject. Indeed, one of the problems Lenski himself has is that he cannot utilize his own theory to distinguish between rational and irrational politics. However, if we focus on the kind of demands which define rationality, and combine that with the notion of status inconsistency, we find that rational politics must be designed to maximize rewards for the self, and be couched in the language of the pluralist, bargaining political game.

This image of politics has certain implications for the way in which we press our demands. Because we have all internalized the constraints of bargaining politics and because we all recognize certain claims as at least potentially justifiable, we enter politics with a certain amount of

willingness to make concessions to our opponents. Moreover, in a structurally diffuse society it is difficult to hold ideas rigidly. In effect, pluralism guarantees that ideas are held with that degree of hesitency which makes rational political discourse possible. It is a plurality of ideas and the hesitency which flows from this plurality which stands behind liberal support of the political value 'tolerance,' and which serves as the base from which to criticize True Believer thinking. The liberal points to the danger of impassioned commitment to one "ideology" to the exclusion of alternative ideas. Pluralist man, confronted with several conflicting ideas (seldom are these seen as ideologies) is a cautious man, waiting for these ideas to stand the test of the marketplace, the test of 'truth.' In the real world of liberal politics, it is assumed that no idea ever does actually win out, and pluralist man always stands somewhat aloof from a full commitment to any particular set of ideas.

III. A preliminary critique

Having set out in detail those criteria which define the True Believer model of political action and its built-in contrast model of rational action, I am now in the position of offering a brief preliminary critique. This critique forshadows the model of the Moral Agent which I will

develop in the next chapter, but it does not require any detailed remarks about that model.

First there are questions which need to be raised about assumptions of egoism, especially in Lenski's version of rational politics. We need to ask whether this egoism is trivially true; i.e., persons indeed have to have a motive in order for it to be their motive. But the more vital claim that persons largely seek only to satisfy themselves although they may do so by cooperating with others may be open to more serious criticism. Lenski may be correct that persons recognize that they must cooperate in order to engage in many kinds of satisfying activities. However, this need not limit us to a view of persons as entirely self-interested, nor to a view that cooperation is parasitic on self-interest. As I shall argue in the next chapter, this model ignores the possibility that the very existence of cooperative activities creates in persons the kinds of interests that cannot be said to spring either from the self or to be entirely in the self. If this argument is convincing, the thesis that egoism undergirds rational action is undermined and a new dimension is added to our understanding of human motives - one that is excluded by the contours of the True Believer model and its contrast.

Neither Lenski, Hoffer, or Kornhauser are interested in whether persons can learn to take an interest in the development of others, although they are each interested in how persons can learn to adapt themselves to the interests of

others. It is highly unlikely that any of them would accept a theory of moral development which might move beyond egoism to some conception of 'social interests,' 'community,' or 'solidarity.'⁵¹ Nor could they conceive of a rational politics that did not rest on self-interest. Politics is rational when it is in the pursuit of egoistic interests, irrational if other reasons are offered.⁵² The most paradoxical thing about Kornhauser's version of the model is that he readily accedes to the idea that persons who have the least interest in an established order - either economically or affectively - are most likely to overthrow that order, yet he cannot accept this overthrow as rational when the society has established procedures for redress of grievance.

Lenski's version, moreover, is asociological and a-historical, despite the fact that Lenski does see great variation in social structure and organization. Lenski abstracts the individual out of society and posits a universal human need for self-respect and status. Without getting involved in a lengthy discussion of the problems of lumping together needs for self-respect with biological needs like survival, sustenance, health, I think I am justified in

51. See Robert Paul Wolff, The Poverty of Liberalism (Boston; Beacon, 1968) for a discussion of 'community.'

52. Kornhauser's discussion of "class" politics is interesting. Unlike Marx, Kornhauser sees class politics as the norm in pluralist societies because he equates class with economic interest groups. Class refers to individual interests and conscious states rather than to relationship with the mode of production. It is not surprising that Kornhauser

saying that Lenski has made a perhaps unconscious and certainly undefended leap from biological to social needs. The implications of this are profound, because in doing this he establishes the foundation upon which is built the notion that inequality is inevitable. Without stratification there would be no status and therefore no needs satisfaction.

Kornhauser, too, is open to this criticism. His vision of a just society is an organically integrated social order in which stratification and the division of labor works to the advantage of all. So long as there is equality of opportunity and persons can sort themselves out according to their talents, democracy is preserved. Since some kind of stratification is essential to satisfy human needs, and to ensure that socially valuable functions are performed by those with talent, ensuing inequalities are not open to serious debate.

Kornhauser and Hoffer, however, are not as open to the criticism of asociality and ahistoricity as is Lenski. Kornhauser clearly links motivational schemes with social structures, and neither looks for reasons why persons cooperate. That is assumed to be part of what it means to be a social being. Yet both seem to make an error in the opposite direction and to lose sight of individuals as they experience a continuous existence. As one cultural form breaks down - when there are marked discontinuities sees class conflict as taking shape in coalition-formation and compromise under liberal democratic rules.

in authority or community or when there is a severe crisis like prolonged unemployment or defeat in war - persons appear to exist in a limbo. There is a feeling here that persons do not exist at the interstices of cultural change.

A society having a traditional system of authority is greatly in need of social formations which can bridge the transition to a new system of democratic power. Otherwise, no group is able to influence deeply the collective activity; and instead of new values being built into the social structure, there is merely a cultural vacuum and social atomization.⁵³

Change is something that happens to people; society dis-integrates, culture changes, personality and motives change.

One cannot quarrel with the sociological sense of a statement like Kornhauser's, "Personal autonomy does not develop apart from society and culture,"⁵⁴ but one wonders what happens to autonomous persons when the pluralist order which nurtures and sustains their independence is dislocated. It may well be that they revert to less developed motivational schemes, but this requires some empirical support. One also needs to consider the possibility that persons might develop another type of autonomy as they engage in the creation of new roles, rules and constraints. There is no sense here that societies may be pluralistic in providing opportunities for persons to experience different kinds of constraints, thus providing the tools for dealing with problematic situations as challenges to present motivational schemes.

53. Kornhauser, The Politics of Mass Society, p. 126.

54. Ibid., p. 110.

There is also a question as to whether Kornhauser's motivational typology is complete. We need to ask whether 'guilt', 'shame', 'obligation', 'anxiety', and 'self-reliance', as he conceives them, are adequate conceptual pictures of political motivation. We need to ask where motives like 'resentment' and 'indignation' can come in. Nor are these motivational concepts particularly well explicated. There is the very important case of 'frustration' which we need to consider.

First, it is assumed that frustration leads to action, while it may well be that frustration and tension arise in the course of action. As Peter Lupsha has so cogently argued, frustration theories posit a "triggering mechanism;" there is the action, somehow it must have been caused, therefore there must have been frustration.⁵⁵ Frustration is a basic emotion, something like fear or anxiety, which can directly cause action without any mediating factors like an explanatory theory which directs action toward the cause of the frustration or which points out gaps between ideals and reality which can be closed. Frustration theory assumes an immature individual who cannot "adjust" to the reality of these gaps. But, "...a crucial element remains hidden; when a man is starving, or is denied justice or freedom, frustration is a sane and reasoned reaction. Equally

55. Peter Lupsha, "Explanation of Political Violence: Some Psychological Theories vs. Indignation," Politics and Society 2 (Fall, 1971):89-104.

sane and reasoned - these do not mean devoid of passion - can be a man's commitment to a movement which aims at eliminating hunger, injustice, coercion."⁵⁶

Breines' criticism of Hoffer leads us directly to the crux of the matter, and that is the place of explanatory theory and moral ideas in this model of political action. According to Breines, ideas flesh out and direct emotion concepts like frustration. Unlike 'anxiety' which is the sort of attitudinal concept most closely akin to a pure emotion term like fear and which arises in a vague, ill-defined, threatening environment, 'frustration' seems to require a more vivid conception of where one is and where one would like to be, some theory of a 'good' society and one's appropriate place in it. Theorists in the True Believer tradition accept the notion that once certain values are present, certain beliefs are precluded, but they do not see that our beliefs can somehow play a role in our choice of values, can redirect or reshape or reformulate emotions, can set limits to what can be valued. Further, as Breines suggests, even if ideas do originate in frustrations, this ought not to be taken to imply the equivalence of all ideas.

...while one may separate, for purposes of analysis, the psychological or social origins of ideas from the content and meaning of those ideas, one cannot exclude the latter without hiding the truth of an idea. It is just this hiding which Hoffer performs through his claim that mass movements are interchangeable.⁵⁷

56. Paul Breines, "Would You Believe: an Introductory Critique of The True Believer" (Boston: New England Free Press, no date), p. 4.

57. Ibid., p. 5.

Some of the ideas people have are moral ideas. I will argue that the True Believer model founders on a conception of morality as the induction of conventional guides. Despite his own rejection of the idea that there can be any truth value in moral judgments, the True Believer theorist does buy the conventions of liberal democracy and is quite willing to reject as rationalizations of deep, subconscious motivations, or as obedience to the commands of external authority, the reasons for action offered by the extremist. They are not perceived as possibly flowing from alternative ideals of a good society. In many cases this categorization may be accurate, but in the next chapter, I shall suggest that in at least some cases this is misleading.

Finally, there are untested assumptions made about the structural constraints of pluralism. Pluralist structures are assumed to provide persons with the social bases from which to pursue their interests without threatening the social order. Since there are opportunities to gain advantages, and because the division of labor is just, right and necessary, one has reason to play by the rules which mitigate social conflict. But the model fails to consider the possibility of uncompromisable conflict. The very structure and rules of pluralist society may make it impossible for some to pursue their interests through legitimate channels. Interests which flow out of radically different conceptions

of what ought to be may be totally incompatible with the rules which are designed to further those interests which are rooted in what is.

And, as Gusfield points out in his criticism of Kornhauser, extremism can and does occur in pluralist societies. By communicating group discontents, plural groups may in fact be essential to the development of political movements. One cannot assume that groups will restrain conflicts where there are no routine means for redress of grievances, and where grievances are not routine.

The belief that participation in the primary and secondary associations of society will moderate conflict arises from this ideological commitment to pluralist politics. It leads the mass politics theorist to identify political defeat with social alienation, to view extremist movements as actions of dis-attached persons, unrelated to specific social bases or pursuing interests of a discrete social base.⁵⁸

In the next chapter, I will suggest that this is indeed a misleading assumption and that at least some extremists are clearly identified with rewarding, meaningful, personally gratifying groups, and not, as the True Believer model would have it, groups which satisfy less than rational needs.

58. Joseph R. Gusfield, "Mass Society and Extremist Politics," American Sociological Review 27(February 1962), p. 29.

CHAPTER III

AN ALTERNATIVE IMAGE OF RATIONAL POLITICAL ACTION

As we at all times occupy a certain position in space and perceive everything from a certain point of view, so we occupy a certain position within the order of development of social institutions and think of men and of their potentialities from this point of view. We know therefore that any philosophical inquiry into the conditions of freedom, and into the essential human virtues, will always need to be revised, however adequate it may seem to the particular conditions of its time, and to the concepts prevailing in the thought of that time.

Stuart Hampshire - Thought and Action

But there is one other motive for intense political commitment that is of a different moral order. That is the motive of compassion. It is possible to be moved to political commitment - not by wanting power, not by seeking some sort of religious fulfillment, not because one needs it psychologically - but because one chooses to involve oneself in the plight of one's fellow men. It is this motive, and this motive only, that I propose to treat with moral respect.

Peter Berger - "Between System and Horde"

I quote these two passages at length since they seem to me to represent in broad outline the model of political action which I shall develop in this chapter. Here I shall attempt to explicate a model of rational action - a model I shall call the Moral Agent - which moves beyond the True Believer image of rationality as the pursuit of self-interest, and which permits us to place that image of rationality in its historical and social perspective. While I do not intend to explicate the concept of 'rationality'

I do want to illustrate how it is rooted in our social life by showing that persons may experience social lives which can move them beyond egoism and self-interest.

This experience can provide the basis for rational political action quite different from the liberal politics pictured in Chapter II. I also want to draw out the relationship between rational politics and moral reasoning, and especially to tease out the way in which our adopting a particular ethical theory infects our political judgments and actions.

I. The moral agent: persons and human relationships

In order to explicate the Moral Agent model, I need to clarify two issues: first, what does it mean to be a person; and second, what types of interpersonal relationships do persons engage in. These are important issues since I want to claim that our image of persons undergirds our moral judgments and because we need an alternative image of human possibility if we wish to move beyond the egoism of the True Believer contrast model.

I should like to argue that being a person involves having certain capacities. These capacities include the following: 1) to feel pain and pleasure; 2) to formulate intentions, projects and long range goals; 3) to enter into rich reactive relationships; 4) to become autonomous. In some respects this image of persons is consistent with the image developed in Chapter II, but there are several

vital differences.

I should like also to argue that persons can engage in relationships which either impede or encourage the development of these capacities. Those which encourage development are what I call 'liberating' relationships; they are relationships in which persons treat each other as having these capacities, and work to promote their development. These are relationships built upon mutual respect. I assume that persons have the capacity to engage in such relationships, are capable, for instance of living up to the demands of a commonly accepted moral code, of being trustworthy, of fulfilling their obligations, etc.

Why these capacities are important will become clear as I develop the notion of mutual respect. That we have these capacities does not mean that persons do not engage in other types of very human relationships - for example, relationships of mutual hatred, which, in a sense, are relationships built upon mutual respect since we do treat each other as having certain capacities like the capacity to knowingly inflict pain. What I am interested in, however, are the implications for political action of our having the capacity to participate in relationships of the former type.

These paragraphs demand a great deal of unpacking. I propose to do this in terms of the following questions:

1) what does it mean to be a rule-follower; 2) what

particular rules does a Moral Agent try to follow; 3) what other elements are involved in the actions of Moral Agents - how are explanatory theories and passions linked to moral reasons; 4) how and under what conditions does the capacity to reason develop; 5) how does this model give us critical leverage against the True Believer model, what are the implications of the Moral Agent model for political analysis.

I.a. What does it mean to follow rules

Undergirding both models developed in this dissertation is an image of persons as rule-followers. This sense of persons rests on the assumption that, while causal explanations of human behavior may at times be adequate, a complete understanding of what a person does - as opposed to what happens to him - needs to take into account the reasons that person gives or could give for his or her actions. These reasons are what constitute rule-governed behavior.¹ However, there are many different ways in which persons can orient themselves to those rules which comprise the accepted 'reasons' for action in his or her own society. Among these orientations are at least critical and non-critical stances vis-à-vis the rules which constitute one's social life.

The image of autonomy on which the Moral Agent model rests is very much linked to persons' orientation toward

¹ I am avoiding many of the debates which revolve around the distinction between 'reasons' and 'causes.' See, for example, Donald Davidson, "Actions, Reasons, and Causes," in May Brodbeck, ed., Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), pp. 44-57.

rules. It rests on the idea that persons not only are able to follow the rules which make action possible - i.e., understand the rules which govern conduct - but are also able to subject them to critical scrutiny. True Believers, rational egoists and Moral Agents all follow rules, but only the latter have developed the sort of critical capacity I will want to label moral.

To clarify what I mean by a critical orientation toward rules, I think it is useful to refer to Piaget's distinction between heteronomous and autonomous reasoning or rule-following. In The Moral Judgment of the Child, Piaget identifies three modes of behavior: "...motor behavior, egocentric behavior (with external constraint), and cooperation. And to these three modes of social behavior there correspond three types of rules: motor rules, rules due to unilateral respect, and rules due to mutual respect."² Motor rules are pre-social; they are rather more lawlike (causal), in fact, than rulelike. But with increasing sociality or constraint by those around her/him, the individual acquires an ability to follow rules. Finally, when persons experience cooperation between equals, autonomy and rule-following qua rule-following - or the ability to critically evaluate existing rules - develops. The individual has moved as far from lawlike behavior as Piaget sees possible.

2. Jean Piaget, The Moral Judgment of the Child (New York: Free Press, 1965), p.86.

To put this in the language of child development, In the first stage of development, the child has no conception of social rules; indeed, s/he cannot distinguish between self and what is outside self and therefore cannot distinguish between the constraints of social rules and the constraints of her/his own body and the material world. This inability leads to his/her investing the social environment with "divine" authority, with the same massive reality as the physical world. In the second stage, the child can distinguish social rules from physical laws, but still sees them as external to self and transcendently real. "So long as the practise is not submitted to conscious, autonomous elaboration and remains, as it were, external to the individual, this externality is symbolized as transcendence."³ Society precedes individual; realism undergirds heteronomous activity. The child obediently follows rules, while at the same time perceiving her/himself as in fundamental conflict with these rules since s/he can neither understand their nature nor assert her/his own will and evaluate them from the point of view of her/his own needs. Yet these rules are obeyed uncritically.

But "...from the moment that children really begin to submit to rules and apply them in a spirit of genuine cooperation, they acquire a new conception of these rules. Rules become something that can be changed if it is agreed

3. Ibid., p. 94.

that they should be...." ⁴ Rules may be altered in light of a critical perspective which reflects an understanding of the difference between what Piaget calls 'constitutive' and 'constituted' rules and what John Searle calls 'constitutive' and 'regulative' rules. ⁵

Searle himself finds it difficult to articulate the distinction he wants to draw between these two types of rules. "As a start, we might say that regulative rules regulate antecedently or independently existing forms of behavior; for example, many rules of etiquette regulate interpersonal relationships which exist independently of the rules. But constitutive rules do not merely regulate, they create or define new forms of behavior." ⁶ The rules create the very possibility of the activity which is then logically dependent on the rules.

However, the distinction is not all that simple because

4. Ibid., p. 95.

5. John R. Searle, Speech Acts (Cambridge: University Press, 1969). See also Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man," Review of Metaphysics 25 (September, 1971): 3-51. Taylor also discusses this distinction: "...we are normally induced to think of rules as applying to behavior which could be available to us whether or not the rule existed. Some rules are like this, they are regulative like commandments: don't take the goods of another. But there are other rules, e.g., that governing the Queen's move in chess, which are not so separable. If one suspends these rules, or imagines a state in which they have not yet been introduced, then the whole range of behavior in question, in this case, chess playing, would not be. Rules of this kind are constitutive rules."

6. Searle, Speech Acts, p. 33.

there may be several layers of rules involved. For example, there are rules which define what it means to play games, any games; e.g., rules that one follows the rules of the particular game one is playing, that one doesn't cheat, etc. But then there are the particular rules which constitute the particular game; e.g., the rule in chess that a pawn cannot take a piece directly in front of it. This rule is essential to chess playing, unlike the regulative rule which stipulates that a player cannot touch a pawn without moving it. This latter rule could be changed without touching the core of the game. It is a regulative rule.

Regulative rules take the form of injunctions, "though shalt," while constitutive rules are more closely analogous to definitions or descriptions of the activity. "If our paradigm of rules are imperative regulative rules, such non-imperative constitutive rules are likely to strike us as extremely curious and hardly even as rules at all."⁷ But it is upon this distinction that much of what I shall argue in this chapter is based, for I shall argue that not until we are able to see rules not simply as imperatives but as constitutive of activities which we may consciously change, will we be able to assess and revise particular rules and to act autonomously and creatively with respect to them.

But there is another important implication for politics of this distinction, and that has to do with the depth of

7. Ibid., p. 34.

debate around and about rules. To clarify this somewhat, I think we might look at the example Piaget uses, the child's game of marbles. Once children have moved beyond the motor-rule stage and have a sense of the meaning of rules, we can begin to consider the implications of the ways they are oriented towards rules for discourse. For these children, the rules of the game of marbles are sacrosanct. None of them can be altered because they are authoritative imperatives imposed either by parents or by bigger children. It is difficult to see here any possibility for rational discourse about changing rules. But for children in the third stage, rules can be subjected to debate in terms of their understanding of what it means to cooperate in playing a game.

It is important to point out that some of the debated rules will be more easily revised than others; e.g., regulative rules about how far one stands away from the circle into which the marbles are rolled may or may not be heatedly debated in terms of whether they make for a better or worse game of marbles, but constitutive rules about whether there is to be a circle at all would - if raised - certainly arouse great passion for to question this rule might be to question the very game of marbles. As in political discourse, there will be debate among children as to what rules are regulative and what constitutive of the game of marbles, which ones

can be altered without sacrificing the game, but the most serious debates will be over constitutive rules, although it may well be that to engage in these debates would require a more sophisticated level of cognitive development and would rarely be engaged in by children.

An analogy from politics may be clearer. The heatedness of the debate over the distribution of rewards between organized labor and management, with each jockeying for position within a system of rules of bargaining and compromise and with each emphasizing those regulative rules - e.g., legislation - which best help their own interests, is as nothing compared to the heatedness of debate over definitions of politics when these occur. Imagine the debate which would ensue were one of the parties - labor or management - to question the definition of politics as bargaining and compromise and to suggest that these procedures were merely regulative of a particular kind of politics. Imagine the debate were one party to propose reconstituting politics as the pursuit of common as opposed to self-interests.⁸

Debate, then, can take place at either level of rule-following, with the most vital debates occurring over constitutive rules. However, the ability to engage in these

8. In "Conceptual Revision and Political Reform," Amherst, Ma., 1973 (Mimeographed), William Connolly joins this issue. He argues that political disputes can revolve around what constitutes the activity "politics." Convincing our opponent to adopt our view is to open up possibilities hitherto rejected and to go a long way toward winning the dispute. I would suggest that radical revisions are more likely to come from those who are not doing very well under existing rules.

debates requires that we can engage in what Piaget calls 'true' rule following. This ability develops at the third stage, the stage of autonomy. Social rules become self-imposed as the conflict between self and society which was so pressing in the second stage is abolished with the development of our understanding of ourselves as social beings. But not only are rules now self-imposed, they are also open to critical scrutiny from the perspective of what one now understands to be the purpose of rules - the delimiting and defining of human activity.

Understanding constitutive rules undergirds the notion of reflectiveness which is part of the conception of autonomy and morality I support. Reflectiveness refers to the way in which persons hold ideas.⁹ In making political choices, reflective persons are aware that their own conceptions may be subject to radical revision in light of both the formal rules constitutive of the activity itself, and in light of alternative notions of persons, their needs and their relationship to society. Heteronomous persons are unfree in just the sense that they are not reflective; they cannot subject the rules, activities, and principles of their society to a critical analysis based on an understanding of the constitutive rules of social life and their relation to human needs, wants and purposes.

9. [An] individual is autonomous (at the social level) to the degree to which he subjects the pressures and norms with which he is confronted to conscious and critical evaluation...." Steven Lukes, Individualism (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973)p. 52.

Reflectiveness is part of the social development of the autonomous person. As we shall see below in the discussion of the conditions under which moral development can occur, reflectiveness grows out of social relationships which permit the development of new cognitive structures through which persons perceive the world in new ways. Reflective action - that action in which Moral Agents engage (when they are acting upon their best motives) - is autonomous action. Unlike heteronomous action - which is characterized by 1) a failure to distinguish self from other (the person has no sense of self as a reflective agent able to criticize existing social rules); 2) commission of the naturalistic fallacy with respect to all rules (what is, ought to be); 3) action based on duty and obedience - autonomous action is characterized by a sense of self and of responsibility for one's actions. Rules are perceived as social and historical (and therefore alterable), and the spring to action - the motivation to follow rules - comes, as we shall see, not from a conflict between self and society which society wins, but from a sense of solidarity with one's fellows. Rules are not the internalized constraints of external authority, but the product of social interactions and are seen as part of what it means to be a person. The Moral Agent understands the idea of rule-following.

I.b. What kinds of rules constitute morality

Some of the most important rules of conduct we follow are moral rules. Moral rules are particularly important

in politics since many of our political actions are guided by moral considerations. Therefore it is important for us to understand what a moral rule is and how persons orient themselves toward these rules.

The distinction between heteronomous and autonomous rule-following is essential to our understanding the distinction between the actions of the True Believer, the rational egoist, and the Moral Agent. What I want to do at this point is to illustrate the sorts of reasons one might offer for engaging in certain kinds of actions when one is applying moral rules heteronomously and autonomously. This will lead us directly into a discussion of the possible principles which could constitute morality itself, and the implications of these principles for political practise.

Lawrence Kohlberg's stage theory of moral development helps us get at these issues. Kohlberg's thesis is that morality is rather more than a set of character traits, role-specific behavior, obligations and rights, more than the code already embedded in existing social practises. He wants to show that morality is a form of reasoning which develops conceptually over time. Kohlberg identifies three levels of reasoning, levels which correspond to Piaget's motor, heteronomous and autonomous modes of rule-following, although one could debate whether Level III ought to include Stage 5 in a society whose moral code embodies these principles. These levels and stages are

set out below, but anyone interested in a fuller description of the stages is invited to review Kohlberg's work as cited in the Bibliography.

- Level I. Premoral:
 - Stage 1. Punishment and obedience orientation
 - Stage 2. Naïve instrumental hedonism
- Level II. Morality of conventional role conformity:
 - Stage 3. Good-boy morality of maintaining good relations and approval by others
 - Stage 4. Authority maintaining morality
- Level III. Morality of self-accepted principles:
 - Stage 5. Morality of contract, or individual rights, and of democratically accepted law
 - Stage 6. Morality of individual principles of conscience.¹⁰

These stages are conceptual; i.e., they involve the developing ability to make sharper and more complex distinctions about persons, punishments and principles. Thus, for example, persons at Level III have a more developed understanding of persons and their social nature than those at Level II - society is envisaged as a human construction rather than as a concrete reality.

In the pre-moral stages, persons obey rules not out of any understanding of the social nature of rules, but either because they fear direct punishment or because following a rule can get them what they want. These stages are similar to Piaget's motor-rule stage since persons actually do not see

10. Encyclopedia of Philosophy, "Moral Development," by Lawrence Kohlberg.

11. Obviously theorists who accept an image of society as having ontological reality apart from individuals will disagree with this claim.

themselves as rule-followers by as constrained either by external force or by the force of their own needs. (Whether Kohlberg is correct that these are two distinct stages with an invariable sequence is open to debate.) Under conventional morality - the level which parallels Piaget's heteronomous morality - reasoning flows from social convention; one makes reference to what others think or to the demands of society in justifying one's actions. At the third level, however, one is able to evaluate these conventions in terms of principles which move beyond convention and which are based on an understanding of the purpose of moral rules. This level parallels Piaget's autonomous morality, but again there are problems since it is not clear to me how one could distinguish whether Stage 5 reasoning were autonomous or heteronomous in a society where contractualism, individual rights and democratically accepted law are embedded in convention.¹²

12. There are some real problems with Kohlberg's theory of moral development. First, there is the problem of how one knows that a person is morally developed. Is there a difference between 'having' and 'using' a concept? As Alston points out (William Alston, "Comments on Kohlberg's 'From Is to Ought'", in T. Mischel, ed. Cognitive Development and Epistemology (New York: Academic Press, 1971), p. 270), "One cannot use a concept in a given situation without having it, but one can have a concept without using it in a given situation." Kohlberg's own tests seem to get at moral reasoning in artificial situations. In "real-life" situations, persons are not only confronted with the logic of the situation but with its emotional impact, including emotional ties to persons about whom moral choices need to be made. This may interfere with pure reasoning at whatever stage the person has reached. (This may help account for why Kohlberg can see Martin Luther King as a moral agent but not Stokely Carmichael; Carmichael's various hatreds may get in the way of his reasoning capabilities which may really be at Stage 6.) Kohlberg

While it goes well beyond the scope of this dissertation to take on the issue of whether Kohlberg has legislated a morality - i.e., elevated his Stage 6 principled morality

has ignored important features of moral development, for instance the problem of how persons become sensitized to the needs of others, and the problem of why persons seem to care about being moral. (See R.S. Peters, "Moral Development, A Plea for Pluralism," in Mischel, ed., Cognitive Development.) The problem, it seems to me, lies in Kohlberg's ignoring the emotive side of moral learning and moral ideas, but, as I shall argue below, this is not a problem endemic to the model.

Moreover, there seem to me to be important conceptual problems in the cognitive stages, problems which flow from Kohlberg's dichotomization of form and content and from his lack of a sociological theory. It seems to me that children do learn a moral content along with the forms of moral reasoning and that the distinction between form and content at some stages cannot be maintained. If this is so, then the stage theory is far from culturally unbiased. For example, Kohlberg will have trouble testing moral development in societies organized along the lines of Stage 5 morality - contract liberalism - since it will be difficult to tell whether an individual is reasoning from authority - the authorities pronouncing the rules of contract liberalism - or from principles. There is also the problem of establishing levels of moral development in liberal societies which justify constituted moral rules in terms of Stage 2 reasons. One wonders also whether persons will have opportunities for exposure to situations which can move them on to Stage 6 when social rules are organized along Stage 5 principles. What happens to moral development when the social structure confirms the formal mode of rule-perception and the content of moral principles at lower stages of development. Can persons develop the principle of 'respect for persons' in a bargaining society where the 'other' is one's opponent and where the only reason for putting oneself in his place is to try to understand how he might be manipulated? There may be something to Kohlberg's claim that middle class children develop more rapidly than working class children because they are exposed to more environmental stimuli (and perhaps, as Peters suggests, because they have more opportunities to practise reasoning at higher levels), but the question remains as to whether middle class life experiences promote Stage 6 reasoning, or whether working class children need to go through Stage 5 in order to reach Stage 6.

into morality qua morality, thus avoiding debate over what constitutes morality - I think that it is important to develop the implications of his theory of cognitive development for political evaluation and action.¹³ If persons do develop the kinds of cognitive abilities which Kohlberg claims for them, what are the implications for our understanding of political action?

Kohlberg's claim is that Stage 6 morality is a critical perspective from which persons can evaluate any of the ethical principles - the regulative rules of a particular moral code - which are already embedded in social practise. If this claim is valid, it is important for our understanding of how persons can move beyond the social conformism of True Believer morality and develop ideal standards which can serve to undergird political action. But what are the principles which Kohlberg claims persons develop and which undergird this critical stance?

For Kohlberg, as for Piaget, one's orientation toward rules develops with an increasing ability to distinguish oneself from what is external to oneself, and at the same time to see oneself as a person among persons. This ability to see oneself as a person, with the capacity to will one's own action, makes possible the adherence to certain moral principles. First, it makes possible the moral principle

13. Kohlberg does begin to engage in this debate in an article entitled "From Is to Ought: How to Commit the Naturalistic Fallacy and Get Away with It in Moral Development," in Mischel, ed., Cognitive Development.

of prescriptivity or reversibility. For one who sees him or herself as a person among persons and as a chooser, a 'moral' rule cannot be either that which another wills for me, nor that which I will for another but not for myself. The Moral Agent cannot formulate a 'moral' rule which s/he would be unwilling to have applied by another to him or herself in a similar situation.¹⁴

The formal rule element at Stage 6 also meets the requirement of universality. Moral rules are meant to be applied in a self-consistent manner to all (morally) similar cases. There can be no exceptions to the rule except morally deserving ones.¹⁵

So far, then, the formal constraints of moral reasoning are prescriptivity and universality. But Kohlberg adds a further requirement of moral reasoning and that is the requirement of respect for persons. It is this principle which I take to be central to the model of the Moral Agent, and it underlies the two formal principles already described.

14. For a more thorough discussion of the principles of moral reasoning, or the moral point of view, see Kurt Baier, The Moral Point of View (New York: Random House, 1965).

15. According to Kohlberg, Stage 6 is a more developed morality because it handles "...more moral problems, conflicts, or points of view in a more stable or self-confident way." It can do this because of the principles of reversibility and universality. Earlier stages are unable to resolve moral dilemmas which Stage 6 can handle because they are "...not fully universal and prescriptive and therefore lead to continual self-contradictions, to definitions of right which are different for Republicans and Democrats, for Americans and Vietnamese, for fathers and sons. In contrast principled morality is directed to resolving these contradictions in a stable self-consistent fashion." (Kohlberg, "Is-Ought," p. 185) Yet there are problems here for certainly a Nazi prison-camp

Kohlberg argues that moral development involves the increasing ability to distinguish human life as a universal principle from all other value judgments about individuals - judgments based on wealth, status, sex, personal relationship, etc. "The moral imperative to value life becomes increasingly independent of the factual properties of the life in question."¹⁶ But we need to ask what Kohlberg might mean by valuing human life, or, as I shall term it, by the principle of respect for persons.

The moral principles of universality and reversibility have an internal relationship to the concept "person." They both imply treating others as one would treat oneself - the Golden Rule. But how does one treat oneself? I should like to argue that we treat ourselves as having those capacities listed earlier in this chapter, as having the capacity to feel pleasure and pain, as having interests, needs, wants and purposes, as acting freely on our own choices, as choosing our own lives, and as capable of participating in humanizing relationships. Thus to treat others as we treat ourselves is to treat them as valuing, autonomous individuals, capable of feeling pleasure and pain, of entering into rich reactive relationships, and as capable of development.

official was entirely stable and consistent in his carrying out of official orders. Is his a developed morality?

16. Ibid. Compare this with Durkheim's moral theory in which respect accrues to roles rather than to persons.

In his article "Persons and Punishment," Herbert Morris develops what I find to be a fruitful distinction between what it means to treat others as persons as opposed to treating them as things.¹⁷ To treat another as a thing is to treat him or her from the outside, to ignore intentionality and responsibility and to seek to manipulate behavior.

When we treat a human being as an animal or some inanimate object our responses to the human being are determined, not by his choices, but ours in disregard of or with indifference to his. And when we 'look upon' a person as less than a person or not a person, we consider the person as incapable of rational choice.¹⁸

Punishment rests on the idea of persons as rule-followers, as beings aware of the social basis of rules and of the implications of breaking rules - that one has unfairly advantaged oneself and therefore owes a debt to society (assuming that the rules are fair). Punishment rests on choice; following rules implies being aware of alternatives and assuming that persons could do otherwise than they do were they to so choose.¹⁹ Treatment rests on the logic of sickness; it is undergirded by assumptions of irrationality. Irrationality, however, is

17. Herbert Morris, "Persons and Punishment," The Monist, 52 (October 1968):475-501. See also P.F. Strawson, "Freedom and Resentment," in P.F. Strawson, ed., Studies in the Philosophy of Thought and Action (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

18. Morris, "Persons and Punishment," p. 11.

19. This notion of choice is problematic since one has to determine what choices are in fact open to persons. This is largely a question of individual and social development.

always tremendously difficult to assess. Treatment may be imposed on persons who are expanding the borders of rationality and acting as responsible agents, and who therefore deserve to be treated as such. Yet we may misinterpret their actions and impose treatment upon them. But if we ourselves are rational and want to avoid the possibility of being so treated, argues Morris, we will choose punishment over treatment, and thereby maintain our freedom to act on our own determination of rationality.²⁰

Respect for persons moves us away from a focus on individual pathology to a focus on social pathology, to the socially imposed limitations on human development. If we find that we cannot treat a range of human beings as persons in our society, we have reason to criticize the existing social order. Further, if we discover alternatives that would open up new ways of life for persons that we think would be in their interest - would develop their personhood - then to treat them as persons is to present them with these alternatives for rational deliberation.²¹ Respect for persons undergirds a critical stance on any social system and its rules, in the same way that the formal principles of reciprocity

20. The idea of 'freedom to act' is problematic, but I cannot nor need I get involved in the debate over whether one is 'free' to do x if x is prohibited and one does x anyway.

21. This raises the "before-after" problem of revolutionary strategy, for if persons are under- or undeveloped in the existing social order, how can they be deliberative about choosing a new one. The solution is often to impose the new social order on them until they choose it. (See MacIntyre's discussion of Stalinism in "A Mistake about Causality in Social Science," in Peter Laslett and W.G. Runciman, ed.,

and universality serve as criteria for evaluating moral rules. Respect for persons acts as a moral reason both in choosing the ends of social change and the means; it is fundamental to a conception of a just social order, a conception which can serve as the evaluative standard for social criticism.

22

But if we ought to respect persons, and especially to treat them as having needs, wants and purposes of their own, isn't this to accept egoism and the image of social life which flows out of egoism? Here we need to consider the idea that the needs, wants, and purposes of persons are not identical with the needs, wants and interests of persons in themselves. To assume this is to make a false move and to accept egoism as inevitable.

The developmental model rests on the notion that persons are social and historical beings. Motives and interests flow out of social relationships. If we experience a 'liberated' social order, our interests and capacities will be those of a fully developed person, a Moral Agent. In less than ideal social orders, our motives will be less than ideal. Under particular conditions, they will more approximate the egoism and limited cooperativeness of contractual-pluralist images of human motivation.

Philosophy, Politics and Society, 2nd Series (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1962). I think the problem is surmounted in the thesis I present - to provide alternatives and to expect persons to consider them as rational beings is to begin to see their development as persons.

22. Morris' conception of punishment assumes equality of persons; it rests on the notion of breach of contract, of

Under conditions of liberation,²³ we develop an interest in our own well-being which is rooted in a recognition that we share a life situation with others. Our well-being becomes bound up in the well-being of others. Since we see ourselves as implicated in a web of social relations through which we have learned to treat ourselves as a person among persons, we come to recognize others as persons with similar interests and capacities as our own. Our well-being is wrapped up in our ability to develop our own capacities, but this development is seen as dependent upon the kinds of relations we have with others. If we perceive our development through the developmental model - if we see individual development as bound up in reciprocal cooperative social relations - then we come to see that we have an interest in such relations. But, since we can only have reciprocal relations with our equals, we have an interest in the development of others. And, since cooperation is only possible between persons who need each other, we²⁴ come to recognize our needs in others.

trust, and of reciprocal relations. Morris rests his case for punishment on the notion of punishment by reciprocity - things are put to rights, contracts are restored, persons are shown how they have harmed relations of trust and sympathy - rather than punishment by expiation.

23. See "Conditions," below.

24. "We are led to the notion of the community of humankind, the members of which enjoy one another's excellences and individuality elicited by free institutions, and they recognize the good of each as an element in the complete activity of the whole scheme of which is consented to and gives pleasure

Moral development resolves the tensions between self and society that individuals feel at preceding stages. If egoism gives persons reasons to act only when action is in their own interest (except for those rare instances of altruism), the notion of social interests casts doubt upon the claims of egoism. Needs, wants and purposes flow out of social relations, and changes in these relations result in changes in needs, wants, and purposes, or the 'goods' of individuals and collectivities.²⁵ Different stages of social and individual development are accompanied by different ends. As persons move from relations of unilateral to mutual respect, conceptions of 'good' change from the rational life plan of egocentric competition to the rational life plan of cooperative sociality.²⁶

to all....the successful carrying out of just institutions is the shared final end of all the members of society, and these institutional forms are prized as good in themselves....
 /M/en appreciate and enjoy these attributes in one another as they are manifested in cooperating to affirm just institutions. It follows that the collective activity of justice is the preeminent form of human flourishing. John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge, Belknap Press, 1971), pp. 523-529. How this recognition becomes a 'need' is discussed below under "Reason and Passion."

25. On the Marxist view, needs flow out of relations of production; on the human development model, out of the structure of human relations in general. I cannot deal with the question of whether productivity is the basic human interaction and whether its structure is fundamental to the form of social life; it seems to me that there are other fundamental relations not taken into account by economics including relations of sex.

26. Before persons reach Kohlberg's Stage 6, they regard their 'good' as individual and egocentric, except where they perceive

The rational life plan of the moral agent is inseparable from consideration of the social arrangements under which all persons can experience the benefits of a life viewed from the moral perspective. A commitment to this conception and to these principles serves as a guide to political action, both constraining actions which might inhibit the development of others and encouraging actions which might broaden

an interest in a contractual relationship; i.e., they consent to social arrangements if these are in their interest. It is difficult for such persons to see a 'social good', (this is the difficult 'pluralists' have with the concept 'public interest') except as the outcome of conflicts among individual 'goods'. Having a limited sense of what respect for persons means, individuals at Stage 5, for example, lack a reason to regard their own good in terms of the good of others; theirs is a competitive conception of social relations with 'good' understood by reference to Stage 2 hedonism. The result is a society of essentially private individuals for whom public participation is a burden and for whom public institutions are means to private ends. These individuals do assume certain obligations, but only insofar as these fill their individual interests and are thus seen from the perspective of enlightened self-interest.

Stage 5 may be an autonomous morality, as Kohlberg claims (there are problems especially in a liberal society), but it is not a fully developed morality since it lacks a fully developed principle of respect for persons. The distinction between Stages 5 and 6 can perhaps be clarified by looking at the distinction Piaget makes between the morality of equality and the morality of equity, both autonomous moralities. These are differentiated in terms of the concept of persons implied by each, equality referring to an abstract individual and lending itself to support of abstract and universal rights, while equity takes into consideration the different needs and handicaps persons have arising out of their natural and social condition. (Piaget, Moral Judgment, pp. 315-325.) This notion of equity supports a radical critique of existing social arrangements based on abstract rights, and lends credence to the idea that rights are socially specific. It can undergird claims against inequities in the distribution of rights and privileges by lending support to demands for compensatory inequalities.

opportunities for others to develop. ²⁷

Finally, we need to consider another implication for action of the principle 'respect for persons.' I have already suggested that this principle undergirds critical evaluation of existing social arrangements and supports the establishment of alternative institutions. But what ought we to do when other persons express no interest in altering their life situation. The question I should like to consider here is whether we are obliged to treat any of the expressed interests of others as deserving of respect. An interesting treatment of this issue can be found in Thomas Hill's article "Servility and Self-Respect."

Hill's concern is somewhat different from my own. His intention is to defend the thesis that one has a duty to

27. The Moral Agent model also rests on a form of 'consent'. I do not mean that persons stand outside social relationships and choose whether or not to join. This is to abstract the individual and to construct society upon the shaky foundations of universal needs, wants and purposes. My point is that moral concepts undergird or constitute social life - they have something to do with social co-operation and make it possible for persons to live together. Our moral concepts are inextricably linked with our knowledge about the possibilities of human motivation and social life. For instance, if we assume that the facts of human life are scarcity and competition, we will adopt a rather different view of the possibilities and reasons for action than if we assume that persons can develop social interests, can move beyond egoism and hedonism. Our conceptions of what can form reasons for action are delimited by our conceptions of human needs, wants and purposes. If we agree that morality is rooted in our conception of the person, and if we agree that persons are social beings, we no longer need to give reasons why persons ought to be moral, reasons why persons should consent to a moral order. If persons are rooted in social life, then the question "why be moral" is non-sensical. To get a sense

respect oneself as a person, a thesis which he claims flows from Kant's "...contention that respect for persons, strictly speaking, is respect for moral law." The question which interests him is whether a person can (morally) refuse to respect him or herself; i.e., act servilely. By servility Hill means an attitude of deference to others, a reluctance to make demands, to express one's own preferences or opinions, a tendency not to form one's own interests, values and ideals or to treat these as less important than those of others. He offers three paradigm cases of servility - the Uncle Tom, the Self-Deprecator, and the Deferential Wife - and asks whether "...there are grounds for regarding [their] attitudes... as morally objectionable. Are there moral arguments we could give them to show that they ought to have more self-respect?" Hill rejects utilitarian arguments since these could be used to justify servility if it should contribute to the greater good, and he rejects happiness as a reason for servility.

The Deferential Wife may be quite happy; but if her happiness turns out to be contingent on her distorted view of her own rights and worth as a person, then it carries little moral weight against the contention that she ought to change that view.... When a person's happiness stems from a morally objectionable attitude, it ought to be discounted.²⁸

of this problem, see Kurt Baier's The Moral Point of View, Chapter 7. This question can only be raised if persons exist outside social life which by its very nature is moral. Morality varies - from heteronomous to autonomous, from egoistic to principled - with social life, but persons are moral beings regardless of what form this takes.

28. Herbert Morris, "Persons and Punishment," Monist 52 (October, 1968):475-501.

But why is servility a morally objectionable attitude? Because, argues Hill, servility involves a failure to "... understand and acknowledge one's own moral rights." Persons may not press their rights because they do not understand them, and we may seek to help them through moral enlightenment, but when persons do know their rights and still do not press them, this is a moral defect unless there is some overriding consideration such as "...a desire to avert dire consequences to oneself, or even an ambition to set an oppressor up for a later fall...." Laziness, timidity, or "...a desire for some minor advantage," are no excuse for disregarding one's own moral status as a person deserving respect, although any of these may be a factor in one's inaction. To be servile is to fail to respect oneself as a person, and if respect for persons is central to respect for morality, then not to respect oneself is not to respect morality, to remove oneself from the moral order. Hill argues that we have a duty to ourselves, a duty to respect ourselves, and that this implies a disposition to affirm our rights and not to tolerate abuses. We may release ourselves and others from their obligation to respect these rights, but only under special circumstances. Failure to respect our own rights is supported by self-recrimination; failure to respect the rights of others is supported by censure, and, I would add, by feelings of regret and shame.

There are several interesting implications for political action in these arguments. They directly support the contention that one ought to press for redress whenever one's own rights are infringed, and by extension - assuming that respect for oneself as a person implies respect for the category persons - one ought to press for the rights of others and work to remedy social conditions which harm others. Of course, there may be overriding considerations which inhibit action, but the reason for action remains valid.

II. Is moral reasoning enough?

In an article entitled "Moral Development: A Plea for Pluralism," R.S. Peters criticizes Kohlberg for making the Platonic assumption that knowing the good means doing the good. This criticism is I think valid, but need not undermine the model as a whole. What needs to be clarified, however, is the way in which the Moral Agent model does incorporate other elements than moral cognitions, particularly the elements of explanatory theory and affective commitment. What I wish to show is the way in which moral reasoning is linked to reasoning of another sort - explaining social phenomena - and to feelings, or the affective commitments which are essential to move one to action.

II.a. Moral reasoning and explanatory theory

It has already been suggested that explanatory theories

are linked to metaethical theories since theoretical assumptions about persons and how they develop are conceptually linked to notions of persons and the 'good' society and to images of what is humanly possible. For example, the meta-ethical position that respect for persons is an integral part of moral reasoning rests on theoretical assumptions that persons can respect each other and that they can develop the particular capacities in question. The principles of morality are supported by a theory of moral development. Values have an empirical element; facts and values are linked in a theory of motivation. If we accept the theory of moral development and the notion of good which flows from it, we also accept a theory of the social conditions under which morality can develop. This has profound implications for our evaluations of social life and for our commitment to social change. It is in this sense that I take Charles Taylor's thesis that an explanatory theory rooted in a conception of human needs, wants and purposes, "...secret³⁰es its own norms for the assessment of politics and policies."

But not only do ethical judgments rest on explanatory theories - in this case theories of moral development - we have seen that the formal principles of developed morality need to be fleshed out by explanatory theories. In particular,

30. Charles Taylor, "Neutrality in Political Science," in P. Laslett and W.G. Runciman, ed., Philosophy, Politics and Society, 3rd Series (New York, Barnes and Noble, 1967), p. 48. For example, if research were to provide evidence against Piaget's psychological theory, John Rawls' metaethics would be undermined. Rawls' principles of justice are undergirded by

in fleshing out the formal requirements of Stage 6 morality, we cannot avoid the intrusion of social content, particularly content about what constitutes harm or injury to persons.³¹

But this content rests on an explanatory theory, the explanatory theory which undergirds society's image of persons.

As an example of this relationship between theory and evaluation, consider the different evaluations of injury which flow from our adopting one or another of the contending theories of social inequality. One cannot claim redress for an injury if inequality is the result of differential merit and benefits everyone - a claim which consensus theorists like Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore make. But one does have a claim if one adopts the conflict theorists' view that inequality is the result either of the intentional power drives of individuals (Gerhard Lenski) or the preservation of the interests of a dominant class (Frank Parkin, C. Wright Mills).³²

Kohlberg wants to argue that there is a difference between learning the content of morality and knowing the formal rules of moral reasoning. Morality, for Kohlberg, is a form assumptions about cultural invariance in the development of autonomy; if all societies do develop in the direction of differentiating persons as autonomous and responsible, support is lent to his thesis.

31. R.S. Peters, "Moral Development: A Plea for Pluralism," in T. Mischel, ed., Cognitive Development, p. 247.

32. Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification," American Sociological Review 10 (April 1945:242-249; Frank Parkin, Class Inequality and Political Order (New York: Praeger, 1971); C. Wright Mills, Power, Politics and People, The Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills,

of practical reasoning independent of social content. But certainly it might reasonably be argued that in order to understand persons' reasons, we have to have some idea of what they are reasoning about. To use Kohlberg's own terms, we need to know what confronts them as a dilemma. I believe that it is here that Kohlberg makes a mistake in his comparison of Martin Luther King with Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown.

Martin Luther King joins a long list of men who had the arrogance not only to teach justice but to live it in such a way that other men felt uncomfortable about their own goodness, their own justice. In the last weeks, one has frequently heard the question, "Why King, not Carmichael or Brown?" It is not the man who preaches power and hate who gets assassinated. He is not a threat; he is like the worst in others. It is the man who is too good for other men to take, who questions the basis on which men erect their paltry sense of goodness who dies.³³

In the wake of assassinations of Black Panther and SLA members, Kohlberg's assertion becomes particularly dubious, but it is still interesting to see why King epitomizes goodness for him in a way Carmichael and Brown cannot. King is a moral man, a moral teacher, because he has a "...concern for the growth of justice in ... society."

...King was a moral leader, a moral educator of adults, not because he was a spokesman for the welfare of the Negroes, not because he was against violence, not because he was a minister of religion, but because, as he said, he was a drum major for

ed. Irving Louis Horowitz (Oxford: University Press, 1958).

33. Kohlberg, "Education for Justice," in Nancy F. and Theodore R.Sizer, ed., Moral Education (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 66.

justice. His words and deeds were primarily designed to induce America to respond to racial problems in terms of a sense of justice, and any particular action he took had value for this reason and not just because of the concrete political end it might achieve.³⁴

Now I have no quarrel with Kohlberg's portrait of King as a Moral Agent; King obviously made political choices from a moral point of view. But he also made those choices in terms of an explanatory theory which supported the possibility of certain types of change, and of change through particular means. King, as compared to Brown or to Carmichael, confronted a moral situation in which, as he saw it, there was no conflict between the value of human life and the value of human liberation. For King, liberation of the Negro people was possible within existing social structures because that liberation was largely a matter of changing attitudes, of moral education in Kohlberg's sense. (Indeed, one might argue that King was assassinated as he moved away from this position, and not, as Kohlberg would have it, because he was a moral educator.) For Brown and Carmichael, however, Black liberation was a matter of structural change, of power relations, and, given their belief that white persons had a clear interest in maintaining existing power relations, violent confrontation became a more justifiable tactic. Kohlberg himself argues that "...it is sometimes right to kill because it is sometimes just," but since Kohlberg accepts King's perception (or at least his own understanding of King's perception) of what is out there to be reasoned about -

³⁴. Ibid., p. 68.

what injuries are being done to persons, how and by whom - he takes King to be a Moral Agent. Carmichael and Brown, on the other hand, probably remain enigmas to Kohlberg; he does not comprehend their explanatory framework.

The issue here is whether two persons at the same level of moral development need agree on all political issues. Understanding how development occurs implies a commitment to a liberated social order, but persons at the same level of development can have different understandings of how they got there. Further, the idea of a liberated social order implies that persons are not injured; injury is certainly a concept upon whose definition all do not agree.

There are formal requirements for determining whether something constitutes an injury. One such requirement is that the harm not be caused by some natural condition but that it be the result of human agency (a flood would not be an injury but if a flood victim is not aided where aid is available, that person has suffered an injury). More importantly, what counts as an injury has reference to an explanatory theory. If we assume that inequalities are necessary in order to perform socially necessary functions and that they therefore work to the advantage of all, then there is no injury in these inequalities. However, if we assume that social inequality is not the inevitable result of differential merit and the performance of vitally necessary tasks, and moreover is injurious to the development of at least some persons, then the inequalities are infringements on persons which carry a claim against society.

Respect for persons carries with it certain assumptions about what it means to be a person, and these assumptions in turn are linked to our conceptions of injury. But these assumptions are also rooted in different social contexts, although, if Piaget is correct, the variation is within certain broadly defined limits. The formal principle of respect for persons is inextricably linked with the ways in which societies structure relationships between persons. For instance, if we live under Durkheimian nomic conditions, we may perceive the needs, wants, and purposes of individuals in terms of limits, roles, a division of labor, etc. The schedule of human needs, wants and purposes will be radically different from a schedule developed by persons who experience 'liberated' social relationships. The latter will be more likely to view persons as role creators rather than role takers, as having capacities for development which ought to be encouraged, and as being harmed by alienating divisions of labor. The social context sets the terms in which we view persons, not so much in the culturally relativistic sense that every culture sees persons in completely different ways, but in the structuralist sense that societies structured along different lines - varying between heteronomy and autonomy - encourage radically different conceptions of persons, and radically different conceptions of what constitutes an injury to persons.

Cultural context also infects our understanding of respect for persons and injury in another way. As an example, let

us assume that respect for persons means that every person must have a fair opportunity to develop his or her potential as a full human being. However, the idea of a full human being is bound up in a social context which places greater and lesser value on certain types of skills and certain types of achievement.³⁵

In an article entitled "Violence and the Rule of Law," Bernard Harrison argues that every society carefully defines those spheres in which merit or achievement is to be rewarded. For example, a capitalist society values and rewards entrepreneurial skills. If we wish to call into question this system of distribution of rewards and punishments - if we wish to move beyond demands for equal opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills and to achieve in the capitalist stratification system - then we must post alternative forms of human excellence and demand that these excellences also be rewarded. For example, we might demand that physical stamina be more highly rewarded than entrepreneurial skills, which would result in reversing the present hierarchy of income, status and power.³⁶ Some alternative conception of persons would cast doubt upon equality

35. The implications are quite clearly drawn in R. Herrnstein "IQ," The Atlantic, September, 1971, pp. 43 - 54. Herrnstein describes the oligarchy which inevitably develops out of a meritocracy which is assumedly fair yet weights competition in favor of those who have inherited abilities.

36. Frank Parkin suggest this alternative in Class Inequality and Political Order (New York: Praeger, 1971).

of opportunity for those whose talents were not recognized by the value system built into capitalism. The broadest critical alternative would promote the valuing of any human excellence, but obviously some achievements will be of no value in a given "real" society - a master ice-box maker would hardly be applauded by the Eskimos. However, this alternative would provide the broadest interpretation of respect for persons; by adopting this idea - that any achievement is worthy of respect - one could perceive structural injustices to which one was previously blind. These structural injustices are not simply the closing of opportunities for success in prevailing terms to particular groups or persons, but the de-valuing of particular skills and modes of human excellence. Closed opportunities for groups who have not hitherto succeeded in established fields might require compensatory inequalities. The more radical demand would require a radical restructuring of basic social values so that alternative human excellences would be rewarded.

37

Finally, the means by which opportunities are closed and skills and talents de-valued are perceived through different

37. The difference is important for distinguishing between the demands of liberal and radical feminists. However, there are serious dangers in pressing for one to the exclusion of the other. Both seem to be essential elements in the stance of a Moral Agent; both flow out of a theory of human development and respect for persons. Indeed, there are dangers in overemphasizing the radical position since it could easily be subverted into a separate spheres doctrine.

explanatory theories. For example, in his Theory of Justice John Rawls does not find any conflict between capitalism and his principles of justice because he does not regard private ownership of property as closing opportunities to persons. Obviously, much has been said on the opposing side and the debate is terribly important. And as S.I. Benn and W.L. Weinstein point out, "...it is a well-established move in radical argument to call in question the hitherto given initial conditions, like property institutions, by arguing that they do close alternatives otherwise available, because there is nothing illegitimate nor logically absurd in envisaging a social order in which they would be absent or at least different."³⁸

II. b. Affective commitment and political action:
the problem of saintliness

Not only does political action involve a conceptual

38. S.I. Benn and W.L. Weinstein, "Being Free to Act, and Being a Free Man," Mind 80 (April, 1971):194-211.

Much has been said about the implications of different explanatory theories for Feminist action and intense disputes have taken place over just what constitutes the source of injury to women. One's sense of injury is not arbitrary; explanatory theories flow out of our life experiences - our perspectives are those of social and historical beings - and this may have a great deal to do with the debate now raging among Socialist, Radical Feminist and Lesbian women.

A good review of these debates on the level of explanatory theory can be found in Zillah Eisenstein's "Connections Between Class and Sex: Moving Towards a Theory of Liberation," paper presented at the 1973 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Women's Caucus Panel, New Orleans, September 4-8, 1973. (Mimeographed.)

link between explanatory theory and moral reasoning, it involves an affective element. In the True Believer version of political action, a sharp dichotomy was drawn between the passionate motivation of the True Believer and the reasoned action of the rational political agent.³⁹ It is this dichotomy that I now wish to call into question by indicating some of the ways in which emotional and cognitive development are linked.

Kohlberg suggests that cognitive and emotive development run parallel to each other.

In contrast to irrational emotive theories of moral development such as those of Durkheim and Freud, the cognitive-developmental view holds that 'cognition' and 'affect' are different aspects, or perspectives on the same mental events, that all mental events have both cognitive and affective aspects, and that the development of mental dispositions reflects structural changes recognizable in both cognitive and affective perspectives.⁴⁰

Unfortunately, one cannot be entirely sure what Kohlberg means in this passage, whether cognition and affect are two sides of a "mental event" or whether reason and affect are somehow internally linked to each other. He is pursuing a fruitful avenue when he argues that sentiments include a

39. I want to be clear that the model of the rational political agent developed in the last chapter is clearly rooted in both a social conception of the person and in an articulated vision of human needs. The dichotomy is not between abstract individualism and social being, nor between abstract reason and emotional needs, but between action constrained by self-interest and action compelled by passion.

40. Kohlberg, "From is to Ought," p. 189; see also Lawrence Kohlberg, "Stage and Sequence: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Socialization," in D. Goslin, ed., Handbook of Social Theory and Research (New York, Rand McNally, 1969).

conceptual dimension, that our 'feelings' are given different names depending on our stage of moral development. But this may mean only that our feelings remain the same and that we change their names. Kohlberg also argues that affect is neither moral or immoral: "The moral channeling of mechanisms (of effect) themselves are cognitive."⁴¹ This statement leads one to suspect that Kohlberg does not see real differences between the emotions as cognitions develop, but rather that cognitions channel the old emotions in new ways. What Kohlberg seems to have done here is to reverse the relationship between reason and passion which we find in the True Believer model rather than clarifying the dialectical relationship⁴² between the two.

Three things need to be said about reason and the passions to clarify the model I wish to support. The first of these has to do with the internal relationship between reasons and passions which is best stated in the following lengthy quotation from Stuart Hampshire's Thought and Action.

/The range of the emotions, feelings and attitudes of mind, identified and distinguished from each other, changes as the forms of human knowledge develop. We identify new emotions and attitudes that have never been recognized before. With a new self-consciousness, and with the extended vocabulary that goes with it, we

41. Ibid., p. 230.

42. Alston argues that Kohlberg ignores the emotive aspect of moral judgments. Kohlberg, he says "...is to be given a great deal of credit for doing some very hard and very unfashionable thinking on moral thought as a subject of interest in its own right, and for producing evidence that should force psychologists to take the cognitive aspects of morality seriously as an important influence on behavior. However, like all

discover new motives for action and new objects to which practical intentions are directed. A reflective man is aware that he would have recognized, and acted from, other motives in himself if he had been born and formed in other circumstances, and that he would sometimes have found others ends of action in the now differently identified emotions and attitudes of others. He cannot refuse to notice that the particular concentration that is characteristic of his own purposes is partly a contingency, something that has happened to him, and not an action of his own, when once he understands the causes of this concentration. He cannot then choose to remain confined within the circle of customary intentions, unless he abandons any claim to rationality or finds by continual comparisons that his habits have some philosophical ground.⁴³

Passions, like reasons are not presocial; they are socially and historically specific and flow out of social relationships which vary with time and place. They are rather like things that happen to us, but that should not imply that we cannot be reflective about them. Reflective persons do not simply introject socially imposed emotions. They are capable of sensing the specificity of their own emotional repertoire and reflecting upon alternative possibilities. This is an extremely important point for the developmental thesis which is, in a way, similar to a movement from culture to culture, or language game to language game. If this analogy holds,

champions of the neglected, Kohlberg has not been able to resist the temptation to overstate his case. From being the outcast stepdaughter, moral thought must not only be restored to its rightful place as a sovereign of the court; it must be elevated into an absolute sovereign." William Alston, "Comments on Kohlberg's 'From is to Ought,'" in T. Mischel, ed., Cognitive Development, p. 278.

43. Stuart Hampshire, Thought and Action (New York, Viking Press, 1959).

then in talking about cognitive development we need also talk about emotional development, and this relationship is hardly ignored in Piaget's work. In a moment I will look at John Rawls' explication of this relationship, but there are two preliminary points which need to be drawn out first.

The first of these also has to do with the internal relationship between reason and passion. Passions (like reasons) are theory imbued; emotion concepts - politically important ones like indignation, for example - need to be seen as resting on theoretical assumptions about persons, that is on beliefs. Secondly, the theory of moral development as constructed by Piaget rests firmly on an emotive base. Clarification of Piaget's image of the relationship between macro-structures of unilateral and mutual respect and micro-structures of individual 'needs' helps us get at Piaget's sense of persons as social beings, and at his understanding of the internal links between reason and passion.

For Piaget, moral development must be understood as the product of an interaction between social structures - the ideal types of social interaction - and cognitive structures. ⁴⁴

Much of the analysis in this dissertation is on the macro level, but Piaget is very explicit that the child him/herself is part of an interaction process. The child's own development confirms or denies the social environment. For example, the externality of moral injunctions at the stage of heteronomy is confirmed by the child's general realism at certain ages. The child's own lack of a sense of intentionality is confirmed by punishment meted out in terms of the consequences of acts. The relationship between society and individual is dialectical. In some ways, Piaget seems almost to argue that there is a biological unfolding which is part of human development, but that this unfolding can be aided or impeded by the social relations in which the child is implicated. See Piaget, Moral Judgment, p. 84, and Genetic Epistemology (New York: W.W. Norton, 1971).

These cognitive structures, however, clearly incorporate an emotive element, and it is this element which demands clarification.

John Rawls version of the Piagetian model directly confronts Kohlberg's Platonism. Kohlberg has problems with the question "Why be moral?" because he has not firmly embedded moral reasoning in a total theory of personality, a theory which would incorporate the emotional side of human development. He offers the reasoning game as if it were a choice, as if one could either take it or leave it.⁴⁵ What Rawls does is to show that the reasoning game is internal to one's development as a person and is part of the human capacity to feel and to enter into rich reactive relationships.

[If] men did not do what justice requires, not only would they not regard themselves as bound by the principles of justice, but they would be incapable of feeling resentment and indignation and they would be without ties of friendship and mutual trust. They would lack certain essential elements of humanity.⁴⁶

For Rawls, morality does not consist solely of reasoning.⁴⁷

⁴
45. See Phillipa Foot, "Moral Beliefs," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society 59 (1958-1959):86-89, for a discussion of this issue.

46. John Rawls, "The Sense of Justice," Philosophical Review 72 (July 1963), p. 281.

47. Indeed, a defense of pure reason is not critical to neo-cognitivist ethics. Piaget argues that children often act at a higher moral stage than they can reason at because they have developed moral habits beyond their cognitive abilities. Neo-cognitive ethics and the theory of moral development does not exclude the development of character traits nor the role of habituation in morality.

Moral personality is dual; it involves both affect and cognition.

But duality is perhaps a misleading term since Rawls' purpose is to show that there are internal links between emotion concepts and belief concepts at different levels of development. More specifically, Rawls' three stages of moral development are associated with three concepts of 'guilt' - 'authority guilt' with heteronomy, 'association guilt' with an association morality, and 'principle guilt' with autonomy. Morality is not only identified with different conceptions of guilt; moral development is pictured as highly dependent upon persons' ability to experience certain feelings, 'natural attitudes', or 'needs.'

The first stage in the sequence of moral development Rawls terms the morality of authority (Piaget's heteronomous morality). This morality is a product of the 'family' structure - a structure of unilateral respect - and it is based on the first of three psychological laws.

First law: given that family institutions are just, and that the parents love the child and manifestly express their love by caring for his good, then the child, recognizing their evident love of him, comes to love them.⁴⁸

Because the child loves the 'parent' and wishes to obey that parent despite the fact that injunctions are not

48. John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge, Belknap Press, 1971), p. 490.

"understood," s/he comes to accept parental commands as obligatory and sees them as massively real.

[It] is characteristic of the child's situation that he is not in a position to assess the validity of the precepts and injunctions addressed to him by those in authority, in this case his parents. He lacks both the knowledge and the understanding on the basis of which their guidance can be challenged. Indeed, the child lacks the concept of justification altogether, this being acquired much later.⁴⁹

If children love and trust their parents (if their conduct towards them warrant it), then they develop a need to obey them and a sense of guilt - "authority guilt" - which arises when there is "...a breach of the relation of love and trust with the authoritative person."⁵⁰ But this morality of external constraint is unstable because parental injunctions are not in line with what children want to do; if they were, there would be no need for them. Morality at this stage conflicts with the hedonistic needs of children; there are unresolved tensions between self and society which continue to threaten the equilibrium of the child's morality.

At stage two, the stage of association morality, persons develop a sense of what it means to follow rules, and this tension begins to be resolved as persons come to see the necessity of cooperative needs satisfaction. At this stage, we find a morality of role-taking, a morality of association.⁵¹

49. Ibid., p. 463.

50. Rawls, "The Sense of Justice," p. 287.

51. We might want to call this a transition stage between heteronomous and autonomous rule-following since it encompasses

The content of the morality of association is given by the moral standards appropriate to the individual's role in the various associations to which he belongs. These standards include the common sense rules of morality along with the adjustments required to fit them to a person's particular position; and they are impressed upon him by the approval and disapproval of those in authority, or by the other members of the group.⁵²

This morality is built upon the feelings of fellowship and trust which persons develop from engaging in cooperative activities.

Second law: given that a person's capacity for fellow feeling has been realized by acquiring attachments in accordance with the first law, and given that a social arrangement is just and publicly known by all to be just, then this person develops ties of friendly feeling and trust toward others in the association as they with evident intention comply with their duties and obligations and live up to the ideals of their station.⁵³

Persons feel "association guilt" when they fail to fulfill their obligations to friends and associates.

Kohlberg's stages 3-5 and clarifies the distinction between Stage 5 and Stage 6 moralities. There are important differences between Rawls middle stage and Piaget's transitional egalitarian stage. For Piaget, children begin to feel the effects of relationships of mutual respect at about age 7 or 8 and to express this in terms of an absolute equality. The transition is not so much a transition from heteronomy to autonomy at this point, but a change in the sense of equality. By age 11 or 12, children have moved from absolute equality to equity. "Instead of looking for equality in identity, the child no longer thinks of the equal rights of individuals except in relation to the particular situation of each." This opens the way to compensatory inequalities and may be especially important in political judgments.

52. Rawls, Theory, p. 467.

53. Ibid., p. 490.

It seems to me that this stage of morality runs parallel to the autonomous morality developed in the preceding chapter. Especially in pluralist societies where persons have opportunities to experience a wide variety of roles does this stage conform to that version of autonomous morality. Indeed, the following passage from Rawls' work could well have been written by a theorist in the True Believer mode:

Thus the morality of association includes a large number of ideals each defined in ways suitable for the respective status or role. Our moral understanding increases as we move in the course of life through a sequence of positions. The corresponding sequence of ideals requires increasingly greater intellectual judgment and finer moral discriminations. Clearly some of these ideals are also more comprehensive than others and make quite different demands upon the individual.⁵⁴

In a pluralist society, persons have the opportunity to reach the kind of autonomous morality described in the last chapter. This is the contract morality we find at Kohlberg's stage 5. Yet we need to ask whether this morality, based as it is on a division of labor and on role-playing is a truly autonomous morality. In one sense, Rawls seems to argue that it is. The transitional stage is built upon an understanding of the cooperative basis of social life.

In due course a person works out a conception of the whole system of cooperation that defines the association and the ends which it serves. He knows that

⁵⁴. Ibid., p. 468.

others have different things to do depending upon their place in the cooperative scheme. Thus he eventually learns to take up their point of view and to see things from their perspective.⁵⁵

But the purpose of putting ourselves in the other's position is to discover what they expect us to do, that is, to discover our duties and obligations and to win the approval of others. Thus the morality of association remains a heteronomous morality, especially to the extent that our motives for being good are cues from the outside.⁵⁶

55. Ibid.

56. Rawls rests his arguments on a tacit approval of the division of labor. But if a society lacks a division of labor, does this mean that moral development will be retarded? Can persons develop under unalienated social structures? If not, there are serious implications for Marxist theory. But I think that a commitment to the division of labor is not essential to this model and that the model is compatible with a Marxist perspective. Piaget does speak of a division of labor also, but his emphasis is always on the differences in structured social relationships. His argument for pluralism is not that the more complex and demanding social roles are, the greater the opportunity for development through conflict - although this is part of his thesis - but more that there is greater opportunity for experiencing relations of mutual respect. Piaget is critical of Durkheim for failing to distinguish between the two types of social relations and for treating morality as a unity. He agrees with Durkheim that our rules derive from our social life, but he argues that Durkheim lacks a theory of autonomy. Durkheim is correct about the morality of duty but fails to develop a morality of autonomy. "The analysis of the child's moral judgments has led us perforce to the discussion of the great problem of the relations of social life to the rational consciousness. The conclusion we came to was that the morality prescribed for the individual by society is not homogeneous because society itself is not just one thing. Society is the sum of social relations, and among these...we can distinguish two extreme types: relations of constraint, whose characteristic is to impose upon the individual from outside a system of rules with obligatory content, and relations of cooperation whose characteristic is to create within people's minds the consciousness of idea norms at the back of all rules." (Moral Judgment, p. 395) If we can argue that cooperation need not be rooted in a division of labor, then we have an argument in favor of the compatibility of Piaget's thesis

Autonomous morality is the attachment to principles for their own sake rather than for the sake of avoiding disapproval or winning approval. At the stage of principled morality, persons have come to recognize the value for themselves and others of their involvement in a well-ordered society.

Now this leads to an acceptance of [the principles of justice] by a third psychological law. This law states that once the attitudes of love and trust, and of friendly feelings and mutual confidence, have been generated in accordance with the two preceding psychological laws, then the recognition that we and those for whom we care are the beneficiaries of an established and enduring just institution tends to engender in us the corresponding sense of justice. We develop a desire to apply and to act upon the principles of justice once we realize how social arrangements answering to them have promoted our good and that of those with whom we are affiliated.⁵⁷

We develop a concomitant sense of guilt - we will "... feel guilt for infractions which harm other persons even though these persons are not objects of any particular fellow feelings." This is principle guilt. "One might say that principle guilt is guilt proper. It is, as the two previous forms of guilt were not, a complete moral feeling."⁵⁸ It is complete because it is the full expression of human feelings, and its absence indicates the absence of a kind with alienation theory. I think we can so argue, and I suggest the compatibility in my final chapter where I argue for 'liberation' as 'dis-alienation.' To make the necessary arguments here, however, would move well beyond the scope of this dissertation.

57. Rawls, Theory, p. 474.

58. Rawls, "Sense," p. 292.

of humanness.

[One] who lacks a sense of justice lacks certain fundamental attitudes and capacities included under the notion of humanity....Now the fact that one who lacks a sense of justice, and thereby a liability to guilt, lacks certain fundamental attitudes and capacities is not to be taken as a reason for acting as justice dictates. But it has this significance: by understanding what it would be like not to have a sense of justice - that it would be to lack part of our humanity too - we are led to accept our having this sentiment.⁵⁹

It is this sentiment which makes it possible for us to feel resentment and indignation, shame and remorse, guilt and responsibility. The capacity to feel these emotions is part of what it means to be a person, to have certain human characteristics and needs.

What I maintain here is that our needs, wants, and purposes are internally related to our activities, to our human relationships. As our activities and relationships change, so too do our needs, wants and purposes. But our needs, wants and purposes are also the grounds from which we critically evaluate existing practises. How is this possible if they are constituted by those practises?

The key to coming to grips with this thorny issue lies in our understanding that societies are not unified entities, experienced monolithically by their members. Rather, we may in some of our activities have the opportunity to develop needs, wants and purposes which allow us to reflect critically upon other practises in which we engage. If Piaget is correct,

⁵⁹. Rawls, Theory, pp. 488-489.

most of us do develop critical abilities, do develop the ability to understand what it means to follow rules and to understand that rules can be altered, and do develop a 'need' to be moral persons.

Persons who experience well-ordered social lives, to use Rawls' expression, develop a 'need' to be moral persons; persons who experience less than well-ordered social lives remain at lower levels of 'needs' development. Moral learning, then, is more than formal cognitive development, more than the acquisition of concepts. The idea of 'needs' encompasses an emotive content as well, a content which also flows out the structural features of unilateral or mutual respect. To paraphrase Rawls' rather extensive discussion, in a well-ordered society, persons move along in their moral development - in their development as persons - because they experience or feel the benefits of participating in this order. They acquire motives to be good - as well as the ability to know the good - as they experience the value of life organized along the principles of a well-ordered society. 60

Indeed persons can often act on reasons at a higher stage than the one they can formulate reasons for on the cognitive level which means that persons have a 'need' to be good before they understand what the 'good' is. Piaget's understanding of moral development is built upon the very type of emotional

60. Ibid., pp. 453-512.

sensitization which others have argued is essential to
⁶¹ moral growth. He maintains that children experience
 the rewards of rule-following and act out of motives in-
 duced by these rewards long before they can articulate the
 abstract principles of reasoning at any particular level
⁶² of development.

The point is that moral learning is contingent upon
 the acquisition of moral feelings which in turn depend upon
 the development of ties of affection and trust. We do,
 as Peters suggests, need to care about moral principles.
 Thus reason and passion are not two forces in conflict with
 each other. Their relationship is an internal one. The
 moral feelings are not raw emotions channeled by cognitions;
 the feelings themselves are made possible by cognitions,
 particularly cognitions or beliefs about oneself and others
 as persons.

Passions (like reasons) are theory imbued. If we
 accept this statement, then emotion concepts like 'indignation'
 can be seen as resting on theoretical assumptions about
 persons, about ourselves and others. These theoretical

61. Peters, "A Plea for Pluralism."

62. Perhaps something ought to be said here about 'rewards'
 so that the thesis is not interpreted as some variant of
 stimulus-response theory. It seems to me that the very
 idea of rewards changes with moral development and that S-R
 theory is mistaken in assuming an abstract model of pleasure-
 seeking and pain-avoidance. Rewards at the stage of author-
 itarian morality are the love of parents and avoidance of
 punishment; at the stage of association morality, rewards
 also consist in the esteem of others. But at the stage of
 principled morality, reward lies in reciprocal relations of
 warmth and trust, mutual respect and 'personality'.

assumptions are also part of our moral development and are specific to particular types of social relations. Relations of mutual respect encourage our capacity to see ourselves and others as persons. This capacity undergirds our ability to have certain feelings. We feel shame at not having lived up to self-expectations, and we feel regret when we fail to fulfill the requirements of morality:

A man's morality is shown by the type of question of conduct that he takes seriously, by the type of decision about which he is prepared to reflect carefully, and to entertain genuine and reasoned regrets and criticisms....An expression of regret is like an expression of envy, admiration, anger, fear, or hope, in at least one respect. It is not the announcement of a feeling, infallably identified by its felt quality; it is rather the announcement of a feeling, in this case a feeling of unpleasure associated with a thought of the past, together with the identification of an object and the announcement of an inclination to behave in a certain way in the future.⁶³

Thus emotion concepts like regret have built into them certain beliefs about human capacities, in this case the capacity to act intentionally. Regret has built into it certain beliefs about what one ought to do; it implies the ability to reflect on our past actions, to seek new reasons for action, although it does not entail action. We may regret an act and yet continue to engage in it in the future.

But emotion concepts also have built into them beliefs about others, beliefs that others are persons like ourselves. We believe others to be like ourselves in their ability to

63. Hampshire, Thought and Action, pp. 240-242.

feel pleasure and pain, to formulate intentions, to feel affection, trust, etc., and to develop as autonomous beings. We have beliefs about the ways in which others can be injured, and we have expectations about the behavior of persons toward each other. When persons injure each other or injure us, we feel either 'indignation' or 'resentment'. Both these emotion concepts imply our understanding of others as rational, purposive agents, responsible for their actions. If others were not responsible for their actions - if we were to believe that they were not actors in at least some respects - then we could feel neither resentment nor indignation.⁶⁴ Our beliefs about others are central to how we treat them and to how we expect them to treat us.

But since our beliefs about others flow out the types of relations we have with them, it matters very much what our ordinary interpersonal relationships are like. These vary in form and in content; therefore, our view of others (and of ourselves) varies in form and content. If we do not enjoy the more developed forms of inter-relationships, we will not enjoy the more developed forms of moral feeling, including the ability to feel indignation, shame and principled guilt.⁶⁵ It is important to look at the structure

64. P.F. Strawson, "Freedom and Resentment," in P.F. Strawson, ed., Studies in the Philosophy of Thought and Action (New York, Oxford University Press, 1968). See pages 84-88 for a discussion of intentionality, responsibility, and the moral feelings.

65. It is difficult to imagine what attitudes one might have toward persons in positions of absolute authority over oneself.

of interpersonal relationships - at the mix of authority and equality as seen from the point of view of each party to the relationship - to understand what emotions might undergird action in that particular social context. Insofar as relationships tend toward equality - at least as the injured party sees her/himself as the moral equal of the injurer - there will be a potential for resentment and indignation which could provide the motives to action lacking where one of the parties - in particular the injured party - does not view her/himself or the one who has injured him/her as a person.

Finally, our having certain moral notions and emotions leads us to expect others to have them also and act towards us in terms of them. These expectations lend support to our treating others as persons and give rise to feelings of guilt when we transgress their humanity. "[O]ne who feels guilty, recognizing his action as a transgression of the legitimate claims of others, expects them to resent his conduct and to penalize him in various ways. He also assumes that third parties will be indignant with him." 66

This combination of belief and affect is tremendously important for our understanding of political action. If one adopts the position that passions precede values, one will

But since relationships are never pure, resentment and indignation are possible even in the most authoritarian societies. It may, however, be difficult to act upon because of the differences in power of the parties. This is important for social change since it will be difficult to determine when an oppressed group feels indignation toward its oppressor if it never expresses this attitude in action.

have a radically different conception of political motivation than if one adopts the view that:

In general, it is a necessary condition and a defining feature of moral feelings that the person's explanation invokes a moral concept and its associated principle(s) and thereby makes reference to an acknowledged right or wrong.⁶⁷

It becomes clearer how moral principles can be guides to political action when one sees that emotion-concepts are linked to levels of moral development, thus giving rise to different motives for action. If analysts fail to see this point, they will tend either to take passion - e.g. 'frustration' - as the only spring to action, or to limit motives to the constraints of self-interest, obligation and duty. We need to have moved to Piaget's third stage of development in order to see that at least some social activists are motivated by what Rawls' terms "the sense of justice," and its related "guilt proper."⁶⁸

II.c. Reasons and actions

I think it is important at this point to pick up on several warnings which have been expressed throughout this chapter that this model of political motivation has reference

^{67.} Rawls, "Sense," p. 295.

^{68.} I want to be clear that if a society is organized in certain ways, it will be very difficult for "guilt proper" to flourish. This is the reason, I think, why most political action in the United States is motivated by reasons and passions at the second of Rawls' three stages; it is rare to find persons at the third stage, and I would suggest that it may well be persons who have been excluded from the dominant social structures and who are implicated in subcultures who do develop. I think this is the reason why the Women's Movement has benefited from its stress on egalitarianism in "consciousness-raising" groups.

only to potentialities. To say that a person had a reason for action and also the concomitant feelings is not to say that s/he acted or will act. Our ability to perceive certain kinds of social practises as injurious, and our ability to feel certain kinds of emotions has no necessary connection to political action.

Indeed, we may have a reason for acting in a way which we think would be right and good, and yet find ourselves acting in quite another way. There are several reasons for this. First, we may feel quite indignant about a particular social practise, and yet feel powerless to change it. Or we may even feel that were we to know what to do, we could indeed do it, but we lack a clear idea of what to do. We lack a strategy for change. Or we may feel guilty about a social practise, feeling ourselves in some way benefitted by it while others are injured, and yet fail to act to change that practise. An excellent example of this sort of instance is the phenomena known as "white guilt." Most liberals have probably experienced the feeling that they are beneficiaries of racism, the feeling that somehow they are partially responsible for its perpetuation, but have not felt that they could do anything about it.

Or we may have very good overriding reasons for not acting on our moral judgments. For example, I have a moral reason to go to my Aunt's house when she is ill because she would be happy to see me. Now I may not be able to go for any number of reasons, some of which are overriding moral

considerations - my daughter is also ill and I cannot leave her alone in order to visit my Aunt - some of which are circumstances beyond my control - I am also ill and cannot get out of bed. I may have non-moral considerations in mind - I lack the airfare to get to Chicago where my Aunt lives. (This assumes that I accept the rule that I ought to pay for my flight.)

Then there is the thorny problem of when we should be critical of existing social practises. Certainly we cannot afford to be critical at all times; we would, I think, go mad if we did not acquiesce to some extent to existing practises. There has to be some background normality to frame our critique of specific practises.

A related problem is how much can we afford to criticize ourselves. Can we emotionally afford to be forever evaluating, regretting and feeling shame over own actions. To be thoroughly self-critical would be to lose sight of ourselves; we have to maintain a certain level of consistency in our own self-image in order not to go mad. However, we may also have conflicting ideals of ourselves and have to choose which to live up to. A brilliant example of a person confronting conflicting ideals is Doris Lessing's character Kate Brown in The Summer Before the Dark. As the result of an illness, Kate is dissociated from her normal self - responsible, efficient organizer of household and business - and is thrust

into a condition of relatively total 'freedom.' In this condition, Kate meets Maureen, a young woman confronting the choice between marriage and what she perceives as 'freedom.' Maureen demands advice from Kate who refuses to respond. She cannot, for to make the choice in the terms Maureen sets would be for Kate to repudiate herself. She recoils from the madness of self-repudiation and determines to temper her(normal) self with a degree of the radical freedom she has learned.

There may also be problems resulting from the ways in which our emotions can stand in the way of reasoned and healthy action. As Rawls says:

None of this is to deny that our existing moral feelings may be in many respects irrational and injurious to our good. Freud is right in his view that these attitudes are often punitive and blind, incorporating many of the harsher aspects of the authority situation in which they were first acquired. Resentment and indignation, feelings of guilt and remorse, a sense of duty and the censure of others, often take perverse and destructive forms, and blunt without reason human spontaneity and enjoyment.⁶⁹

The theory of cognitive development does not deny the Freudian thesis that persons can get "blocked" at certain stages in their development, nor does it imply that development means that we leave all prior stages behind as we enter new ones. We are who we have been; we do not shed the needs of earlier stages as we progress to later ones, although we may perhaps gain a clearer understanding of

⁶⁹. Rawls, Theory, 489.

those needs and a greater ability to control them as we come to see their rootedness in a social life which we ourselves create. Nor does the theory of cognitive development deny the Freudian contribution to our understanding of the unconscious. Our conscious motives do often conceal underlying unconscious ones. Perhaps as we develop a greater ability to reason, we are simply giving ourselves more ways of deceiving ourselves about the purity of our motives. That we understand the principle of respect for persons does not mean that we might not use this principle to rationalize actions which serve our far more selfish interests.

Then there are our "gut" reactions in the face of which we are often expected to exercise great rationality and control.⁷⁰ These may be an especially difficult problem in political situations where strong emotions - e.g., anger and hostility - come into play because our interests - and possibly our lives - are in danger. To control these certainly requires our having developed character traits like self-control, will-power, and perhaps what we might call the "habit" of being rational in the face of emotionally charged situations.⁷¹ Our affective commitments to others -

70. See Robert Paul Wolff, "Marcuse's Theory of Toleration," *Polity* 6 (Summer, 1974):469-479, for a discussion of this problem. Wolff's example is that he would find it impossible to perform a tracheotomy regardless of how clearly he recognized its necessity.

71. Peters, "A Plea for Pluralism,"

our caring for them - will also support us in doing what we perceive is right.

III. The conditions under which moral development can succeed

In the last chapter we saw that writers in the True Believer mode took successful moral development to be the introjection of a variety of external demands. No one of these demands determines action; rather conflict among them allows a latitude of freedom necessary for autonomous choice. The model developed here contrasts that version of moral development with the theory of cognitive development, a theory which assumes that development results from an interaction between structures at the individual (micro) and social (macro) levels. This latter version is in partial agreement with the pluralist model developed in the preceding chapter since it is assumed that the greater the opportunities for varied social experience, the greater the opportunity for moral development. The social conditions for moral development in both models are social structures which approximate the conditions of plurdism.

However, there is a vitally important difference between the images of pluralism upon which each model is built. Analysts who adopt Piaget's framework place an additional requirement on social structures and that is that at least

some of these structures satisfy the criteria of what Rawls terms a "well-ordered society." It is not enough for persons to be exposed to a variety of role-taking opportunities; the form of role-taking must meet the requirements of moral development.

While role taking in the form of sympathy often extends more broadly than the sense of justice, organized or 'principled' forms of role taking are defined by justice structures....Because the central mechanisms of role taking are justice structures of reciprocity and equality, institutions better organized in terms of justice provide greater opportunities for role taking and a sense of sharedness than do unjust institutions.⁷²

But there are problems with this notion of justice structures. One problem is that Kohlberg may have so broadened the concept of justice as to include every possible criteria of the good society. If he has done so, he is open to criticism from those who wish to retain justice as a distributive concept and differentiate it from, for example, the concept benevolence. Moreover, if Marx is correct, and every "justice" structure is constructed to protect the interests of a dominant class, it is important for Kohlberg to be clear about what differentiates his "justice structures" from those which are exploitative. To avoid these problems, I would rather employ the notion of 'liberated social structures,' a phrase which I think captures the essential features of Piaget's structures of mutual respect.

72. Kohlberg, "Is-Ought," p. 193.

For Piaget, it is the quality of role-taking which is vital to moral development.⁷³ Quality varies with the structure of human relationships. In relationships of unilateral respect, persons take on the role expected of them by those in positions of authority. The interests of the authority remain external to the individual and in conflict with his own interests. S/he does not have the opportunity to act as though her/his own interests mattered, nor can s/he take on the role of the authority since the latter occupies a different social position. Action is governed by roles set by authority figures. These roles are massively real for the individual, especially for the child whose own cognitive structure is still at the stage Piaget describes as "nominal realism."

Now, moral constraint is closely akin to intellectual constraint, and the strictly literal character which the child tends to ascribe to rules received from without bears...a close resemblance to the attitudes he adopts with regard to language and the intellectual realities imposed upon him by the adult. We can make

73. Kohlberg is unclear about what he means by justice structures and how they contribute to moral development. He seems to suggest that they are valuable because they provide greater opportunities for role-taking, and he criticizes Piaget's focus on autonomy and peer group relations as confusing the form and content of moral thought. "There is nothing more cognitively mature to preferring a peer than an adult." (Kohlberg, "Stage and Sequence," p. 22.) What Kohlberg has done is to misinterpret Piaget's purpose, which is not to predict the direction of moral development based on a logical sequence of concept acquisition, but to understand the conditions under which morality qua morality might develop.

use of this analogy to fix our nomenclature and shall speak of moral realism to designate on the plane of judgments of value what corresponds to 'nominal realism' and even verbalism or conceptual realism on the plane of theoretical reasoning. /This realism/... results both from a confusion between subjective and objective (hence from egocentrism) and from the intellectual constraint of the adult....⁷⁴

The implications of this perception of moral rules are threefold: 1) duty is heteronomous rather than autonomous - rules are "givens" and obedience to them is all that counts; 2) moral rules are interpreted literally, or rather not interpreted at all but simply followed; 3) responsibility is objective; i.e., it has nothing to do with the agent's intentions but entirely with the consequences of the act itself and whether these consequences are treated by authorities as "bad."

This heteronomous morality, however, is essential to our development as moral beings since the conditions of its acquisition are also the conditions of our acquiring those character traits which undergird commitment to moral rules. Parental constraints serve to develop children's will-power; they must control their own wants in the face of possible punishment. These are the years of developing ego-strength, and the fact that Piaget casts development in terms of rule-orientation ought not imply that the model excludes the development of character traits.

⁷⁴. Piaget, Moral Judgment, pp. 110-111.

In relationships of cooperation and mutual respect, persons have the opportunity to take on the roles of all the parties involved in the interaction, and potentially to play a part in defining those roles. We do develop character traits which are specific to our performing these roles well, and we develop a sense of obligation to others who are also seriously trying to live up to their duties. We develop a sense of commitment toward others which constrains us from engaging in actions which would undermine the trust and predictability which makes our lives as social beings possible.

But our personality is more than the sum of our obligations, and our feelings toward others involve more than constraints on actions. Having the opportunity to equally engage in activities - i.e., to play all the roles which comprise the activity - opens us up to seeing ourselves as persons among persons.⁷⁵ Our actions begin to be defined in terms of an appreciation of the interests of all parties; it begins to take into account the way in which we all have a mutual interest in the action, an interest which I would term a "social interest." This is not the static external interest of "society" as opposed to individual interests; rather it is the dynamic interest of persons who recognize that they are potential creators of their own social life and that this life ought to reflect and satisfy their developing needs, wants, and purposes. As we become aware

75. There are striking similarities here with Marxist images of communism.

that our development is implicated in particular types of interpersonal relations, we begin to sense that our own interests are firmly intertwined with the development of others as persons; we take an interest in their development as they in turn take an interest in ours.

The moral implications of relations of mutual respect are also threefold: 1) duty is autonomous - rules are subject to debate and alteration; obedience to them is voluntary but based on solidarity; 2) moral rules are open to interpretation in light of a commitment to reciprocity and egalitarianism; 3) responsibility is "subjective" - we have acquired a sense of ourselves and others as having intentions and projects and we can be held responsible for our acts.

Piaget does not argue that there are invariant sequences of moral development, that persons always develop from one stage to the next, nor that the direction of development is the same for everyone. But he does argue that true morality can only flow from relationships of mutual respect since in relationships of unilateral respect, respect is for authority roles rather than for persons. For Piaget, both the peer group and the parent-child relationship are justice structures. But the former rests on the justice of autonomy and solidarity, the latter on the justice of authority. If the requirements of justice - or of a liberated social order and autonomous reasoning - include respect for persons, then peer groups ideally better meet these.

I want to be clear that both of these relationships are ideal types. Neither unilateral nor mutual respect occurs in pure form in "real-life."

Constraint is never unadulterated, nor, therefore, is respect every purely unilateral: the most submissive child has the feeling that he can, or could, argue that a mutual sympathy surrounds relationships that are most heavily charged with authority. And conversely, cooperation is never absolutely pure: in any discussion between equals, one of the disputants can always exert pressure on the other by making overt or hidden appeals to custom or authority. Cooperation, indeed, seems rather to be the limiting term, the ideal equilibrium to which all relations of constraint tend.⁷⁶

Peer groups may be adulterated by the presence of older children; parent-child relationships are adulterated by parents' awareness that children deserve respect.⁷⁷

Structure alone, however, cannot establish the conditions for moral development. As we have seen in the preceding section, moral development is contingent upon the experience of certain types of reactive relationships between persons, a contingency which raises questions about the part "warmth" plays in moral development. Kohlberg

76. Piaget, Moral Judgment, p. 90.

77. Piaget raises the question of why boys between the ages of 11 and 13 can be so democratic in playing marbles when real democracy is usually lacking in adult life. His answer is that boys drop the game shortly after this age and so there are few older boys around to impose their authority and adulterate democracy. This condition rarely obtains in adult life. "With regard to the game of marbles...children of 11-13 have no seniors....Since they no longer have to endure the pressure of play-mates who impose their views by virtue of their prestige, the children whose reactions we have been studying are clearly able to become conscious of their autonomy much sooner than if the game of marbles lasted till the age of 18. In the same way, most of the phenomena which characterize adult societies would be quite other than they

rejects the importance of emotions in development and stresses the role of cognitive conflict:

The environment which provides role-taking opportunities is not necessarily a warm, loving, identification-inducing environment, and an environment deprived in role-taking opportunities is not necessarily cold or rejecting. A certain minimum amount of warmth in face-to-face groups or institutions is required if a child or adolescent is to feel a sense of participation and membership in the group. However, the conditions for a child's maximal participation and role-taking in a group is not that he receive maximal affection from the group, or that the group be organized on communal affiliation lines.⁷⁸

In a sense Kohlberg is correct to downplay the role of affection. Rawls, for instance, would agree that as one moves to the higher stages of development, emotional attachments to particular persons become less and less salient in making moral judgments. Yet Piaget and Rawls do place greater emphasis on the role of emotional ties in moral growth.⁷⁹ For instance, Rawls claims that emotional attachments of warmth, trust and friendship and principled guilt are integral to development at the highest stage. His three psychological laws depend upon love and concern for others.

Piaget is more concerned to show the conditions under which autonomous moral reasoning develops than to demonstrate are if the average length of human life were appreciably different from what it is." Ibid., p. 76.

78. Kohlberg, "Is-Ought," p. 191.

79. See Richard Merelman, "The Development of Political Ideology," American Political Science Review 63 (September, 1969):750-767, for a discussion of the role of parental warmth in the development of political ideology. Merelman is the only political scientist I have been able to uncover who utilizes Piaget's theory to understand political socialization.

logical connections between moral concepts. Piaget is thus more concerned than Kohlberg with the development of character traits and with the role of habituation. For Piaget, the assumption is that all persons have the capacity to reason, but whether persons always develop and utilize these capacities is an altogether different issue.⁷⁹ Development depends in part on opportunities to experience warm, egalitarian, reciprocal relations. But action requires the development of such traits as will-power, consistency, caring, dependability, reliability, compassion, etc. I would also suggest that rational action requires a certain amount of habituation, practise in the skill of reasoning; rational action also requires a certain amount of character-strength. Piaget does not imply that individuals will act in a predictable fashion when confronted with moral choices. He gives us no tools for predicting action as Kohlberg claims to do (from knowledge of an individual's position on a scale of cognitive development). I would suggest, however, that

⁷⁹. Cognitive development theory sheds interesting light on the current debate about race and IQ. Kohlberg claims that there is a relationship between IQ and moral development, which makes sense if moral development is the ability to manipulate concepts. If some persons lack the capacity - the IQ - to develop morally or conceptually, there are serious social implications. The issue is a thorny one with some interesting cases. Might there not be persons - the mentally retarded - who are incapable of moral development? The boundary between those who cannot and those who can develop will be a fuzzy one, however, as is the boundary between retardation and normality. But it is this boundary which permits policy-making based on the optimistic premise that persons do have capacities for moral development; it may be that those at the borderline might benefit from social policies designed to enhance opportunities for development, despite the fact that some persons will remain incapable of development.

Piaget implies that the more opportunity an individual has to utilize the tools of autonomous reasoning, the more likely he or she will be to act morally.⁸⁰ Indeed, persons may be able to act morally before they can reason about what they are doing. As Alasdair MacIntyre argues

An agent can only do what he can describe. But children can often do what they cannot yet describe. This example certainly necessitates a modification of the argument [that all action is conceptual or reasoned. Furthermore, children learn what is available for them to learn.]⁸¹ The child's actions count as actions because we can identify them as such in terms of our descriptions....And this example thus helps to bring out a crucial point. The limits of what I can do are set by the limits of the descriptions available to me, not those I possess at any given moment. And the descriptions available to me are those current in the social groups to which I belong.⁸¹

So, individual development rests fundamentally on social development, and the availability of role-models does broaden the scope of what children - and adults - can do. The availability of role-models who act on the basis of morality can sensitize children to moral action before they can reason.

Finally, persons need not always utilize the tools of reason which they have acquired. Let us say, for example, that an individual is confronted with an authoritarian situation. One rational response is to use the conceptual

80. This may help to account for the rigid authoritarianism of the working class. Working class children may have fewer opportunities, too, to develop their moral potentiality.

81. Alasdair MacIntyre, "A Mistake About Causality in Social Science," in Laslett and Runciman, Philosophy, Politics and Society, 2nd Series (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1962) pp. 59-60.

repertoire appropriate to the structured situation. However, an individual may also rationally utilize the conceptual tools developed in other activities to cast critical judgment on the present activity. What I am suggesting is that our ability to act rationally is bound up in our ability to perceive alternatives. Although one definition of rationality is always given by the situation - that action which is situationally appropriate - this definition can always be overriden by looking at the situation from another perspective. This distinction is important not only for comparing the two models which I have explicated, but has important implications for political action. Persons with more highly developed cognitive repertoires will have more options open to them. Which option they choose is not open to prediction, but understanding their choice and the options they perceive does require that we share their cognitive framework. This framework will be a composite of the following elements:

- 1) An ability to conceptualize at some stage of development (at stage 3, to give reasons which flow from the principle of respect for persons);
- 2) An explanatory theory which fleshes out the ways in which persons are being injured (at stage 3 this will have reference to mutual respect);
- 3) A strategy for change which proposes ways in which the injury might be alleviated (at stage 3 this will have

reference to a theory of liberated social structures).

IV. Adequacy of the two models

My intention has been to accurately but not impartially lay out two contending theories of political action. I have intended to show that one of these theories is more adequate than the other. The more theoretically adequate perspective allows us to see alternatives to which the other is blind, while at the same time encompassing those features of human activity accurately pictured by the first. I would now like to develop this point more fully and to show the ways in which the Moral Agent perspective is more theoretically adequate than the True Believer perspective.

IV.a. The acquisition of political motives

Both the True Believer and Moral Agent perspectives rest on the assumption that there is some relationship between social life and human consciousness and that some social structures are conducive to human development while others are not. In other words, each has a built-in theory of socialization and moral development.

The True Believer perspective rests on what I have called the induction approach to socialization. This approach posits a pre-existing social order - institutions, ideas, rules, morality, etc. - into which persons must be inducted in order to become human. We have seen that

this socialization occurs in two stages - primary and secondary - and that the secondary stage is particularly important in the development of mature, autonomous, rational motivation. Primary socialization is rather too authoritarian for liberals who invest a great deal in the political values of freedom, pursuit of self-interest, and opportunity. Secondary socialization - where groups are open and multiple - permits a range of choice and a degree of autonomy not encouraged by primary socialization.

But we have also seen that autonomous action is not absolutely free. It is delimited by rules of the game which are embedded in the very structure of pluralist society and which are inducted along with other content into the motivational schema of persons living in such societies. These rules constrain political action by establishing the legitimate means for pursuing private ends and the legitimate means for redress of grievance (as well as defining what constitutes a grievance). They are the rules of bargaining and compromise, within a competitive political world, and moral-political rules like equality of opportunity in a competitive private world. If persons learn these rules - and develop the character traits which make it possible (although not necessary) for them to act on these rules - we wind up with a rational politics of constrained egoism.

But if society is not structured, if it breaks down,

both autonomy and the constraints of liberalism are eroded. Under anomic conditions, persons lack conventional standards and clearly articulated interests. They regress to a state quite like childhood, where they suffer a need for constraint. These non-autonomous persons may find this constraint in political movements into which they move in one disjointed leap. They are quite simply filled with a new moral and ideological content which satisfies emotional needs.

There is, however, a way in which consciousness can change in a rational, constrained manner. Persons who experience status inconsistencies may come to recognize that they have an interest in pressing for change in terms of existing moral-political rules. They may, for instance, apply the principle of equality of opportunity to themselves in ways they never before regarded as legitimate.

The Moral Agent perspective posits a different range of social relations and of human motives. It encompasses the True Believer perspective and moves beyond it in ways which allow us to pick out features of political action to which the True Believer theorist (and actor) is blind.

The Moral Agent perspective assumes that different ways of seeing the world are conceptually connected, that they develop out of each other and that some may be more developed than others. It is assumed that persons can develop an ability to critically evaluate the rules of their own society in terms of developing cognitions which move beyond

justifications already embedded in social practise.

Piaget's theory of moral development helps us to understand how persons can be socialized not just to know the content of social rules, but to understand the purposes of rules and therefore be able to criticize those rules which construct their present social life. We have seen that Piaget, in contrast to the inductionists, argues that it is not necessarily the role-taking possibilities provided by society which encourage development but the quality of role-taking itself. This quality varies from unilateral to mutual respect. In relations of unilateral respect - relations which approximate the image of socialization undergirding the True Believer model - persons take on the roles expected of them by those in positions of authority. Rules and roles are givens, and conformity to them is what counts in evaluating persons and practises. Where there are open and plural roles, persons do develop a type of autonomy, but it is an autonomy which is at the nexus of other-determined roles. In relations of cooperation or mutual respect - relations built on mutual trust, compassion, friendly feelings - persons have the opportunity not only to take on the roles of all parties - an opportunity which gives them a sense of themselves as a person among persons - but to play a part in defining those roles. Here the Moral Agent model moves beyond the True Believer model. Critical consciousness rests not on cognitions of conflicts between existing rules, but on cognitions about the ideals of social life.

As we develop, we come to see that we have an interest in certain types of relationships with other human beings. We come to perceive our own development as intricately bound up with the development of all persons and to see that life is impoverished for all who participate in relationships in which there is no respect.⁸¹ We develop a "social interest," an interest in encouraging social relationships in which persons can flourish. This is an interest which those who adopt a different theory of human development and those who have not yet developed a sense of themselves as rule-makers will have great difficulty comprehending.

Our developing sense of ourselves as persons undergirds a morality based on respect for persons, a morality which supports a critical perspective on existing social arrangements. If existing social practises - including moral-political rules like equality of opportunity - preclude the development of human capacities, then we have reason to change them. Having developed these capacities ourselves, we now can perceive ways in which social practises fail to meet the requirements of morality, which bring into relief the injuries which are being done to persons. If we also have a strategy for change, we have acquired a reason to act, a reason which moves beyond the justifications for political action which are already legitimated by society.⁸² The

81. We also have reason to support those early relations of unilateral respect which undergird later development.

82. This discussion is closely related to the anomie-alienation

True Believer theorist is trapped in just those legitimizations, trapped by her own theory of moral learning. The rules of a particular society become immutable facts, hardly open to critical evaluation when they meet the requirements of the good society which flow from the True Believer model. This model founders on its inability to encompass interests which move beyond egoism and to comprehend justifications which flow from ideal conceptions of social life rather than from norms already embedded in social practise.

IV. b. Reason, passion and action

These competing theories of the relationship between social structure and political consciousness support differing conceptions of the relationship between reason, passion, and political action. This in turn undergirds differing notions of the ways in which political ideas are held and acted upon.

controversy. Anomie theories rest on a contrast with either an organically or mechanically integrated society which is assumed to be good since persons need social constraint. These theories usually assume that freedom is dangerous, or at least threatening to persons who may find it difficult to develop individual standards of conduct when society fails to provide these. Alienation theories rest on the assumption that persons can develop alternatives to their own social rules and evaluate existing arrangements in terms of these alternatives, but the basis for radical consciousness is always difficult to establish. Critical consciousness, according to development theories, requires at least some experience with non-alienated, egalitarian relations of mutual respect. Out of this experience can flow a principled morality which serves as the basis for evaluating alienated social life, life which does not fulfill the needs of developed persons.

The True Believer model assumes that action flows directly from the passions - that 'frustration' produces revolutionary violence (keeping in mind that these passions are rooted in particular social conditions) - or that egoistic reasons produce action - rational action is action based on self interest (again rooted in particular social conditions). A political demand is rational if it utilizes the existing rules of the game - i.e., liberal-democratic rules like equality of opportunity - to maximize egoistic interests. Rational politics is the use of power to gain private benefits, within the constraints of liberal rules. We expect to find actions designed to maximize individual and group benefits, justified perhaps by the principle of equality of opportunity, and constrained by the rules of bargaining, majority rule, tolerance, etc.

But what happens when political actors question existing practises using standards of legitimacy which are not shared by all members of society? When reasons for action offered by political agents fall outside accepted conventions, those who accept the conventions will tend to see actors as
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 crazy, wild-eyed fanatics, or at best utopian visionaries.

83. Often unconventional behavior, especially behavior which cannot be subsumed under self-interest is explained in terms of unconscious motives rather than conscious reasons. "The conscious reasons, which make it look like an action are regarded as being in some way irrelevant or illusory, an excuse for what the man is going to do anyway. Some such theory was advanced by Freudians who held that some reasons for actions are rationalizations, a facade that we erect so that we can satisfy dangerous wishes in a manner that is socially acceptable." R.S. Peters, The Concept of Motivation (London: Routledge, and Kegan Paul, 1958), p. 59. The Moral Agent mode does not exclude rationalization.

"Judged by the standards and needs of the existing society ...revolutionaries are out of their minds. To the enemy of revolution the Reason of the revolution appears to be madness."⁸⁴

In contrast to this image of the wild-eyed radical, is the image of the mature political agent, rooted in pluralist, conflicting roles (or at least constrained by the roles others play), and committed to the liberal values of 'freedom of thought,' 'tolerance' etc. It is assumed that such an individual will adopt ideas hesitantly, although with strong commitment, and be willing to test these ideas in the "free market place" of the political arena. Radicals, on the contrary, plunge themselves into an ideology without reservation - and probably with fleeting commitment - and instead of testing ideas in the political arena, they pull out of politics. Their ideas are designed not to guide political action - the pursuit of self-interest through the use of power - but to avoid responsibility and power.

There is a sense in which all reasons rest on a background ideology which legitimizes certain demands and delegitimizes others. But the background to self-interested politics is unexamined. Because of their conceptual biases, True Believer theorists fail to see how their contrast model - the pluralist order and self-interested politics - has become an immutable, near "natural" fact. Any challenge

⁸⁴. Breines, "Would you Believe?" p. 9.

to this order, any conception of interests which moves away from egoism (although a rare occurrence of altruism is permissible) is mistaken; action based on such challenges are mislead.

I have hoped to show that the True Believer model rests on a clear ideological base, on an unquestioned conceptual framework which blinds theorists in this tradition to alternative possibilities, alternative reasons and justifications for action.⁸⁵ Theorists in this tradition

...want to understand the movement without changing their own positions. Participants know this is impossible....To 'understand' movement ideology is to make the conceptual switch...which brings about fundamental or radical changes in orientation.⁸⁶

The Moral Agent perspective allows for these shifts and is therefore a more adequate way of approaching political ideologies. It rests on the assumption that there can be alternative motives for action, alternative types of interests, and that at least some of these provide the basis for rational political action.

85. This is not to say that radical perspectives do not distort and blind also. As Sheila Rowbotham says, "Be-wilderment and mystery surrounded the birth of women's liberation. It seemed to come out of an ideological lacuna belonging neither to previous feminism nor to Marxism. Orphan-like it had apparently sprung up from nowhere in particular....Feminists and Marxists alike were convinced that when it grew up, and became sensible like them, it would shed its ill-defined 'absurdities'." Woman's Consciousness, Man's World (New York: Penguin Books, 1973), p. ix.

86. Luther P. Gerlach and Virginia H. Hine, People, Power, Change: Movements of Social Transformation (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970), p. 176.

The True Believer mode has a narrower range within which phenomena can vary. Its concept of rationality is rooted in egoism and is linked to particular means as the way of achieving egoistic ends. The model is correct to link rationality with concepts like 'autonomy' and 'freedom' and 'free choice' since rationality does presuppose individual responsibility for action. However, it is incorrect to assume that 'autonomy' necessitates egoism and that rational choices are always in one's self-interest. The Moral Agent has a broader image of autonomy, and image which sees autonomy as linked to the notion of social being. The Moral Agent perspective assumes that since persons' needs, wants and interests are socially and historically specific, so too is rationality. And it assumes that we can take an interest in the well-being of others without being "altruistic."

Rationality is implicated in our social life. Every society sets limits on the kind of autonomy which can flourish and sets limits on what can be chosen. We cannot choose any possible life and have others consider us rational. The point is that our conceptions of rationality are socially and historically specific and that we need to look at the True Believer image of rationality in this light. Our historically developing images of persons and their potential undergirds developing images of rationality. This again is not to say that all action is rational, or even that all

reasons are rational in the sense of getting us what we need in order to flourish, but simply to say that persons do or may have reasons for action which move beyond egoism. 87

The Moral Agent model also more adequately handles the complex relationship between reason and passion. The True Believer perspective tends to dichotomize reason and passion, to bifurcate them into the two models of action built into it.

87. I would like to make some additional comments on rationality, comments which are not central to my argument. First, when we use phrases like 'freely chosen,' 'autonomous,' 'free action,' etc. we may become trapped in an ahistorical, individualistic perspective on action. This is dangerous because it slides away from the notion of persons as social and historical beings and towards the liberal-individualistic image of the person, an image which makes it difficult to maintain a sociological perspective on social change and on changes in consciousness. (Another danger is to move in the direction of social determinism - for example, technologism - and to see changes in individual consciousness as the result of events on the macro level alone rather than as the result of a dialectical relationship between individual consciousness and social life.)

I also want to be clear that there are "objective" tests of rationality, tests which appear to conflict with the idea of studying action in its social and historical context in order to understand it. I agree with MacIntyre that standards of rationality are given by cultural norms, but that rationality also involves conformity to universal logical criteria. I would add that rationality also links means to ends. However, since the ends of human life are socially and historically specific, this means-ends requirement is purely formal. (See MacIntyre, "A Mistake about Causality.")

Rational choice involves both form and content. However, persons cannot choose what is not available for choice, and availability flows out of the social context. The implications for change are far-reaching since society then always limits the content of rational choice in important ways. This means that choice will never be absolutely rational - in the sense of absolutely fulfilling human needs. Our needs develop as our social life changes, and any of these needs are likely to fall far short of some abstract ideal, an ideal which fails to find reality in social life and which is therefore doomed to be misleading.

It does treat passions, or 'wants', and feelings like guilt, shame, obligation, etc., as rooted in our social life, but it has a limited conception of the relation between cognition and passion which has special import for motives like 'frustration.' The Moral Agent perspective is better able to handle this relation - the relation, for instance, between frustration and our ideals of social life, between indignation and our cognitions of injury to others - and the relation between our changing emotional and cognitive repertoire and our changing political purposes. Although the True Believer perspective does link changing emotions to different modes of political action, it has a more limited understanding of the nature of these emotions.

The Moral Agent model also has a more adequate theory of socialization, one which allows for critical consciousness. The induction model of socialization is correct in putting a great deal of emphasis on the acquisition of affective commitments in political action. Action does require our having the will to act; we need to have acquired the strength of character to do what we know is right even when it conflicts with other things we want to do. Guilt, regret, a sense of obligation are part of moral action. But the Moral Agent model does not exclude these elements. The theory of cognitive development is compatible with an approach to socialization which sees the importance of a nurturant "family" structure (although we could debate whether our nuclear family best meets the requirements of the first stage of

moral development) for the development of ego strength and character traits.

Our understanding that our own actions may be undergirded by a developing conceptual framework and by certain affective commitments has implications for the way in which we hold our ideas and the way in which we act. The True Believer perspective allows for a type of self-criticism; so too does the Moral Agent perspective. As we come to see ideas as developing dynamically, we become hesitant about truth. (My own hesitancy in the face of Marxist friends' surity of their own position is probably shared by many; it seems to me to indicate an unwillingness to accept any systematic program for change as the final answer.) On the one hand, we are constrained from actions which would undermine our image of moral personal relations - e.g., telling lies, breaking a trust, etc. - and on the other, we are encouraged to engage in actions which represent our understanding of the interrelatedness of human lives.

At the same time, we are aware that we are not always rational agents, that we have needs - including unconscious ones - which are rooted in our personal histories and in our social lives in such a way that any program for action, any political ideology which fails to take them into account is doomed to failure or to thoroughly repressive measures. Some of these needs are the flawed products of a flawed society, but even though our needs are flawed, we cannot

stand completely outside ourselves. We can only test ideas in light of personal experience and stand as critical agents in the face of any proposed truth. Some proposals for change will offend our understanding of our needs; others will express the best of our developing needs, our needs for relations of warmth, trust, compassion and commitment.

To summarize, the Moral Agent perspective is more adequate than the True Believer perspective because it better accounts for the development of critical thought, because it incorporates reasons for action to which the True Believer perspective is closed, and because it permits us to see relationships between reasons and passions which make more sense of what persons do when they act - in general, because it opens us up to seeing more facets of political action. This is not to say that the True Believer perspective may not adequately describe a specific political action, may not often capture the nature of a given political justification. It is rather to say that the perspective I support opens us up to more potential descriptions, to more possible categorizations of human activity. I should also argue that political action can and does fall beyond the limits of the categories established by the True Believer perspective, an argument which can be more clearly defended by looking at a particular political movement, the Women's Liberation Movement.

CHAPTER IV

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

It should now be clear that any answer to the question, "What do women want," is going to be tremendously complex. What I have done in the past two chapters is to develop two broad theories of political action and to argue that the latter is more adequate than the former in terms of its ability to provide answers to this question. I am now ready to apply these models to an understanding of a contemporary political movement, the Women's Liberation Movement. Again, it is important to be clear that these models serve both the political analyst and political actor. Therefore, in what follows, I shall attempt to develop each perspective as it is used both to explain the rise of contemporary feminism and to justify the actions of contemporary feminists. I shall want to show that there is a conceptual development in the Movement and that only a theory which can adequately capture this development will adequately account for the movement itself. I also want to show that this development has provided more and more adequate explanations of the position of women in contemporary American society and more and more adequate resolutions to the problems which confront us all. In particular, I shall want to show that three conceptions of

women's liberation - 'equality of opportunity,' 'authenticity,' and 'dis-alienation' - are more and more adequate conceptualizations of what constitutes an injury to persons and what structural changes need to be made in order for persons to flourish.

I. The True Believer Model

I.a. The Frustrated Bitch Hypothesis

This explanation of the Women's Movement flows out of the assumptions of the True Believer model. Its proponents assume that women have too much freedom - indeed are suffering the ill effects of anomie - and that the Movement is a reaction to and an escape from freedom on the part of immature persons. The ideas of the Movement are treated as simple rationalizations of fears and of frustration arising from the challenges of freedom. This is probably the most common explanation of the Women's Movement, at least as it is grasped by the public mind,¹ and most explanations in this mode are fairly unsophisticated. They are cast in terms like 'castrating bitch,' 'witch', 'irresponsible child.' But an example of this mode which

¹ This ought not be surprising given Kohlberg's theory of cognitive development. Many people in a hierarchically organized society will see themselves as somewhere around Kohlberg's stages 2 and 3 and will tend to see others in these terms.

is quite sophisticated is Midge Decter's much-criticized The New Chastity and Other Arguments Against Women's Liberation.

On page 52 of her rather interesting critique of contemporary American feminism, Decter writes:

No doubt women are far from having attained a full parity of opportunity. No doubt they have been and continue to be discouraged from undertaking the practise of certain professions. No doubt they are in many instances paid less for the work they do than men would be. These are, however, issues of injustice that lend themselves not to the large-scale analysis of a liberation movement but to the particular and practical application of pressure against the wrong-doers....Where there is no disagreement as to what constitutes an injustice - as there is none with respect to issues bearing on the rights of women today - the constant vociferous harping on it tends to lead to the suspicion that one is here witnessing the beating of a dead horse.

In other words, argues Ms. Decter, we all know what is wrong and we need only apply ourselves to remedying particular ills. But the point of this dissertation is to illustrate exactly how it is that we do not all know what is wrong, and that each of comes to an understanding of social life which delimits the range of things which we can and do consider wrong. What I want to investigate here are the underlying assumptions in Ms. Decter's work which lead her to state that we all know what is wrong and then to reject feminist analysis which picks out other features of social life as "wrong."

Women, argues Decter, are freer than they have ever been before, free from both biological necessity and social constraint. The American female "...experiences life as a

constant process of decision and so a constant assumption of responsibility." ² For example, in choosing to work or to be a housewife, a woman makes a very real choice: "at any moment, by her own volition, she might be doing otherwise," unlike her husband whose life is imposed by necessity. Her worklife, once driven by the biological and social necessity of the family, is no longer so driven; her sex life, unlike her husband's is not driven by lust; her life is neither natural nor social contingency but autonomous choosing. ³ The sexual revolution has freed her from social constraint in ⁴ her sexuality; technology has freed her from biology; the new woman is on her own. Women are now the arbiters of their own sexual conduct. Marriage has become a freely chosen contract for which partners bear the responsibility of success or failure, and child-bearing, too, is a free choice, undetermined by either biological necessity or a limited conception of woman's proper role.

Since there were no standards of conduct, either to obey or to violate, since she herself was to be the arbiter and the standard, she was pressed into a species of self-knowledge it has been one of the purposes of sexual games and encounters to help her attain to. Far from being a sexual object, as Women's Liberation claimed, she was a sexual subject par excellence. ⁵

2. Midge Decter, The New Chastity, (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc., 1972), p. 49.

3. One wonders what has happened to those women who need to do both work and housework out of necessity. Decter also seems to buy the myth that women, unlike men, do not have sex drives.

4. The idea that women are now free to pursue sex (which they don't want anyway) ignores their loss of bargaining power in a sexist society. Without the power to say no, has woman exchanged repression for greater oppression in a society where she still needs to marry in order to maintain the middle class status to which her father made her accustomed.

5. Decter, The New Chastity, p. 83.

But this freedom from standards and necessity, "...curiously enough...makes her anxiety the greater." She envies man "...his blanket, unwilling, unthinking entailment in necessity. This is the inequality between them. Were she to feel herself so entailed, she would not feel resentful but would simply, and with the same lack of heed and moral justification as he does, provide herself with what she needed."⁶ It is she who is the subject, man the object; she who is the chooser, he who moves in a world of necessity. And it is this freedom coupled with envy of man's rootedness in a world of necessity which underlies the Women's Liberation Movement.

Women's Liberation constitutes a response to the predicament of the modern woman that begins with a falsification of the nature of that predicament. The movement says that women are subjected to a distorted, exploitative shaping by society which they cannot, without an overturning of the oppressed female consciousness, escape from. Whereas the truth is that women are for the time being caught in a transition in which they feel themselves too little shaped by society, its demands on them too indefinite, their demands on themselves (or lack of them) far too operative, and they cannot even get their consciousness organized.⁷

Lacking both social and biological guidelines, women are left adrift, anomic women primed for an ideology which allows them to rationalize their failure to cope with freedom and to put the blame for their inability to cope with and determine their own lives onto external hate objects, i.e., men or the system. This female escape from freedom is rationalized by a feminist ideology. For example, the theory of

6. Ibid., p. 49.

7. Ibid., p. 52.

patriarchy denies woman responsibility for her own failures; lesbian theory and auto-eroticism provides escape from adult sexuality and justifies it ideologically. And what Decter interprets as an anti-child, anti-biology ideology, allows woman to deny herself by denying motherhood.

[For] women to announce that their very womanliness results only from a bad and meritricious culture is the expression of a deep hatred for themselves. Such an expression of self-hatred, is indeed, exactly the primary emotion that informs Women's Liberation diatribes against the impositions of motherhood....Denial of [sexual difference]- no matter how nobly, or on the other hand, how trivially, uttered - becomes the denial of oneself, one's nature and one's true possibilities; becomes in other words, the denial of life itself.⁸

Now it may well be that some members of the Women's Movement are compelled by self-hatred, but this is not equivalent to demonstrating that none are motivated by some alternative conception of human excellence which they seek to attain through the Movement. Rather than a denial of responsibility, an escape from freedom, or a fear of failure, feminist ideology may reflect mature analysis of one's personal responsibilities to help create a free society where persons can succeed at being persons.

What we need to ask is why Ms. Decter cannot perceive feminist demands as mature and rational. This inability rests on both her acceptance of anomie theory and the True Believer contrast model of an integrated pluralist society where persons are constrained by the rights and duties

8. Ibid., p. 180.

accruing to roles in a clear division of labor. This is quite clear in her criticism of Feminist alternatives, and especially in her claim that Feminists seek to avoid responsibility and obligation.⁹

In general...the new liberators of women give no evidence of a feeling of obligation to alter themselves....They do not...desire a freer society, one that affords them a larger and wider variety of opportunity, but rather one in which the very terms 'freedom' and 'opportunity' will be redefined so as to conform with their desires....¹⁰

And that is the very crux of the matter; Feminists are re-defining the terms of political discourse and that is a very dangerous move indeed. Moreover they are doing so in terms of their desires. Satisfying one's desires is quite clearly contrasted to fulfilling one's responsibilities, living up to the obligations and duties of a relatively well-ordered society.

Women's Liberation is cast as a demand not for new freedom, but for a new immaturity;¹¹ not for new definitions of female roles - roles which might be more humanizing - but for an excuse from performing given social roles well. Decter admits that one of the gravest problems facing contemporary women is the need to devise new standards, but she rejects Feminist demands as legitimate efforts to

9. Here Decter is criticizing Germaine Greer who she identifies as "one of the movement's most favored ideologists." This identification is unfortunate.

10. Decter, The New Chastity, p. 56.

11. Ibid., p. 142.

develop such standards.

The need to devise a morality that does not disqualify one from excellence is a familiar need in our time. /But the desire to escape/...the adult world of begatting and striving where the aggressions that create conflict have also been a necessary condition for the sustenance of life on earth ...is the demand...to remain children.¹²

Again, demands to alter the criteria of human excellence are classified as demands to avoid being judged in terms of "adult" accomplishment. Women's Liberation becomes not an effort to value the personhood of women, but is cast as a demand by women to remain little girls - avoiding work, escaping sexuality, denying their responsibilities in 'wiving' and 'mothering.'

I would suggest that the quarrel between Ms. Decter and the Women's Movement hinges on ideals of freedom. Ms. Decter argues that her opponents do not want freedom or equality.

Women's Liberation does not embody a new wave of demand for equal rights. Nor does its preoccupation with oppression signal a yearning for freedom. The movement turns out to be about something else altogether; it is about, in fact, the difficulties women are experiencing with the rights and freedoms they already enjoy.¹³

What I would suggest is that this classification of feminist demands flows out of Decter's own explanatory theory and level of moral development. Lacking a conception of the Moral Agent, the person who can critically evaluate existing social arrangements from an alternative point of view, Decter

12. Ibid., p. 56.

13. Ibid., p. 43.

must see the feminist critique as a result of anomie. Indeed, one gets a clear sense that, for Decter, the basis for a new morality already exists in the division of labor between male and female coupled with the opening of new opportunities for women in the man's world. But more than this, Decter's own sense of justice is a liberal sense; she accepts the liberal society as a just society; with the exception of a few minor problems which women could quite well eradicate if they exerted themselves, there is not much grounds for complaint. Women have benefitted from the social arrangements of contemporary society - from marriage as contract, from motherhood, housewifery - and they owe men - who provide them the rights that accrue to these roles - certain obligations. To deny the obligation, as Decter claims feminists do, is not to assert alternative obligations and responsibilities, but to deny responsibility and to assert a "...freedom not to receive that which one needs to receive and to give that which is needed of one but rather freedom to be relieved - and in the name of some 'higher value' - of both." Decter understands 'freedom' as freedom from arbitrary role assignment and she believes that women are now so free. She understands equality as the equal opportunity to compete for all social roles, compatible with the biological function of maternity, and she believes that society is moving to make this possible. In the end, then, Decter asserts that the sexual division of labor is

¹⁴
14. Ibid., p. 180.

fair, that society is open to moves in the direction of freedom and equality for women, and she rejects all arguments against this society as the immature wailings of persons who cannot handle the freedom to choose among roles and to compete in a man's world.

I.b. Rational feminism - liberal variant

I have argued that Decter clearly accepts the True Believer contrast model of an integrated pluralist society where persons are constrained by the rights and duties which flow out of the division of labor. What I want to argue now is that this contrast model undergirds an image of the way in which female consciousness can change - in which new demands can be developed - which is profoundly different from the image of feminist ideology as a rationalization of the fear of freedom. This image rests on the belief that with the breaking down of traditional sex roles, women are now exposed to conflicting standards associated with many different roles. It is at the interstices of these roles where woman finds her freedom - the freedom to choose among conflicting roles each of which provides her with both a new self-image and a rational interest. New and rational consciousness, then, can flow from exposure to the conflicting role demands of a pluralist, fluid society. Two theories which utilize these basic assumptions to explain the rise of contemporary feminism are the theory of status inconsistency and the theory of relative deprivation.

The theory of status inconsistency posits that political demands may arise when persons experience statuses which carry differential rewards (prestige, wealth, etc.) and when there is an ideology which can be utilized to justify shifting the distribution of rewards from one merit system to another. The objective condition of status inconsistency is linked to subjective dissatisfaction with existing conditions and a demand for social change is based on liberal-democratic ideals like equality of opportunity. Thus women can employ the principles of equality of opportunity and of citizenship to press for a shift in the basis of merit from "sex status" to status as worker and citizen - the right to a job and to the vote.

15

15. In Power and Privilege, Lenski argues that, with traditional barriers to women crumbling on all sides - politics, higher education, occupation, rights of property, divorce - the question of women's status inconsistency has been resolved. What barriers remain are either with woman herself - e.g., in her basic responsibilities in the family and in her biology - or because there are biases against women among those in positions of power. But these barriers cannot form the basis of a legitimate complaint because the former are either socially advantageous or "natural," and the latter do not rest on legal supports and therefore cannot form obstacles to women who exert serious effort. Women can use the legal system to press claims against non-legal discrimination. Furthermore, women can fulfill their need for status through an advantageous marriage. For women, ascribed status is as good as personally achieved status and merit for satisfying the need for self-esteem and prestige.

Although women may not have achieved full equality in the "...worlds of work and politics....the majority of women do not seem greatly concerned. The explanation for this apparent paradox lies in the family system which...makes it possible for most women to attain their goals through marriage as easily as most men can attain theirs through work and political activity....This probably explains why the feminist movement has lost most of its vigor: for the vast majority of women, the battle for equality has been won." (p. 426)

This theory has been considered especially appropriate to an understanding of contemporary feminism since so many feminists are women who have succeeded (or who have the skills to succeed) and who now complain that their status as women is unsatisfactory. One theorist who has had a tremendous impact on the way the Women's Movement has been perceived and who uses the theory of status inconsistency as a tool for explaining feminist consciousness is Betty Friedan.

Friedan's key assumption is that autonomous persons can and do develop under existing social arrangements, or, at least that there is no serious conflict between conventional standards of achievement and ideal standards of autonomous moral action. However, woman's socialization can get in the way of her achieving these standards.

The purpose of socialization, according to Friedan, is

The assumption is that women's statuses are no longer inconsistent; a successful businesswoman need not think of herself with a sex status lower than her occupational status. Married women who get their status from husbands need not feel that this is inconsistent with their sex status. Obviously the problem for Lenski is that he does not see a sex-caste stratification system but only stratification in terms of production and consumption which could give rise to demands for equality (it is interesting that he inherits this problem from the socialist part of his "synthesis"). The whole issue of women as a "class" or "caste" is ignored since women's legal status is now (assumed to be) equal to men's, and there are no power relations involved.

Lenski's book appeared in 1966 shortly before the revival of American feminism. It is telling that his theory of status inconsistency did not predict this revival. I would suggest that he failed because it is not possible to predict what choices persons will make about the standards of excellence they might wish to attain to. Nor could Lenski predict because he failed to see existing power relations and discriminations which flow out of these relations.

the development of autonomous persons, persons who have a "firm core of self, or 'I,'" ¹⁶ who have an individual identity. Moral development requires a transition from the outer-directedness of conventionality to the inner-directedness of autonomy. Autonomous women, Friedan argues drawing from Abraham Maslowe's notion of self-actualization

...prefer to be treated "Like a person, not like a woman." They prefer to be independent, stand on their own two feet, and generally do not care for concessions that imply they are inferior, weak or that they cannot take care of themselves. This is not to imply that they cannot behave conventionally. They do when it is necessary or desirable for any reason, but they do not take the ordinary conventions seriously.... Rules per se generally mean nothing to these women. It is only when they approve of the rules and can see and approve of the purpose behind them that they will obey them....¹⁷ They are strong, purposeful and do live by rules, but these rules are autonomous and personally arrived at....

This passage has the ring of Moral Agency, but I want to point out some essential differences between it and the image of morality developed in Chapter III, differences which place Friedan's conception of morality within the boundaries of the True Believer contrast model. We need to consider what standards Friedan's autonomous woman might use to critically evaluate conventional rules, especially those rules which define her role as woman, and we need to consider how Friedan pictures the development of critical consciousness.

For Friedan the standard for evaluating female rules is the standard of human excellence already embedded in existing

16. Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique (New York: Dell Publishing, 1963), p. 293.

17. Ibid., p. 307.

social practises. It is the standard of manliness. High dominance women are more like men - "Above all, the high dominance woman was more psychologically free - more autonomous," and exhibited more of the traditionally "male" character traits.¹⁸ Most women lack these qualities; their socialization insures the forfeiture of a mature self which is not biologically but¹⁹ culturally male.

If the standard of excellence is already given, women's exclusion from achieving these standards constitutes an injury. Since women are socialized to choose between their humanness as self-actualizers and their femaleness as biological beings - child-bearers - female socialization is the denial of humanness.²⁰ Friedan argues that this "humanness" is a high order

18. Ibid., p. 308.

19. Steven Goldberg's The Inevitability of Patriarchy (New York: William Morrow, 1973) is an attempt to "prove" that Feminism is doomed to fail because women's ability to succeed in competition is limited by her lack of the male hormone testosterone. Patriarchy is biologically necessary and does not constitute an injury. While Mr. Goldberg may be correct that Feminists have not paid adequate attention to biology, he fails to consider what the implications are of positing a non-competitive, non-hierarchical society as the goal. Goldberg also deploys the emotional needs thesis to explain why women are so willing to adopt untenable positions. "That even a few academic intellectuals have accepted the feminist analysis with its illogic and its misrepresentation of fact is explicable only in the terms of emotional necessity. It is intellectually defensible in no terms at all." (p. 134) And in a footnote on the same page: "The political ideologue never did care about ideas, logic, or the integrity of intellectual pursuit. The layman who seeks rationalization for emotional necessity has always embraced the most improbable explanation for as long as it catered to his needs while he demanded of the unpalatable theory a proof that the very nature of scientific theory precludes."

20. Socialization, not power relations, is the source of

"need," and she explains the plight of modern woman as the frustration of this need.²¹ In positing the male virtues as needs, and in arguing that these needs are frustrated for women, Friedan casts the male virtues as universally human and implies that any good society will be so constituted as to promote the masculine virtues - the "will to power," "self-assertion," "dominance," and "autonomy." Some of these traits are those we would hope to find in all mature persons, and Friedan takes the negative bite out of others by denying that they imply "...aggression or competitive striving in the usual sense....." But one might well wonder in what sense they are to be taken, especially in light of the strategy for social change which flows logically from the assumptions that these are the traits to be nurtured.

Before we look at this strategy, however, we need to see how the idea of sex-role socialization supports a theory of rational changes in consciousness. Friedan wants to show how women can become aware that their human needs are not

injury. There is no attempt to investigate either the notion of patriarchy or the institutions of capitalism in terms of female oppression.

21. While I do not want to criticize Maslowe's needs theory here, it is important to see that Friedan ignores the social nature of needs - that certain aspects of femaleness become needs also, needs which any program for social change cannot ignore.

22. Friedan, The Feminine Mystique, p. 299.

being met. At first it seems that this awareness arises from the frustration of needs which results in a "disease center or else atrophy" of the person. But "diseased" or sick persons seldom change themselves, or at least they seldom choose healthy means. For Friedan it is women who have experienced growth in some sphere of their lives who make rational demands for social change. This assumption is compatible with both the True Believer and Moral Agent models, but when we investigate the type of growth experience Friedan picks out, it is apparent that her theory of changing consciousness is based on True Believer assumptions. Women who demand change have experienced the status inconsistencies which can undergird a critical evaluation of some social practises, but only in terms of other practises already embedded in social life.

These are educated women who are individualized in their educational experiences, separated out from the class of women and permitted some sense of achievement, only to find that when school is done and they resume their female role they must become "...an anonymous biological robot in a docile mass."²³ These women, strong in their individualism, assertiveness, achievement orientation, however, are able to say an unequivocal "no" to the housewife image. "Something very strong in a woman resists the death of herself."²⁴ And in this "no" is implied a "yes," a yes to new individual life

23. Ibid., p. 296.

24. Ibid., p. 297.

plans which combine career and marriage, competition in a man's world as well as rootedness in woman's. These women make demands for social arrangements which will allow them to "...compete then, not as a woman, but as a human being," demands which make it possible for them to pursue careers, to achieve high status in an existing stratification system.

Social change occurs first on the individual level - individual women seeking careers - and then moves to the political - groups of women demanding the establishment of those conditions which permit them to achieve individually. "Not until a great many women move out of the fringes into the mainstream will society itself provide the arrangements for their new life plan."²⁵ Not until women enter the world of work - particularly the professions - will society provide for day care, for child care on the campuses, for maternity leaves, etc., for those institutional reforms which permit women to compete on equal terms with men in all the things men do. The strategic goals for the Women's Liberation Movement, then, are to establish those conditions of equal opportunity under which women are no longer handicapped by their female sex roles. (What is interesting about Friedan's strategy is the rather blatant ignorance of the fact that working class women have always worked and that society has seldom provided them with the social arrangements for which Friedan now calls.)

25. Ibid., p. 361.

A related theory of changing consciousness is the theory of relative deprivation. In an article entitled "A Feminist Analysis of Relative Deprivation in Academic Women," Judy Long Laws attempts to utilize this theory to explain how professional women come to perceive inequities in their status as professionals and the kinds of demands which flow from this perception.

While the theory of relative deprivation does differ from the theory of status inconsistency in important respects, they are quite similar. The most important point of similarity is the assumption that persons seek pleasure and avoid pain and that one pleasure is self-esteem and prestige. The theory of relative deprivation assumes that a person's "...relative gratification or deprivation results from social comparison," and that "...social comparisons are made in such a way as to avoid pain and provide pleasure."²⁶ Like the theory of status inconsistency, the theory of relative deprivation assumes that the impetus for social change lies in comparisons with standards of excellence already existing in society. The criteria for what is worth having are already established by social practise. Whether Laws consistently maintains and adequately defends this position will be considered in a moment.

Laws develops a typology of four postures which academic

26. Judy Long Laws, "Feminist Analysis of Relative Deprivation in Academic Women," The Review of Radical Political Economics 4 (July, 1972), p. 107.

women might adopt when confronted with the dilemma of social comparison. These comparisons can be either individual or group based - e.g., they can compare themselves with fellow male academicians, female students, housewives, etc. If, for example, the academic woman compares herself with housewives, by the "laws" of motivation outlined above, so long as the academic woman does not see herself as a member of this group, "...the result is a feeling of personal gratification and of superiority to the deprived group. Both these feelings militate against the woman professor's perceiving similarity and solidarity with other women and contributes to her resistance to the Women's Lib appeal to 'sisterhood.'²⁷ Should she compare herself to women students, the academic woman should feel herself relatively advantaged in terms of academic achievement since the "laws" of comparison will lead her to make judgments which provide pleasure - in this case, the judgment that she is better than other people. Comparison is motivated by ego-gratification and precludes "class" solidarity.

Academic women faced with discriminatory practises, however, may compare themselves to academic men, and this may produce feminist consciousness. This depends on which of four possible comparisons are made. Laws' "Token" is really a male in women's clothing. She sees herself as an "exception" and compares herself only with men. Since she accepts male norms of achievement, she does not feel deprived

27. Ibid., p. 109.

if she or other women experience discrimination. The "Old Feminist" also accepts male standards, and she too does not feel deprivation. Her response is to accept the challenge and beat men at their own game; she rejects completely her status as a woman. The "Pussy Cat" is politically immobilized because she totally accepts male norms, but unlike the Token she does not think of herself as an exceptional case, nor does she want to outdo men like the Old Feminist. She is a non-achiever who legitimizes discrepancies in status by focusing on the rewards of non-power - typically the "benefits" of avoiding responsibility.

The "Women's Liberationist" is also achievement oriented, but on Feminist terms - e.g., her standards of scholarship are not the traditional standards of her discipline but the standards of Feminist scholarship. Her reference group - that group with which she compares herself - is other Feminists, not male academicians. But we need to ask whether this choice of standards and of reference group is consistent with the theory of relative deprivation. I would argue that it is only if we very loosely construe relative deprivation to include deprivation in terms of some ideal standard as well as in terms of existing standards and groups.

The key element in the first three types is the legitimacy of existing standards. The Token, the Pussy Cat, and the Old Feminist feel relatively deprived in terms of these standards, but their response to this feeling can hardly be said to be unfiltered through cognitions, particularly cognitions of what

constitutes an injury. The Women's Liberationist adopts alternative standards through which she perceives existing practises as injurious. The distinction between the Women's Liberationist and those women who accept existing standards as legitimate is very useful, but Laws has not clearly explained how it is possible for women to come to adopt alternative standards. She has made a rather large step away from the theory of relative deprivation, a step not grounded in a theory of how persons can come to adopt standards not already legitimated by social practise.

Laws argues that social distance (anomie) can help to account for this shift.

For academic women to develop a sense of deprivation qua women...clearly two sorts of changes are required: (1) an increase in the felt distance from the group of male colleagues, and (2) an increase in the sense of similarity or shared fate with other women.²⁸

But might this increasing distance be explained as a rational decision to choose alternative standards rather than an instance of anomie? It seems to me that the experience of deprivation in terms of a social category (sex) must be filtered through an ideological perspective which includes some notion of solidarity with women, and it is this perspective which ought to form the focus of analysis rather than being snuck in through the back door and explained in terms of avoiding pain and feeling pleasure. Why, for instance, should a woman who gains pleasure from being an exception suddenly shift to the less sure pleasures of

28. Ibid., p. 116.

identifying as a woman? Laws' answer is that she is avoiding the pain of being rejected by men and gaining the pleasure of self esteem in "rap groups" and this explanation of female solidarity has plausibility. But it is both a circular and post hoc explanation which in the end itself requires explanation. Women shift their identification to avoid pain and receive pleasure. How do they know that identifying with women will accomplish this? (Indeed, it may raise tension, anxiety, frustration, etc.) Certainly they can only know this insofar as the choice of reference group is theory imbued. One's choice of reference group, then, is not determined by expected pleasure or pain, but is at least in part directed by our cognitions. That is, it is a choice based on one's perception of the kind of person one wants to be and the kind of social life one wishes to be implicated in. Of course, we expect to find this pleasurable.

Why one woman perceives practises like unequal pay or unequal rank as legitimate and another regards them as illegitimate requires investigation into the issue of legitimacy. Questions of identification (reference group) and Feminist scholarship need to be treated as involving more than the pursuit of pleasure. It seems to me that the whole notion of Feminist scholarship rests on the capacity to criticize existing norms. Moreover, Feminist scholarship must spring in part from woman's need to understand herself as a woman, a need which itself rests on prior identification of oneself

as a woman rather than as an academician for whom biological differences are irrelevant. It is this identification as a rational process involving cognitions and theorizing which needs more thorough examination.²⁹

Finally, we need to come to grips with the ways in which these theories of status inconsistency and relative deprivation affect the analyst's ability to "see" other explanations of contemporary Feminism and alternatives to liberal proposals for social change. If we look at a 1973 article by Friedan entitled, "Up from the Kitchen Floor," we can see that for Friedan, at least theory and program seriously limit her sympathy with other branches of the Women's Movement.

In that article, Friedan traces her own development since the publication of The Feminine Mystique, the hostility she faced from other women, overcoming her own

²⁹. It is interesting that Laws applies her theory only to academic women. Certainly academic women do most keenly experience inconsistent statuses - as women and as professionals. But how, then, does the consciousness of non-professional women get raised? Perhaps Laws' theory is useful for pointing out the difficulties of raising women's consciousness since housewives, for example, have few persons with whom to compare themselves. Since they generally share few attributes with their husbands - in the way that academic women share attributes with academic men - on what grounds can they use men as a reference group and feel relatively deprived as women? Perhaps we have highlighted an important problem in consciousness-raising, but Laws still ignores the fact that many non-professional women do participate in the Movement. Moreover the Movement does make demands that move beyond equal pay, affirmative action, etc. It is necessary, I think, to make the comparisons between demands for new standards of academic proficiency and demands for non-hierarchical organizations, for example, and demands for equality with men. Both demands question existing practises in ways that equal pay for equal work and affirmative action do not.

fear of being alone and getting a divorce, her developing sense that society needed to change if women were to change, and her establishment of N.O.W. But after this review of her private and political actions, Friedan gets down to the nitty-gritty of the article, a scathing criticism of radical women, "...those who preached the man-hating sex/class warfare [and who] threatened to take over New York N.O.W., and National N.O.W., and drive out the women who wanted equality, but who also wanted to keep on loving their husbands and children."³⁰ She links these radicals with CIA subversion, accuses them of power-tripping, and finally describes Radicalesbians as "...merely acting out sexually their rebellion and resentment at being 'underneath' in society generally, being dependent on men for their personal definition."³¹ Merely "acting out" frustrations - the liberal categorizes the radical as a True Believer!

Now it may well be that Lesbian women are acting out their frustrations and that some Radical Feminists hate men, but what I want to suggest is that Friedan is not open to seeing this frustration and hatred as a legitimate response to what Radicalesbians and Radical Feminists regard as a male-dominated caste system. Friedan gives the very distinct impression that anyone who comes out in favor of

30. Betty Friedan, "Up from the Kitchen Floor," New York Times Magazine, March 25, 1973, pp. 32-3.

31. Ibid., p. 34.

Lesbianism must be driven by an illegitimate "pseudoradical
infantilism."³² (I think that it is interesting that

Friedan's list of those to be castigated does not include a single Marxist, although Millett and Firestone do move in that direction. Either Friedan does not know that Marxist Feminists exist, or she does not consider their analysis worth any attention.)

For Friedan, much has been accomplished in the ten years since the publication of The Feminine Mystique. Indeed, at a recent N.O.W. conference, she called for an end to the Women's Movement and asked for a movement of men and women together. Now this is an admirable goal - this goal of human liberation - and one which meets the requirements of the Moral Agent mode - but it is a stance few Radicalesbians or Radical Feminists could adopt at this juncture in history.³³ Because they approach the women's problem from radically different theoretical perspectives, Lesbians and Radical

32. Midge Decter provides us with the contrast to pseudo-radical infantilism. This is her image of the mature political agent, committed to liberal values, adopting ideas hesitantly, although with strong commitment, and willing to test these ideas in the "free market place" of the political arena. Such an agent is like Decter's description of the early Feminists who "...were forced not only to demand the vote, but to establish in theory their right to it, as they did their right to be educated, to own property, to run for public office, or to sue someone in a court of law." (p. 52) Today's Feminist plunges herself into an ideology without reservation and pulls out of politics; ideas do not guide political action but serve as a means for avoiding responsibility and power.

33. Compare this with the position Sidney Abbott and Barbara Love express in Sappho Was a Right-On Woman (New York: Stein and Day, 1973): "Under present conditions, a Feminist may well ask: Is heterosexuality a valid life-style? Feminists

Feminists and Friedan can scarcely communicate. Unwilling to accept - or even to consider - the possibility that men might have power over women,³⁴ Friedan focuses on the eradication of continuing discriminatory practises that impede woman's achievement in the male sphere. Her theory of status inconsistency is not a theory of power; there are no power relations which prevent the shift from femaleness to "humanness." Neither capitalism nor patriarchy are considered as possibly providing the structural underpinnings to the "problem without a name." Lacking a theory of power, Friedan casts Radicalesbians as pseudoradical infants and ignores Marxist analysis entirely.

Friedan's castigation of radical women flows from her fear that the media will identify the Movement with these individuals rather than with its "responsible" members, and that identification with man-hating will drive other women away. There is validity in Friedan's position - few women can afford to adopt man-hating as a practical life posture (and man-hating may not be part of a developed moral point of view) - but to castigate those on the outer fringe as infants and CIA agents makes a mockery of political ideology and serves to drive a wedge between left and center of the Movement, playing on women's fears of their own

who cannot tolerate traditional male dominance have a good reason to see heterosexuality as masochistic and Lesbianism as rational." (p. 152)

34. Whether this power takes the form of a sex-class or sex-caste system is one of the more interesting debates taking place in the Movement on the level of explanatory theory.

sexuality. What we ought to do is to look carefully at Radicalesbian analysis (and the Radical Feminist tradition) in terms of both explanatory theory and level of moral development. As I shall indicate below, there are problems with the analyses on both counts, but I suggest that because they move beyond liberalism, persons like Friedan are bound to have trouble coming to terms with them and to reject them out of hand.

I.c. Bitchiness as a justification for feminism

While it is hardly likely that any political activist would define her own actions as the irrational outburst of frustrated desire, there are those who do justify their feminism as an assault on the social constraints which limit "authentic" human activity. If Midge Decter's critique of contemporary American feminism rests on the belief that women are suffering the ill-effects of anomie, then Germaine Greer's The Female Eunuch is a glorification of anomie as a radical alternative to the constraints of liberal society and as a route to "authenticity."³⁵

Greer's conception of liberation flows out of an image of the autonomous person and a view of the proper relation between persons and society which is indebted to the True Believer model, while at the same time arriving at a radically

35. This discussion of Greer ought not to be taken to imply that there are no pure Hoffer-type True Believers in the Women's Movement. What I want to do here is to illuminate the ways in which fundamental theoretical assumptions delimit political strategies and conceptions of liberation.

different image of 'liberated' life. Essentially what Greer does is to throw out the contrast model of liberal rationality and bourgoise conformity and opt for anomic freedom.

Greer's model of the autonomous person is one in whom mind and body, reason and passion, thought and action are united. She is critical of any separation of these elements of human personality, especially separations which appear in the male-female dichotomy. What is interesting, however, is that Greer clearly thinks that all social constraints maintain this separation, despite her appearing to suggest a radical alternative.

Anything which separates mind and body, reason and passion, thought and action constitutes an injury to persons. The male-female polarity constitutes such an injury. This polarity is the product of culture and socialization. Woman is deeply embedded in a conventional social order which dehumanizes her. For instance, in learning a language, woman learns the weapons of self-abuse; language constructs for her a reality of shame and self-loathing. Faced with this abuse, woman abdicates even conventional responsibility and retreats to an asocial world of phantasy - a private woman's culture in which resentment becomes a way of life, in which frigidity and verbal assault become the real weapons in a battle of the sexes. Yet it is these women, women who destroy both their men and themselves, whom Greer expects to free themselves.

The question is how is a radical transformation of woman's consciousness to take place. Unfortunately, her socialization bodes poorly for her becoming an authentic actor. The Female Eunuch is a de-sexualized person, civilized, repressed; if sexual energy is life, then civilization is death, socialization the destruction of persons. Compared to the child's existence, the socialized adult's life is clearly impoverished.

The newborn baby is not conscious of any distinction between himself and everything he sees. He is first conscious of his ego when some wish of his is not gratified, and by frustration and confusion he finds the difference between himself and his mother. Thus the first act of the ego is to reject reality, to adopt an inimical and anxious attitude to it. This sense of separateness and limitation inside the self is carefully fostered in our culture, to become the basis of our egoistic morality, which acts not from understanding and feeling the repercussions of acting upon the community because of the continuity between the self and the rest, but by laws and restrictions self-imposed in a narcissistic way.³⁶

Greer here offers a useful critique of conventional morality, but her argument is undermined by her theory of moral development. In the first stage of development, according to Greer the child introjects parental values in order to get what s/he wants. In the second stage, children - especially male children who are more encouraged to break from parents - develop independence and some level of autonomy; Greer even goes so far as to mention the importance of group activity in the development of male children. For girls, however, the only

36. Germaine Greer, The Female Eunuch (New York: Bantam Books, 1970), p. 71. (Underlining mine.)

free experiences are in school, and while these do create contradictions and possibilities, the effects of freedom are largely eradicated during puberty when social pressures result in internalized repressive norms. The Female Eunuch is created.

Lacking a theory of moral development which moves beyond repression and the creation of egoism, Greer can only offer women a solution which requires that they step outside their socialization and refuse to obey their own internalized constraints.³⁷ "Eternal Eros is imprisoned now in the toils of the sadomasochistic symbiosis, and if we are to rescue him and save the world we must break the chain."³⁸ Now there do seem to me to be certain problems in this "chain-breaking," especially for the deeply repressed Female Eunuch. But Greer thinks she has resolved any tensions by pointing to the remnants of childishness in women. This is important since it is the child - and not the mature adult - who provides Greer with her contrast model of the free agent (with a touch of rationality added).

Greer's notion of "womanpower" rests on this faith in woman's childlike, passionate nature. Since her socialization is more limited than males - because she is more isolated

37. It is important to note the distinction between repression and oppression. Repression is something one does to oneself - albeit within the context of a social life; oppression is something someone else does to you - it implies politics, or power relations.

38. Greer, The Female Eunuch, p. 99.

from social life - she retains a degree of contact with a world that more rational males have lost. Although "... woman's oceanic feeling for the race has little opportunity for expression," ³⁹ this quality - which is dampened down and perverted into male egoism - is what a humanist revolution can be built upon. Freeing woman from social constraint frees up the "natural instinct" for humanity which under- ⁴⁰girds Greer's dream of a more communal social life.

Greer seems to want things any number of ways at the same time. Woman is destroyed by her socialization - de-sexualized - but she is salvageable by alienation from social life. Greer sees hope in woman's isolation in the nuclear family, isolation from the social pressures which lead men to conform to the reality principle, isolation from development as a social being. But Greer ignores repression in the family and the intricate ways in which family and culture, work-family-culture, sex and family are interwoven. Her focus on sexuality as the energizing force in Women's Liberation ignores the non-sexual aspects of human life and female personhood. She ignores the relation between familial repression and oppression in the economic sphere, and the possible ways in which sexual repression - which may indeed produce a sexual division of labor - is implicated in other human activities - socialization of children, work-life, etc. In other words, Greer ignores politics.

39. Ibid., p. 115.

40. This assumes that persons have a natural instinct for community and that this instinct can be freely pursued.

Her faith in woman's passionate nature undergirds Greer's rejection of politics and Feminist analysis in favor of doing one's own thing, of "acting freely." Greer's sweeping indictment of the Women's Movement rests on the anarchistic, individualist conception of autonomy which she deploys to justify her own flouting of convention and constraint. She is critical of analysis which she argues arises from a warped experience, which is "...devised by minds diseased by the system...."⁴¹ But one wonders if Greer really means to argue that some sort of truth, or objectivity, is possible if one frees oneself from social constraint, if one de-socializes oneself.

If analysis - and I would insist, the emotions - flow out of one's life experiences, then feminist analysis must flow out of the warped human experiences of women. I fail to see how Greer herself has been freed from her own peculiar life experiences. She is admittedly an exception - and rather proud to be one - a woman trained as a man, able to "get ahead" to "make it" in both senses of that phrase in a man's world. While she does seem to develop an analysis of woman's condition and to offer a strategy for changing that condition - women should form solidarity groups organized around foodshopping, laundry and childcare (!), reject violence and all forms of male behavior - but one gets the vivid impression that these suggestions fail to take root in

41. Greer, The Female Eunuch, p. 316.

Greer's own life. Her own personal experiences surely lead her to treat these suggestions as secondary to the primary thrust of liberating women by "...replacing... compulsiveness and compulsion by the pleasure principle.... The essence of pleasure is spontaneity....[which] means rejecting the norm, the standard that one must live up to and establishing a self-regulating principle."⁴²

But there are tremendous problems with this suggestion. First, Greer lacks an explanation of how women can free themselves to be spontaneous; her understanding of woman's oppression is inadequate. There are statements like: "Women must reject their role as principal consumers in the capitalist state." Yet no links are drawn between consumption, capitalism, and sexual repression. Greer argues that "Women must have room and scope to devise a morality which does not disqualify her from excellence, and a psychology which does not condemn her to the status of a spiritual cripple...."⁴³ but one wonders how the pleasure principle is to serve as a guide to the new morality. It seems that Greer must move in the direction of hedonism - like the child whose wants (or pleasures) are thwarted by parental demands and who rebels against parental injunctions, Greer's autonomous agent rebels against social constraint in pursuit of her own wants. But if our "wants" are somehow rooted in our social life, how can they be pure and "authentic?"

42. Ibid., p. 347.

43. Ibid., p. 119.

How can they form the basis for truly human activity? Surely children are not always kind, considerate and humane; why assume that the child-like woman will be?

Civilization must be rejected; women are called upon to begin all over again, as if they could, under anomic conditions. Normlessness becomes the condition of human 'freedom;' the first requisite of moral action is rejection of all existing moral injunctions. But once existing norms are rejected, how is one to construct a society within which authentic action is possible? (Note that Greer has no criteria for deciding which, if any, existing moral injunctions might be worth retaining.) Greer suggests that such a society could be built on love, defined as follows.

The proper subject for love is one's equal, seeing as the essence of love is to be mutual, and the lesser cannot produce anything greater than itself.... It is the only foundation for viable social structures, because it is the manifestation of common good.⁴⁴

This passage sounds a good deal like the respect for persons which undergirds the Moral Agent model, but, while Greer is careful to show how love becomes perverted in patriarchal society, she is not terribly cautious in her description of the type of social arrangements which would allow love to flourish. Her vision of a Calabrian commune is complete with peasant family performing maintenance and child-care duties thus freeing up her "brilliant" women friends to both reproduce themselves and remain liberated from child-rearing.

⁴⁴. Ibid., p. 330.

Certainly there are problems with this image of the liberated life, especially for the "local family" who work house and garden.

Greer fails to show what these love relations will look like; will they be relations without conflict, relations in which there is no need for principles of choice because all wants are so harmoniously conjoined? How will these love relations ramify into the economy, how will they form the basis for an unexploitative economic life? What is the relationship between the personal and the political for Greer? How is love to rejoin the polarized sexes? (The assumption that the sexes are polarized is open to critical scrutiny; one wonders how persons can be minds without bodies, reasoning and impassionate, etc.) Greer argues that love will bring "...the cunt into its own..." and "...humanize⁴⁵ the penis, take the steel out of it and make it flesh again." Despite her castigation of women, despite her own sense of superiority to other women, Greer sees woman as more human than men, and therefore proposes feminizing power hungry males. This is an interesting proposition, but one which does not rest firmly on an image of the social arrangements under which this could occur.

Greer's argument for a new woman, for a new morality (and for a new man) is both ahistorical and asocial - it assumes that woman can stand outside her culture and develop

45. Ibid., p. 338.

something entirely "new" and "free" and thoroughly unconstrained. Morality is total freedom; there is no sense of obligation, no sense that persons' wants may conflict and that we may need some criteria for choosing among them. Greer's failure to explicate a new morality lies in her attempt to couple an unalienated notion of personhood with a hedonistic, relativistic morality. This combination will just not wash since it fails to flesh out the conditions under which unalienated personhood can be achieved. Nor does it lay out guidelines for choosing among social institutions and for justifying political actions. Women should just do their own thing.

Germaine Greer has not been hedged in by social convention; she prides herself on her fortuitious escape from woman's lot: "...a Negro who cannot do the lindy-hop or⁴⁶ sing the Blues...." Nor has she suffered sex discrimination in non-sexual spheres. "As an academic, I daresay I have found [an alternative to the drudgery of woman's work.] I do receive equal pay. I was appointed in preference to male competition and nothing can prevent me from being promoted in⁴⁷ the natural course of events." Greer is her own best approximation of the autonomous person - flouter of convention, flaunter of her sexuality, unmarried, undisciplined, and rather scandalous. One may well wonder how applicable this model is to the average British - or American - housewife.

46. Ibid., p. 111.

47. Ibid., p. 139.

To summarize, theorists in the True Believer mode fail to adequately comprehend the Women's Movement because they lack both an adequate explanation of woman's oppression and a fully developed moral perspective from which to criticize existing social practises. Theorists like Germaine Greer begin to understand that there are power relations in our society which need to be understood, and she is critical of existing moral rules; yet she lacks a developed perspective from which to arrive at an alternative morality. She is at once progressive and retrogressive. She emphasizes the freedom side of morality or autonomy to the extent of losing sight of the person as a social being with obligations and commitments to others, a being who requires certain kinds of human relationships in order to grow and flourish. Theorists like Decter and Friedan err in the opposite direction, emphasizing the obligation side of morality to the exclusion of critical consciousness. Both accept an explanatory theory which sees societies ranging between anomic chaos and integrated pluralism, an explanatory theory which blinds them to alternative possibilities. Decter and Friedan also lack a theory of power relations, a theory which could link socialization to the distribution of burdens and benefits.

II. An alternative image of rational feminism

The Moral Agent model outlined in Chapter III provides the theoretical foundation for an approach to political

action and an understanding of the Women's Movement which is more fruitful than the accounts offered above. Although proponents of these accounts would claim to incorporate the arguments of each of the others, I would argue that the Moral Agent model aids us in making up for the deficiencies of the True Believer model, deficiencies which have to do with understanding the distinctions made in goals and justifications of feminist action. The approach to political action which I have labeled the Moral Agent model assumes that feminism varies with historical time and place, that motives and the language in which motivation is couched changes also, and that motives are not abstract and universal but rather develop over time. This model also provides a framework for an understanding of how the image of rational action outlined above itself flows from the theorists' own ideological commitments and stage of moral development.

I want to suggest that the Moral Agent model is a more fruitful approach to understanding the Women's Movement because it does several important things. First, it rests on a social and historical perspective on ideology, and on persons. Second it flows from a more adequate explanatory theory. And third, it is rooted in a more developed morality.

No social movement can be explained by a one-dimensional theory. Different motivations and justifications can be found in any movement both during the same historical period and as the movement develops over time. One needs to understand

these changing justifications - as they find expression in movement ideology - to understand the changing nature of the movement. Some form of a ⁴⁸verstehen approach needs to be adopted in order to understand a social movement since very different actions and very different futures flow out of different actors' conceptual frameworks. If a group of persons engages in action, they must have ideas - unless one wants to argue that political action is a product of material forces alone. I have assumed that this is not the case.

Out of different feminist critiques flow different strategies for social change; these critiques in turn flow out of different life experiences which produce different understandings and evaluations of sex oppression. If the analyst does not share these understandings and evaluations, s/he is necessarily going to commit mistakes in categorization (so long as the actor is not engaged in pure rationalization). S/he will misconceive the action because his/her categories will guide perception in terms of his/her own understanding. Now it may well be accurate to portray some feminists as seeking to escape from freedom, or, on the contrary, as seeking to redress inequalities within the confines of an established procedure for deciding the legitimacy of claims. But this cannot account for those feminists who may be developing new moral ideas - who may be extending the notion of 'liberation' in new directions, not out of anomy but out

48. For a defense of verstehen as an empirical methodology, see Arthur diQuattro, "Verstehen as an Empirical Concept, Sociology and Social Research 57 (October 1972), 32-41.

of having experienced egalitarian relationships and
 shring developing meanings.⁴⁹ Of the modes of explanation
 of political action which were developed in Chapters II and
 III, I would argue that the second is the more fruitful
 since it permits us to see and understand actions to which
 the first is blind.

To meet the requirements of the Moral Agent mode
 of analysis, an explanation of Feminism has to do several
 things. It has to treat persons as social and historical
 beings whose needs change over time, and who have the
 capacity for development - who can, in freedom, create
 themselves. It needs to treat persons as having feelings
 and ideas, some of which are more developed than others,
 but all of which are part of being human. It has to treat
 persons as capable of entering into egalitarian relations,
 relations which are rewarding and liberating for all
 parties - as capable of having social interests and moving
 beyond alienation. And it has to treat persons as having
 both the capacity for feeling indignation when others are
 injured, and for feeling warmth and trust. In other
 words, the explanation needs to treat persons from the
 moral point of view described in Chapter III.

⁴⁹. A pamphlet published by the Women's Liberation Basement
 Press clearly points up the importance of restructuring
 human relationships in order for women to develop their con-
 sciousness. "The Small Group, Three Articles by Lynn O'Connor,
 Pam Allen, Liz Bunding," (Berkeley: Women's Liberation Base-
 ment Press, no date). The small group plays a vital role in

Explanation in the Moral Agent mode also develops an alternative image of 'liberation' based not only on this developed moral perspective but on an explanatory theory linked to the idea of alienation. Although it would require another dissertation to do justice to the notion of 'liberation' I use here, I would like to rest my case for an alternative image of liberation without too much argumentation on the Marxist concept alienation. The alienated person is one who is separated from her species being - for example, a women, privatized and individualized in a home which is no longer a relationship of social beings but is more and more a fragmented, individualized, alienated relationship, is an alienated being. Alienation is another way of describing non-reciprocal, inegalitarian, egoistic relationships. In contrast, the dis-alienated person is a cultural being, a social being who creates herself consciu through action rather than being created by physical or economic need. She is autonomous, de-individualized and social, as contrasted to self-interested and privatized. The image of the liberated woman is a person in whom culture and the expansion of human activity or choice supercedes nature through transformations of all spheres of woman's oppression and exploitation, making possible an autonomous, social life. If Piaget is correct, this dis-alienation requires reciprocal, egalitarian, social relationships. Human liberation involves a developmental tool in the Movement. See also Pamela Kearon, "Power as a Function of the Group," Notes, 2nd Year, pp. 108-110.

the realization of female liberation through the eradication of all oppressive and exploitative conditions.

What we could ask now is what exactly is it that makes for female alienation in our society. It is around this question that many of the hottest debates in the Women's Movement have revolved, particularly debates between Marxists and Radical Feminists.⁵⁰ I am not so much interested in the fine points of this debate - although this is certainly essential in terms of developing an adequate explanatory theory - as I am in developing a sense of the way in which Feminist ideas have developed dialectically over time.

What I propose to do now is to look at several Feminist analyses in terms of whether they satisfy the requirements of the Moral Agent mode. Each of the analyses laid out below moves beyond explanation in the True Believer mode, but I shall suggest that some remain relatively inadequate as examples of the Moral Agent mode, either because they fail to adopt an adequate explanatory theory or to rest on a fully developed moral perspective, or both.

50. A reader might note that I have not included any of the classical Marxist statements on women's oppression or any contemporary Trotskyite statements. This is an intentional oversight. Had I been primarily concerned with explanatory theory, both would have been included. But since my primary concern is with the dialectical development of Feminist ideas today, I selected material which was both contemporary and which presented problems in both explanatory theory and level of moral development. Marxist perspectives are covered in my treatment of Juliet Mitchell. I am more interested in patterns of ideological change than I am in specific explanatory theories.

The Radical Feminist branch of the Women's Movement does move in the direction of meeting these requirements especially as it moves beyond liberal equality of opportunity to an understanding of the relationship between patriarchy and alienation. The alienation which flows out of patriarchy and which is embedded in sex roles finds its expression in woman as "other," unable to name herself and to engage in freely chosen activity.

While I do not want to suggest that Radical Feminism is a monolithic political position lacking in internal debate and controversy, I think that Shulamith Firestone's The Dialectic of Sex is the classic statement of this position. Firestone's book is an attempt to synthesize Marx and Freud. She begins with the Marxist notion of alienation as separation, but she finds the roots of this alienation not in production but in reproduction, in sexual dualism. Out of this biological dualism flows an ideological superstructure which is also divided into two spheres - the female Aesthetic Mode and the male Technological Mode - and a division of labor into men's work and women's work. Both ideology and work-life are a reflection of the biological dualism which for Firestone produces woman's oppression.

Woman's reproductive capacity is the root of her oppression. In order to achieve female liberation, then reproduction must be brought under control. To do this,

women must seize control of the Technological mode and use it to end the oppressiveness of child-bearing and the alienated life built upon it.

But Firestone also offers what she claims is a Freudian interpretation of the family as the source of the "psycho-dynamics of power." This psychodynamics, which is also rooted in the biological division of labor, gives rise to all power relations - age, race, class, etc. To end oppression, then, women must work to eradicate the biological family. Biology is doubly damned.

What we need to ask is whether this analysis is an adequate expression of the Moral Agent mode. I think that there are several glaring problems which prevent classifying Firestone as a Moral Agent theorist. First, Firestone lacks a clear image of the person as social and historical being. Biology is abstracted out of social relations and assumes the status of first cause; it has no history, no social specificity. Reproduction is always oppressive. Since women are always biologically female, they appear as static images in history. Changes in female oppression occur through the mechanism of technology rather than through the conscious intervention of human actors. ⁵¹ This tech-

51. Firestone calls her theory a "dialectic of sex," a problematic identification with Marxist epistemology at best. Juliet Mitchell criticizes her for being far more a "materialist" than an historical materialist, far more a dualist than a dialectician - both valid criticisms.

nologism creates problems for Firestone's understanding of the role of ideology in social change. Although Firestone does attempt to illustrate the development of feminist ideology from 19th Century Women's Rights to 20th Century Radical Feminism, there is an unresolved tension here. The 20th Century resurgence of Feminism is cast as "...the inevitable female response to the development of a technology capable of freeing women from the tyranny of their sexual-reproductive roles - both the fundamental biological condition itself, and the sexual class system built upon, and reinforcing, this biological condition."⁵² But if feminism is a response to technology, how is it to capture technology for its own purposes? How are purposes determined?

In her move away from female oppression and towards a concern for the oppression of all persons, Firestone reduces all oppressions to one form - the psychodynamics of sexual power. She rejects socialist analysis as "not radical enough" because it fails to root oppression in sexuality (indeed, this is an inadequacy of classical Marxism), and because "...it does not relate the structure of the economic class system to its origins in the sexual class system, the model for all other exploitative systems, and thus the tapeworm that must be eliminated by any true revolution."⁵³ In pressing the Feminist call for a move from the "personal to the political,"

52. Shulamith Firestone, The Dialectic of Sex (New York: Bantam Books, 1971), p. 31.

53. Ibid., p. 37.

Firestone defines the personal as both the model for the political and as the cause of the political. She is not really clear which it is to be, nor is she clear on how the sex and political class systems interrelate dialectically. Her analysis is uni-dimensional and mono-causal rather than one which captures the complexity of human existence. She has reduced life to biology; for example, she offers a rather lengthy discussion of racism in which she reduces racial oppression to "sexism in the family of man." Here she reaches out to Blacks in an attempt to understand the linkages between various forms of oppression, but she does it in a way which delegitimizes important differences among these. This is a naive "totalism."⁵⁴ To say that oppressions are linked is not necessarily to say that they all flow from the same source, and that is what Firestone has done.

Finally, Firestone has problems with the requirement of respect for persons, for their capacity as feeling, responsible agents with the potential for development. It seems to me that any argument which rests on technology does two things - first, it denies human beings a central place in history, a responsibility for their lives; second, it denies them the rich, varied and often painful feelings they experience in a life whose problems are not always amenable to technical solutions. Are the problems which confront

⁵⁴. Juliet Mitchell in Woman's Estate (New York: Pantheon Books, 1971), uses this term to denote an analysis which expands upon one form of oppression as the root of all others.

women as persons resolvable solely through a technology which eradicates the biological roots of oppression? To argue that they will is to ignore the fact that woman is more than a biological being. She is the person who has had primary responsibility for child-rearing and this is more than a biological function. It is a role which has profound implications not only for women but for children as well. Women have had a unique relationship to children and this has created needs (I want to be terribly clear that this need is not "maternal instinct"), needs which any proposal for social change must take into account.

We need to ask whether Firestone's proposals adequately deal with these needs, including children's needs for the conditions which promote their development. Firestone's technological solution seems to usher in an era of baby farms and child-rearing by "experts." She argues that children are oppressed by patriarchy - economically and physically dependent, deprived of their sexuality, repressed in their daily lives, but will technology and entry into work-life resolve these problems and encourage their flourishing as full human beings? Firestone says that ghetto kids are freer - freer in their sexuality, which is "groovy" but is sexuality all there is to human development? Firestone has failed to come to grips with either woman's or children's needs regarding child-rearing.

And her theory of sexual 'liberation' raises serious

questions as to where men will be in the liberated society. One wonders whether Firestone sees men as having a capacity to develop, and therefore deserving certain types of treatment. Firestone does not want for women what men now have - she does not want equal opportunities to achieve in a man's world; indeed, the man's world - i.e., the capitalist class system - is vehemently rejected as a reflection of man's need for power. But does she want men? At first reading, it seems that the goal is the reintegration of the male-female duality into a unified whole - "...reintegrating the personal with the public, the subjective with the objective, the emotional with the rational - the female principle with the male."⁵⁵ But one is left with a nagging feeling that Firestone thinks men essentially unsalvageable, that they are inherently flawed.

Unlike economic class, sex class sprang directly from a biological reality: men and women were created different, and not equally privileged.⁵⁶

Aside from the dubious assumption that privilege is biological and not social, we need to ask, if oppression is so clearly rooted in biology, must one eradicate biology before one can eliminate any of the forms of oppression, and, if male privilege is biological, is there any basis for rational discourse between male and female in the process of change?

In arguing that biology causes oppression, Firestone verges on an argument quite similar to Steven Goldberg's in

55. Firestone, The Dialectic of Sex, p. 210.

56. Ibid., p. 8.

The Inevitability of Patriarchy, except that she thinks that Culture can supercede Nature if women organize to gain control of technology. Indeed at one point Firestone does say that men cannot love - perhaps because of "...Male hormones??"⁵⁷ Because she works from a natural dualism, Firestone cannot account for how it might be possible to humanize the male. If maleness means power and femaleness means non-power, how are the non-powerful to achieve power and what effects might this have on the presently powerful? How can the female principle humanize the male principle when both are biologically determined? A dichotomized world does not carry within it the seeds of either its own destruction or development.

A logical extension of Firestone's position is the Radicalesbian alternative.⁵⁸ If the psychodynamics of power accurately accounts for man's power hunger, and if the family is rooted in biology, since we have neither the technological means of eradicating biology nor the political power to control and determine technology, female liberation can be achieved by no longer relating to men.

A Feminist politics is necessary only where there is power, and there is power only where there are men.⁵⁹ Consider the following long passage from Jill Johnston's Lesbian Nation.

57. Ibid., p. 135.

58. Not all Radical Feminists adopt Lesbianism. There has been much debate in the Movement as to whether Gay Women are a radical Feminist vanguard, whether one needs to be Gay in order to be a Feminist, whether Lesbianism is necessarily

Reparations. Child Care and Equal Pay and Abortion Rights. The victims are people being held down (women are still down) and the debate is about shortening their sentence somehow....I don't relate to the subject very well. I'm certain this is because as a realesbian my position as a woman or victim was relatively remote like that of a ghetto minority to the center of action, I mean there are varying degrees of intimacy in relation to the oppressor and child care and equal pay and abortion rights are the issues based on the greatest intimacy and such intimacy and such issues no longer concerned me personally and my position in fact was to disengage from the oppressor such that these issues would no longer be issues but practical problems in a woman's society. My message in other words was all about women and not women in relation to men.⁶⁰

Alienation and oppression are rooted in a male-dominant sexual dualism. Without men, women would suffer no injuries, there would be no political issues because biology would not be implicated in power relations. Without men, women could enjoy authentic, loving, egalitarian relationships.⁶¹ Thus, the Radicalesbian position. But is this a pseudoradical, infantile position as Friedan suggests in her offenseive against the Lavender Menace? That depends on whether the position flows from a developed moral perspective and rests on an adequate explanatory theory.

Unfortunately, Johnston falls short on both accounts. Although she is critical of Greer's blatant heterosexuality, radical.

59. Or where Lesbians pattern their relations on the heterosexual.

60. Jill Johnston, Lesbian Nation, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), p. 33.

61. Whether Lesbian separatism is a political position is debatable. Decter may be correct in chastizing Lesbians for

Johnston often sounds very much like Greer. She, like Greer, is at once progressive and retrograde. She proposes Lesbianism as the only route to true equality - "The lesbian is the woman who has experienced real equality in relationships in which no party has the biological or social advantage which characterizes heterosexual coupling"⁶² - as the means for abolishing sexism in truly egalitarian peer relations.⁶³ But Johnston's focus on equality, on peer group relations, seems tacked on to an account of a rather uninvolved, uncommitted, inequalitarian personal life.

Perhaps Johnston is at a point of transition from one mode of consciousness to another, but she has not yet made the transition a way of organizing her own life. Moreover, her explanatory theory - which I would argue flows directly from her life-long lesbianism, her relesbianism - inadequately accounts for women's oppression and also establishes a view of men which fails to treat them as persons. "It is difficult to conceive of an 'equal' sexual relationship between two people in which one member is the 'biological aggressor.'"⁶⁴

being anti-political. But if one engages in political struggle to establish the conditions for female love, then Lesbianism is strongly political. Moreover, if politics is broadened to include egalitarian, participatory and liberating activity, then Lesbianism may be political in this sense.

62. Johnston, Lesbian Nation, p. 157.

63. Ibid., p. 178.

64. Ibid., p. 154.

Even with liberal reforms, "There'll still be a man. And biology is definitely destiny."⁶⁵

Johnston has felt her own oppression most vividly as a biological being, or, rather, as an individual in rebellion against her biologically determined identity. Out of this felt oppression flows an analysis which sees persons almost entirely as biological creatures: Man's biology leads to evil, woman's to good. Eradicate male biology, eradicate evil - a simple solution to the world's woes which flows from an inadequate explanatory theory. But this is not to say that Johnston is a pseudoradical infant. Rather, I would argue that she is struggling with a terribly difficult transition from her own individual sense of sexual oppression to an understanding of human oppression. Nor would I label her a man-hater. Her position viz men is more like the righteous indignation which arises when we see someone as responsible for injuring us. Yet one wonders whether she thinks men could avoid doing this injury. Homosexual men can; Gay men have abrogated their male prerogatives and their position of power. So at least some men are capable of developing, at least in the direction Johnston sees as development. But can men and women develop in heterosexual relationships? Johnston certainly claims not.

I think Johnston's great failure lies in her explanatory theory. Her move has been from gayness to feminism and her political theory is couched in these terms. By defining

65. Ibid., p. 175.

woman totally in terms of her sexuality, Johnston fails to make important links with other modes of oppression and to work out a political strategy for change.

In a sense, Johnston is right when she says, "We don't have to have anything to do with men at all. They've taken excellent care of themselves....The liberation of women is for women, not for men."⁶⁶ Certainly, women have to avoid a naive altruism and certainly there are problems in working with men for female liberation. No group which has been advantaged by inequality is going to readily give up its prerogatives, especially when these satisfy deep-seated psychological needs. Moreover, female liberation does have something to do with women acting for themselves, but we have already seen that such action can move beyond egoism and towards social interests.⁶⁷ Feminist consciousness does have to begin with woman's oppression, and woman's oppression is at least in part rooted in personal life,⁶⁸ but Johnston's

66. Ibid., p. 177.

67. Female liberation does have something to do with women no longer defining themselves in terms of men, no longer serving men and no longer allowing men to name them, to give them their identity. But as Anne Koedt points out, Radical-esbians continue to define woman in terms of who she sleeps with, no big change from heterosexual definitions. The goal, argues Koedt, is personhood, not homo-, hetero- or bisexuality.

68. The phrase the "personal to the political" is extremely fuzzy indeed. It simply demands clarification. For example, Johnston implies that sex relations are power relations - the is the political. Moving from the personal to the political, then, is understanding that one's inability to cope is not a personal problem but one rooted in a sex-caste system. Juliet Mitchell uses the same phrase to describe the move

dualism is too simple - man is bad, woman is good. Glorification of the victim inevitably fails to account for the negative effects of oppression on persons.

Woman is more than a sexual being. Johnston's analysis is non-contextual; there is no image of woman at work, no attempt to understand the relationship - if any- between woman's sexual alienation and her alienation as worker, either house-private or job-public. Without this context, it really does look like men and women have nothing in common, no shared alienation (although even this is experienced from different sexual perspectives). The personal may be the political, but there is still a world of work and public activity into which the personal feeds, a world of power, inequality, burdens and benefits, a world which vitally affects women.

Nor is there any consideration of woman as mother, of the particular relationship woman has had to socialization and the needs that this creates in both mother and child. Johnston has a tendency to define needs as biological. If technology has made reproduction outmodes, if we don't need men because they just aren't as essential to reproduction as we thought all along, what happens to men, what is the relationship between mother and child? If needs are social and historical, Feminism has to come to grips with

from consciousness of sex-private oppression - which she agrees is the first oppression women sense - to political consciousness or an understanding of the public-power relations within which sexual oppression is embedded. These are quite different interpretations and make for confusion in Feminist discourse.

needs which are embedded in parenthood and with heterosexuality as a need deeply embedded in all of us who are not "non-political" or realesbians.

Looking for first causes is always problematic. Certainly work life is vital to women; Lesbianism becomes a more viable life style (as most Lesbian activists are well aware) as women have opportunities to enter occupations which pay enough to support themselves and their children. Equal pay cannot be irrelevant to Lesbian women, nor is it possible to win the struggle for equal pay through separatism, unless one establishes totally self-supporting Lesbian work collectives. This has been done in several places, but I wonder how viable these can be on the mass level. We need to get clear on the relationship between woman's public work and her need for a man to support her and her children. We cannot avoid this issue by passing off woman's need for man as biologically outmoded. We also need to get clear on how people become heterosexual. They do, and this presents problems for any Lesbian strategy. We do have heterosexual needs, which - regardless of their no longer having biological roots, which is debatable - are needs nonetheless.

If the Radical Feminist and Radicalesbian perspectives fail to meet the requirements of the Moral Agent mode both in terms of explanatory theory and the requirements of morality, is there an analysis which does meet these requirements?

A possible candidate is Alice Rossi's conception of an-
 drogyny⁶⁹ or her "hybrid model of equality."⁷⁰ Rossi's plea is
 for a move beyond separate spheres for males and females and
 beyond equal opportunities for women in the man's sphere, and
 to an androgynous personhood. This personhood combines the
 human qualities found in both males and females.

By sex equality I mean a socially androgynous con-
 ception of the roles of men and women, in which they
 are equal and similar in such spheres as intellectual,
 artistic, political and occupational interests and
 participation, complementary only in those spheres
 dictated by physiological differences between the
 sexes. This assumes the traditional conceptions of
 masculine and feminine are inappropriate to the kind
 of world we live in in the second half of the twentieth
 century. An androgynous conception of sex role means
 that each sex will cultivate some of the character-
 istics usually associated with the other in traditional
 sex role definitions.⁷¹

Since it is sex-role socialization which stands in the way of
 androgyny, Rossi's call is for the re-socialization of persons
 into those character traits which would make it possible
 for them to develop their full human capacities.

Unlike Friedan, Rossi does not take the standard of
 human excellence to be male. She rejects the idea of equality
 as woman's entry into the man's world.

The assimilation model [of equality] makes an assumption
 that the institutional structure of American society,
 developed over decades by predominantly white Protestant
 males, constitutes the best of all possible worlds.
 Whether the call is to blacks or to women to join white

69. Alice S. Rossi, "Equality Between the Sexes: An Immodest Proposal," in Robert Jay Lifton, ed., The Woman in America (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964); pp. 98-143.

70. Alice S. Rossi, "Sex Equality: The Beginnings of Ideology," in Constantina Safilios-Rothschild, ed., Toward a Sociology of Women (Lexington: Xerox, 1972), pp. 344-353.

71. Rossi, "Equality Between the Sexes," p. 99.

men in the mainstream of American society, both racial integration and a feminist ideology accept the structure of American society as it now exists. The assimilation model rejects the psychological theses of innate racial or sex differences implicit in most versions of the pluralist model, but it accepts the social institutions formed by the ascendant group.⁷²

Woman is biologically different from man, but her particular capacities ought to be recognized and valued while some compensations might need to be made in order for her to develop fully in all spheres of human activity. But recognizing and valuing sexual differences is carefully distinguished from separate spheres, from what Rossi calls the "pluralist model of equality," and which is similar to the call for separate but equal educational facilities for the races. The standard of human excellence is not male; rather men have much to learn about their own personhood and have been equally injured by the pluralist model.

Rossi also works from a social and historical perspective on women. Biology has not always oppressed women in the same way. Rather the biological role of mother has taken on a new status in contemporary society. (One would wish that Rossi had developed this understanding more thoroughly and had dealt in more depth with the relationship between capitalism and biological oppression. This would clear the way for a more adequate understanding of the power relations which undergird sex-role social-

⁷². Rossi, "Sex Equality," p.351.

ization). "What has not been seen is the general point that for the first time in the history of any known society, motherhood has become a full-time occupation for adult women."⁷³ It is not biology or motherhood per se which oppresses women, but the social definition of woman as biological being, as mother. Full-time motherhood is injurious to women, it is injurious to children, and it excludes men from their full humanity. (Again, Rossi fails to consider who might benefit from this arrangement.)

Rossi, then, seems to satisfy the requirements of a developed moral perspective. Her arguments for female liberation are based on respect for persons as social and historical beings. But she clearly lacks an explanatory theory of how she came to this position and this in turn colors her image of the ways in which others' perceptions of themselves and society can be altered and serve as a base for social change. Rossi combines a developed moral point of view with an inductionist approach to socialization, and this will not do as analysis in the Moral Agent mode. For example, she argues that women who now challenge existing roles have been profoundly influenced by their fathers.

It is possible that those women who have led exciting, intellectually assertive and creative lives did not identify exclusively with their traditional mothers, but crossed the sex line and looked to their fathers as model sources for ideas and life commitments of their own. This is to suggest than an exclusively same-sex identification between parent

73. Rossi, "Equality Between the Sexes," p.106.

and child is no necessary condition for either mentally healthy or creative adults.⁷⁴

This image of the way in which healthy, creative adults may develop undergirds Rossi's claim that female liberation can only be achieved if children are exposed to new role models, models which expand their self-conceptions beyond traditional sex role stereotypes. This view of changing consciousness supports her call for greater male participation in the lives of their children and for more open role-socialization in the schools. Yet it fails to come to grips with how critical consciousness is possible. Is cross-pressuring, or exposure to male roles, enough to induce a critical perspective on social roles? Rossi's theory of socialization is rather more a variant of status inconsistency theory than a theory of radical criticism. Altering role models may help break down rigid sex-role identifications, but one wonders if this is all there is to critical consciousness. We have seen that the Piagetian image of socialization also depends on exposure to a variety of roles, but the important step is to move beyond role-taking to role-making. It is this step which requires critical consciousness, an ability to critically evaluate social roles and rules from the moral point of view, and makes possible demands for a more radical form of mutuality and egalitarianism than role-choosing can permit.

Finally, Rossi has failed to develop an adequate understanding of the power relations which undergird sex-role

⁷⁴. Ibid., p. 133.

socialization, and the interests which are served by this socialization. She begins to move in this direction in her critique of pluralist ideology which "...often disguises a social system in which one group dominates - the upper classes (white Anglo-Saxon Protestants) - and minority ethnic, religious or racial groups are confined to the lower classes."⁷⁵ And she begins to make links between work life and sexism.

Why does American society persist in maintaining erroneous myths concerning female sexuality, contrary to research evidence, as it does in urging women to believe their children's development requires their daily attendance upon them, again contrary to research evidence? I believe the answer lies in the economic demand that men work at persistent levels of high efficiency and creativity. To free men to do this requires a social arrangement in which the family system serves as the shock-absorbing handmaiden of the occupation system.⁷⁶

Rossi also recognizes that there are social handicaps like race and class, but she has not investigated the links between these and the handicaps of sex. She has not analyzed whether these phenomena are part of all industrial societies or whether they are particular to capitalism. Rossi, then, fails on the level of explanatory theory - in her explanation of critical consciousness and in her explanation of the sources of injury to women and to persons.

75. Rossi, "Sex Equality," p. 349.

76. Ibid., p. 350.

77. "Women in Science: Why so Few," in Constantina Safilios-Rothschild, Toward a Sociology of Women (Lexington: Xerox, 1972), pp. 141-153.

In her treatment of ideological development and in her explanation of female oppression, Juliet Mitchell moves beyond Rossi's explanatory inadequacies. Yet at the same time, Mitchell maintains a developed moral point of view, although some of the elements require more development.

Mitchell gives central place to ideological change in her discussion of contemporary Feminism. Only through analysis of the legitimizing functions of ideology, she says, can one begin to understand how persons alter their lives and circumstances. Ideology is a determinant in our lives, as important to understanding social change as is the economic substructure of classical Marxism. "The dominant ideological formation is not separable from the dominant economic one, but while linked, it does have a certain degree of autonomy and its own laws."⁷⁸ Understanding social change requires taking seriously this ideological autonomy and these "laws" of development.

Mitchell's own explanation of ideological change is identified by the short-hand phrase "the role of contradiction." At first inspection, her theory of contradiction appears to have much in common with Lenski's theory of status inconsistency. Women who experience different opportunities in different spheres of their lives - e.g., the opportunity for sexual freedom as contrasted to a limited occupational freedom - may make demands for freedom of choice in areas now closed. Or, using the language of relative deprivation,

⁷⁸. Mitchell, Woman's Estate, p. 156.

women who have the same education as men will expect the same social rewards and feel deprived when these are not forthcoming.

At first, Mitchell claims, the contradictions of capitalism are recognized by middle class women through the medium of bourgeois ideology.

With the ideology of equality...overt discriminatory practises come as a shock. The egalitarian ideology does not mask a gap between the 'reality' and the 'illusion offered, but on the contrary, is the way in which both the discrimination and the opposition to it is lived. The belief in the rightness and the possibility of equality that women share has enabled them to feel 'cheated' and hence has acted as a precondition of their initial protest.⁷⁹

Rebellion is at first a demand for simply more of what people already have; it is quantitative.⁸⁰ The women's rebellion initially asserts liberal values - the cult of individuality, of subjectivity, of personal freedom and choice, of doing one's own thing. First a demand for equality of opportunity, the Movement moves in the direction of subjective liberation a la Germaine Greer. But this direction is a false one since it is a bourgeois consciousness manipulable for capitalist purposes.

Late capitalist ideology precisely urges one to be free in faith, personal and individual emotion, and to think that one can be this without a socio-economic transformation.

Emotions cannot be 'free' or 'true' in isolation; they are dependent today on a social base that imprisons and

79. Ibid., pp. 40-41.

80. Ibid., p. 154.

determines them. The liberation of emotionality, as a transformation that apparently takes place on its own (within the superstructure alone) is impossible. Indeed, the belief in its possibility is an ironic self-parody.⁸¹

But how does bourgeois consciousness transform itself into radical consciousness; how does equality of opportunity or doing one's own thing become the equality of respect for persons? Mitchell describes this transformation as a change from the 'personal' to the 'political,' a move from subjective feelings of oppression, through individual and group solutions, through "totalism," to a unified analysis of oppression in all its forms, and to political solutions.⁸² This transition requires new conceptualizations, new cognitions.

81. Ibid., p. 38. Note the treatment of emotions as social.

82. Jean Elshtain's typology of Feminist strategies is useful here. Elshtain argues that Feminist strategies are of three types - personal (solutions at the individual level), sub-systemic (working it out in the family), and systemic (ranging from legal rights to demands for a radical restructuring of society). This is a fruitful way of looking at the change from the personal to the political, but one which runs into problems in clarifying the difference between reform and revolution. What we need is some way of distinguishing between a reactionary and a progressive change - one that is on the road to liberation and one that buys off dissident elements thus making capitalism, for example, operate more efficiently. There is also the problem that even a reactionary reform which pays women more - it is easier for capitalism to provide more pay than it is for it to provide more meaningful work - makes life somewhat easier for those who receive even limited benefits. One's judgments on these matters will in large part determine what actions one decides to support. Jean Elshtain, talk at a "Working Conference on Women," University of Massachusetts, Amherst, January 25, 1974. See also Sheila Rowbotham, Woman's Consciousness, Man's World for a discussion of some of the difficulties in staking out a

These new conceptualizations may come from other political movements. Since the Women's Movement does not take place in a cultural vacuum but in a pluralist society, there is opportunity to borrow from the experiences of others - from "...the 'politics of experience,' the spontanist methods of anarcho-syndicalism and the Situationists, the separatism of Black Power, the socialist theory of the unity of all oppressed peoples, the concept of itself as a grass-roots, potentially mass movement"⁸³ is developed. Women have to be ready to utilize these more radical analyses, however, and this is where Mitchell runs into some trouble.

Mitchell explains this readiness in terms of the middle class woman's training and experience in manipulating ideologies. She argues that in a pluralist society, one in which there are numerous contradictions, different spheres present radically different possibilities for freedom. Change may come about when persons become conscious of these contradictions and when ideas which flow from one can be utilized to criticize the other. To give two of Mitchell's own examples: Our society permits a great deal of freedom in the sexual sphere, and the idea of sexual freedom does contradict limits on freedom in other spheres. But the transference is not so simple as, say Germaine Greer thinks it is. Mitchell does not believe that freedom automatically ramifies into other spheres; sexual freedom, for instance is position on equal pay for equal work.

83. Mitchell, Woman's Estate, pp. 13-14.

too easily adapted to a consumption and fun ethics compatible with capitalism.⁸⁴ Second, bourgeois marriage is a free contract entered into by legal equals, but once married, women are immersed in a radically unequal division of labor - between home and "work," male and female - which contradicts the equality of the marriage contract, and in radically unfree sexual relations which contradict the freedom of romantic love. These contradictions form the basis of a dialectical process of change.

Middle class women are the first to become aware of these contradictions because they have had the greatest exposure to liberal ideology and because they have been educated to manipulate ideologies. Demands for social change flow out of the needs to which bourgeois ideology gives rise.⁸⁵ But Mitchell has yet to demonstrate how it is possible, or likely, that women who are trained to manipulate the concepts of bourgeois ideology will learn the concepts of a radical ideology.⁸⁶ Does she mean that the language of social change is a simple extension of the ideals of liberal society? There are parts of Mitchell's discussion which suggest this; e.g., her discussion of revolutionary demands as demands for what people already have only bigger and better.⁸⁷ If this

84. Ibid., p. 147

85. The ideology of the family - individualism and privacy - gives rise to needs which the family cannot meet.

86. Indeed, there may be negative consequences of liberal feminism. Middle class women may get what they want and reinforce much of the status quo.

87. Mitchell, Woman's Estate, p. 154.

If this is a variant of the Marxist "quantity into quality" thesis, it needs further development.

Mitchell sometimes seems to be arguing that radicalism is a simple unification of the liberal values freedom and equality, and that the language of liberalism can be used to express radical demands. Yet at the same time she gives us examples of several ideological developments in American feminism which can hardly be interpreted as liberal ideas - consciousness-raising (which does not take persons' wants as givens but assumes that persons can be moved to new levels of awareness through the revolutionary practise of "speaking bitterness" in words normally repressed by society);⁸⁸ male chauvinism and male supremacy (theories of sex-caste power); sexism and patriarchy (also theories of sex-caste and sex-class power); feminism (a call for a radical restructuring of social relations); separatism (the need to organize around specific oppressions without falling back on self-interest); collectivity and no-leadership structures (rejection of the implicit assumption that hierarchy is inevitable). One wonders if these are ideas that analysts in the True Believer tradition would find credible.

However, Mitchell's idea that change flows out of existing social arrangements is compatible with the case I have developed. Changed conceptions of justice or of liberation do flow out of bourgeois conceptions, at least in a bourgeois

88. Ibid., p. 62.

society. Moreover, Mitchell is quite clear that radical and bourgeois consciousness differ in terms of their recognition of interests.

Mitchell argues that at first feminist consciousness is self-interested. It flows out of the particular position of women in capitalist society and makes demands for women. Radical - or political consciousness - on the contrary, "responds to all forms of oppression."

If we simply develop feminist consciousness we will get not political consciousness, but the equivalent of national chauvinism among Third World nations or economism among working class organizations; simply a self-directed gaze, that sees only the internal workings of one segment; only this segment's self-interest.⁹⁰

Once feminist consciousness begins to seek an understanding of oppression as it finds meaning in a total social context, it moves beyond group interests to solidarity with all oppressed groups. This conceptual move is Mitchell's contribution to a developed moral perspective from which to understand the Women's Movement as it transforms itself from interest group to radical social movement, from egoistic group interests to the interests of persons in a just social order. While there may be problems with Mitchell's formulation of feminist ideology and with her analysis of the move from the personal to the political, the approach

89. Ibid., pp. 33-35.

90. Ibid., p. 94.

remains one of the best examples of the Moral Agent mode available in terms of this move beyond egoism and toward social interests.

Mitchell's explanation of changing consciousness is different from the one I support but the two are compatible. She does have some suggestions as to how moral consciousness might develop, but unfortunately she does not expand upon⁹¹ them. She discusses the role of consciousness-raising groups in the development of class consciousness and "total-⁹²ist" ideology. In the small, non-hierarchical group, women probe their personal oppression; out of this comes an awareness that they are oppressed as women, and analysis of the roots of this oppression follows. But why the small, non-hierarchical group? Is this simply a rhetorical stance? Mitchell is weak here and would be considerably aided by a developmental hypothesis. To understand how women's interests can develop without being diverted either by altruism (Friedan has recently come out against Women's Liberation and taken the stand that N.O.W. should fight for "human liberation") or "class" interest (certain radical-Lesbian positions which give men up as unsalvageable), requires a deeper analysis of the small group and these non-hierarchical relations, a more clearly developed hypothesis about how women, working together in egalitarian

91. It would be interesting to see where her Freudianism would lead her. Unfortunately, her second book, Psychoanalysis and Feminism (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974) is also disappointing.

92. Mitchell, Woman's Estate, p. 59.

relationships, may develop a consciousness that society impoverishes life for all persons and not just women.

I want to add an important caveat at this point and that is that the small, non-hierarchical group need not always contribute to human development. In discussing Piaget's focus on the peer group, many of my students point out that peer groups often have informal leadership structures, or even informal tyrannies - the big boys and the bullies. And as Jo Freeman has so cogently argued, structurelessness can often devolve into oligarchy.⁹³ This "tyranny of structurelessness has been noted and reflected upon by Movement members. It is indeed a problem; women bring the problems of the wider society with them to the small group and these can produce "ego-tripping" and petty tyranny. Yet consciousness of this dilemma of small group organization can lead to the establishment of procedures designed to avoid the worst excesses. Nor should it be implied that the idea of no-leadership structures has not been seriously thought through or does not require further analysis. Problems have arisen here as women develop leadership skills within the movement itself; often these women are rejected by other Movement members. There is no doubt that part of developing a moral perspective on female liberation involves working out these issues of

93. Jo Freeman, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," The Second Wave 2(1972):20-25,42.

informal oligarchy and the appropriate role of leadership in egalitarian relationships.

Mitchell has not dealt with either of these issues, yet she has contributed much to this moral perspective. Her own feminist ideology moves beyond individualism and self-interest to social interest, beyond equality of opportunity or hedonism to an alternative justification of feminist action. And her understanding that the progress of the movement is a transition from the personal to the political, from the "instinctual" to the "rational" seems to capture the idea of cognitive development I have been exploring in this dissertation - the move to new levels of reasoning can answer to the conflicts between one's needs as a person and the constraints of the existing social order.

In one sense Mitchell's analysis is compatible with the True Believer model. The "instinct of oppression" is the result of status inconsistency. The True Believer analyst can follow this argument and can also follow Mitchell into her discussion of individual anarchism. But once Mitchell moves to analysis of the Women's Movement as a critique of the limits of bourgeois ideology and posits alternative modes of social organization coupled with alternative moral constraints - the constraints of reciprocal, non-alienated feminist consciousness -

the True Believer analyst is bound to cry either "Utopianism" or "Ideology!" since the notion of interests upon which the alternative rests is alien to him or her.

Mitchell's analysis of the difficulties of raising women's consciousness is excellent. Her understanding of women's treatment of work life and the implications of this for class consciousness is a fruitful insight into the problems of raising the consciousness of working class women. So long as women enter the work force as individuals - to satisfy personal or family needs - they will continue to remain outside social relationships and consciousness will remain at a low level. Women's consciousness "...is determined outside the labour force; outside a situation of potential class-consciousness - it is determined in the home.⁹⁴ Within this home there are inherent contradictions, but so long as the home remains a privatized and individualized experience it cannot by itself provide the basis for political consciousness.⁹⁵ Women who have the opportunity to

94. Mitchell, Woman's Estate, p. 181.

95. Whether the family is a humanizing or de-humanizing institution is highly debatable. Some Feminists (e.g., Susan C. Bourque and Jean Grossholtz, "Politics as an Unnatural Practise: Political Science Looks at Female Participation," Politics and Society 4 /Winter 1974/:225-266) argue that women are more developed morally than men because of their rootedness in the family. Others find this proposition dubious at best on grounds similar to Mitchell's and with which I agree. The issue, however, is somewhat ill-met since it rests on different conceptions of morality. Indeed, women may have more "moral" character traits because they engage in social relations

participate in social relations will lead the feminist revolution since they will face and perceive the contradictions between the reality and ideal of the family.

But they will need an ideology to frame these contradictions; therefore, middle-class women, committed to realization of the bourgeois ethic for themselves and their families will by most likely to perceive these contradictions. For example, the ideology of the family, with its claims to

which are more loving, more personal, warmer - but that depends on whether one views morality as involving only character traits like compassion, or whether other traits like impersonality, discipline, etc. are central. On the other hand, if morality is a form of reasoning and if reasoning involves having experienced egalitarian relationships, can a family situation provide these relationships?

The tension between these two positions comes out clearly in Rowbotham's Woman's Consciousness, Man's World. She argues that in some ways the family is a better world because it is not caught up in the depersonalization of an industrialized, capitalist society. It is the site of love, warmth, humanism, and as such mitigates the evils of capitalism and makes life bearable. "The family is a place of sanctuary for all the hunted, jaded, exhausted sentiments out of place in commodity production. Chased out of the dominant mode of production where there is no room for emotion, such characteristics as love, tenderness, and compassion assume a mawkish guise from confinement....But this distortion of human relations still represents the only possibility of personal life." (p. 59) Yet at the same time woman confined in the family is deprived of the social relations out of which political consciousness develops. "The non-recognition of women's labour in the home leaves them with no sense of value as a group at all." (p. 69) Consciousness cannot be organized around nothingness. Privatized within the family, woman is "...rather like those mental patients and prisoners who are terrified to live without the safe and known routine of their institution.. This is our kind of 'institutionalization.'" (p. 79) Certainly this is not a firm foundation upon which to built an autonomous morality.

individualism and privacy is recognized by the middle class woman as a contradiction to the way she experiences the family and this gives rise to new consciousness. However, this analysis could be aided by an understanding of the ways in which different life experiences lend themselves to moral development, especially since working-class women too immediately experience the contradiction between family ideology and family reality. With a developmental hypothesis, we could begin to get at some of the difficulties in raising working-class consciousness not only in terms of the primary identification of working-class women in the home - for this identification also holds for most middle class women - but in the nature of the social relationships which working-class and middle class women experience. The radicalism of the early trade union women might then be understood as flowing not only from their excusion from the wife- mother-role, but from their opportunities for egalitarian relationships with other women in a work life structured somewhat differently from today's assembly line.⁹⁶ And the focus of much contemporary feminist

96. It would also help to account for the very radical position of women's trade unions in the 19th Century, especially as compared with the middle class movement which arose out of the abolitionist movement. Indeed, one might well wonder where we would be now if 19th Century feminism had picked up on the ideas coming out of trade-unionism rather than those of liberal abolitionism. See Emma Goldman's Living My Life (New York, Dover Publications, 1970) 1.

literature on personal rather than on work life is given theoretical support if it is here and not in work life that women experience some real freedoms - freedom in education, in control of sexuality and reproduction, and some real equality and sociality in relations with other women through the Women's Movement. And it is these relationships which establish the cognitive base for perceiving the contradictions inherent in family and work life.

The theory of contradiction, with its focus on the middle class woman at the nexus of bourgeois social contradiction, is open to serious criticism from both left and right. Yet it remains a serious attempt to explicate a changing ideological framework for political action and as such begins to meet the requirements of the Moral Agent mode. It is an attempt to understand how ideology can move beyond democratic-liberalism to an alternative conception of a just social order, and it is also a clear illustration of how one can understand and interpret less developed conceptual frameworks from the perspective of a more developed one.

Mitchell's concern for human freedom also satisfies the requirements of the Moral Agent mode. Woman, argues Mitchell, is unfree insofar as she is alienated - i.e., separated from her species being, from creative, purposive responsible activity - and she is alienated because her biology has become her definition.

Unlike her non-productive status, her capacity for maternity is a definition of woman. But it is only a physiological definition. Yet so long as it is allowed to remain a substitute for action and creativity, and the home an area of relaxation for men, women will remain confined to the species, to her universal and natural condition.⁹⁷

Woman is alienated in reproduction so long as her capacity for reproduction confines her to "...her universal and natural condition," removes her from the realm of choice and activity. She is alienated in her sexuality so long as there is a necessary link with reproduction. She is alienated in the socialization of children because "...her biological 'destiny' as mother becomes a cultural vocation...."

Biology undergirds woman's alienation only insofar as it is implicated in a specific social and historical reality. The biological function of maternity has been "...a universal, atemporal fact, and as such has seemed to escape the categories of Marxist historical analysis,"⁹⁸ but now that technology has made biology a potentially historical category, culture can supercede nature. Women now have the opportunity to develop in the realm of freedom, a realm which, while based on a technology which puts biology under her control, requires conscious intervention in history. Change is not accomplished through the deux ex machina of technology, but rather through woman's rational understanding of the way in which her oppression operates,

97. Mitchell, Woman's Estate, p. 109.

98. Ibid., p. 107.

particularly the way in which the structures of the family interrelate with the structures of capitalism. At present, woman is denied her personality through her definition as biological being - she is denied significance as a social, cultural, and historical being capable of creating herself through human activity. But she can gain personhood by coming to grips with this definition and challenging its roots in the unity of the family as a social structure.

The four elements of women's condition cannot merely be considered each in isolation; they form a structure of specific inter-relations. The contemporary family can be seen as a triptych of sexual, reproductive and socializatory functions (the women's world) embraced by production (the man's world) - precisely a structure which in the final instance is determined by the economy. The exclusion of women from production - social human activity - and their confinement to a monolithic condensation of functions within a unity - the family - which is precisely unified in the natural part of each function, is the root cause of the contemporary social definition of women as natural beings. Any emancipation movement must still concentrate on the economic element - the entry of women fully into public industry and the right to earn a living wage.....[But] reproduction, sexuality, and socialization also need to be free from coercive forms of unification.....⁹⁹

Woman's freedom requires a move away from the natural and towards the social and it is this move which undergirds her potential equality as person.

We have to read into Mitchell somewhat to see what she envisages as an egalitarian society, but her socialist stance does require a leveling of income rather than equality of opportunity to enter into the competition for present

rewards. Persons deserve a "living wage." They also deserve equal opportunity, but these are not opportunities for positions in the existing stratification system, but rather opportunities to develop their full human capacities. This requires that they be implicated in the kinds of personal and public activities which encourage development. And that can be done only by ending the division of labor between male and female - males in the public sphere of work (although women are obviously there also, but most often doing "women's work"), and women in the private sphere of the family.

100. Whether the division of labor between male and female is inherently alienating is debatable. It seems to depend on whether men and women have natural capacities to perform certain kinds of work, and this is exactly the thesis that Mitchell criticises. But even if work is linked to biology and genetics (the parallel is the relation between IQ and the ability to perform in middle class functions) it seems to me that we can criticize an inequality which utilizes natural capacities as the basis for rewards, especially since societies always do value some achievements more than others. Natural capacities to perform those things which a particular society values ought not be linked to greater desert as a person. However, this opens up a can of worms which I need not deal with in this dissertation.

Another problematic issue is whether entry into work-life (the public sphere) necessarily adds to woman's development. Socialists assume that work-life is essential to the development of political consciousness; radical feminists do not agree since women experience their primary oppression in the family. Mitchell's theory of contradiction is an attempt to work out the relationship between work-life, family and consciousness. Another interesting approach to this issue can be found in Rowbotham's Woman's Consciousness, Man's World, which also attempts to understand the ways in which a female consciousness rooted in the family creates problems for raising female consciousness in the public sphere. It

In part this division of labor is eroded by attacking the family as a monolithic fusion of structures. Rejecting the socialist call for "abolition of the family" as "...maximalist in the bad sense, posing a demand which is merely a negation without any coherent construction subsequent to it,"¹⁰¹ Mitchell calls for alternatives to the monolithic fusion of sexuality, reproduction and socialization in the family.

[Equality] will not come from its [the family's] administrative abolition, but from the historical differentiation of its functions. The revolutionary demand should be for the liberation of these functions from an oppressive monolithic fusion. ...What we should seek for is not the abolition of the family, but the diversification of the socially acknowledged relationships which are today forcibly and rigidly compressed into it. This would mean a plural range of institutions - where the family is only one such institution, and its abolition implies none.¹⁰²

Mitchell does not attack the functions these structures perform - people have sexual needs, they do need to reproduce, and children need to be socialized (her concern for children's socialization is clearly in contrast to Firestone's solution that children be brought into the public sphere; Mitchell, however, has not developed the relationship between male liberation and socialization and Rossi could help her out here). What she attacks is woman's seems to me that work life is productive of radical consciousness to the extent that it does encourage social relations, and that the same is true of private life.

101. Mitchell, Woman's Estate, p. 150.

102. Ibid., p. 151.

immersion in the family which is a realm of unfreedom. Female liberation means expansion of the realm of choice within the context of a social order which can satisfy human needs in the four areas of production, reproduction, sexuality and socialization. To ignore needs in any structure is to fail to liberate women; to focus on one structure as the key to female liberation is to ignore the dialectical relationship among structures.

As we have seen, Mitchell works from the assumption that persons can develop interests which move beyond egoism and a political consciousness which, by recognizing the relationships among these four structures, can commit them to the liberation of all oppressed groups. (She is, unfortunately, not specific about where racial oppression might fit in; her focus is on sex and class.)¹⁰³ The task for feminists is to organize around woman's specific oppression, but any solution to this oppression, embedded as it is in a capitalist structure, must move in the direction

103. Mitchell does not provide an analysis of the links between class oppression, racism, agism, sexism, etc., but these issues are being worked out in the Women's Movement. Of particular interest are the formation of new feminist organizations by women who are at the nexus of these various systems of oppression - Black women, working class women, older women. It seems clear to me that one's explanatory theory establishes the basis of solidarity among these women and the sorts of actions one engages in as an expression of that solidarity. For example, Black and white women can join together on abortion reform only to the extent that Black women do not see abortion as an attempt at genocide, or only so long as white women perceive that Black women might have legitimate reasons to suspect this possibility.

of making links between woman's oppression and working class oppression. The Movement thus moves beyond middle class demands for equality of opportunity to an understanding of the inter-relatedness of oppressions, to solidarity amongst the oppressed.

Finally, Mitchell's critique of the family is clearly rooted in an alternative conception of human relationships - relationships seen from the moral point of view. What is alienating about the family is not only that it denies woman her personhood, but that it provides a false equality and freedom within the context of capitalist productive structures, when there are possibilities for real equality and freedom in all social relations. Women's liberation is not liberation for women; freeing women from the unitary structure of the family frees them from the task of holding together a unity which is destructive to all its members.

The family...has an economic and ideological role under capitalism. Roughly, the economic role is the provision of a certain type of productive labour-force and the arena for massive consumption. This is specifically capitalist. The economic function interacts with the ideology requisite to produce the missing ideals of peasant, feudal society; a place to equally and freely enjoy private property.¹⁰⁴

But this ideology (in the Marxist sense) is mystifying - it hides the reality of inequality and unfreedom under capitalism, and encourages "...the increasingly disruptive individualism of its members."¹⁰⁵ It inhibits freedom and

104. Mitchell, Woman's Estate, p. 155.

105. Ibid., p. 158.

equality in work-life, sexuality, reproduction, and socialization and supports a generally de-humanized life for all.

Mitchell has adequately dealt with what might be termed the top-side of dis-alienation, the side of freedom and equality. But we need to consider a bottom side of liberation, the side where we find emotions and persons as historic individuals. Mitchell does begin to deal with the emotions in the final chapter of Woman's Estate when she considers the ways in which oppression marks those who are oppressed, makes liberation a serious struggle.

The difficulties that confront us are not just the opposition of the system we are confronting, but also its influence. It is this latter difficulty that I think we are in danger of ignoring. The conditions of our oppression do condition us.... You cannot inhabit a small and backward world without it doing something to you.¹⁰⁶

But the writer who has perhaps best captured the difficulties of liberation is Ingrid Bengis, especially in her treatment of the relationship between liberation and personal history.

The rational mind is capable of making astounding leaps. I can espouse communism one evening and radical conservatism the next. I can theorize about the future of the family from dusk until dawn. I can create and destroy whole new systems of thought, systems of being, systems of living, all within the course of a dinner conversation. Similarly, I can create and re-create 'new women' to suit the perspective of the period. What I

106. Ibid., p. 162. "To recognize that we are the victims of our own masochism is our political beginning." Rowbotham, Woman's Consciousness, p. 42.

cannot do, however, is become the person each decade newly assumes I ought to be. I cannot be the completely feminine woman of the fifties, the emancipated, sexually free woman of the sixties, and the militant, antisexist woman of the seventies. I cannot ignore the fact that my own life has unfolded slowly, that it has been a part of all those trends and none of them. I cannot ignore the fact that essentially the same me has persisted throughout the upheavals, throughout the analyses of historical circumstances and evaluations of what a woman's life ought to be.¹⁰⁷

Understanding that we are the same person throughout the process of social change carries with it important implications for what we might demand of social change. We might expect that change will better satisfy those needs we do have, that altering social relations will better provide for the fulfillment of what we perceive as our needs. Here Bengis provides an insight which is rare in Feminist analysis, an insight which has to do with our felt need for commitment, for the stable relationships which form the underside of dis-alienation.

Still, the need for continuity, for love, for something with at least enough solidity to make permanence seem possible, even if it usually isn't attained, persists. No matter what our concepts of freedom are, there is no way to ignore the simple fact that it takes a long time to get to know someone, to understand their strengths and weaknesses and coordinate them with your own, to balance the weight of closeness and separateness, to arrive at some degree of sexual openness. The prospect of repeating the process over and over again is exhausting, even for a fertile imagination.¹⁰⁸

107. Ingrid Bengis, Combat in the Erogenous Zone (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), p. 203.

108. Ibid., p. 237.

Here the language is of sexual relations, but remove the sexuality (although this would be some part of any liberated human relationship), and I think that we have a remarkable image of the kinds of constraints that human needs place on human relationships.¹⁰⁹ This passage is lent support by Piaget's theory of human development, a development which requires careful nurturance in an atmosphere of warmth, commitment, stability; it in turn gives us reason to be critical of any proposals for absolute freedom a la Germaine Greer.

A good society would provide stable, mutual relationships which would nurture development over time. These relationships might be especially important at the two extremes of the human life span - in our early years when warm, loving "parents" are essential to the growth of ego strength and our ability to care for others, and in our old age when we need strength and support in the face of death. We are social and historic beings then in this very individual sense. We have a memory and we have a future; and our relations with others are a vital part of the past and future.

109. Bengis posits human 'needs' for love, warmth, compassion, for emotional expression through 'authentic', human relations. But it is not clear whether she views these 'needs' as universal or as cultural specific. She is rather clear that their fulfillment is frustrated by male-female power relations. See Zillah Eisenstein's discussion of Bengis' conception of needs in "Connections Between Class and Sex: Moving Towards a Theory of Liberation," paper presented at the 1973 Annual Meeting of the American Political

Our ability to comprehend and be attracted to new ideas is also affected by our individual historicity. Ideas are held by real people with real needs. Some of these needs are the flawed products of a flawed society and stand in the way of our rationality. When our images of ourselves are warped, it is difficult for us to comprehend what an 'authentic' self might be or to develop images of others which could serve as the foundation for solidarity. But, even though we are flawed, we cannot stand outside ourselves; we can only test ideas in the light of personal experience and stand as critical agents in the face of any proposed truth. Some of our personal experiences will lend themselves to rational evaluations, to autonomous criticism based on more developed needs; other experiences point up needs with which proposals for change must come to grips. Our feelings and our needs are the final criteria for the validity of an idea - not in the subjectivist sense but in the sense that any proposal for change must take into account the needs, wants and purposes which persons do have. Radical proposals for change expand these needs to incorporate unfolding capacities, but unless these capacities are rooted in real needs, wants and purposes, we are engaged in Utopianism.

Some proposals for change will offend our understanding of our needs; for example, my students often react quite

Science Association, Women's Caucus Panel, New Orleans, Louisiana, September 4-8, 1973. (Tapeographed.)

negatively to Firestone's technological solution to child-bearing. It seems quite inhuman to them, and indeed it is in light of their understanding of their own, quite human, needs. Bengis' discussion of abortion is to the point - abortion reform appears to understand woman's need to control her own body, but in treating abortion as a simple medical technique somewhat akin to a tonsillectomy, the state ignores' woman's need to have shared in a meaningful human relationship. "Will [abortion] change the fact that for many women, the adaptation to the physical fact of being aborted, requires another adaptation....a sense of separation from the life of her body." ¹¹⁰ In her mind woman needs the child as proof of her man's faithfulness; to undergo an abortion, she must separate herself - her body - from these real needs, inauthenticate herself. (One solution is to provide alternative support institutions which is what feminist abortion counselling is all about.)

Our feelings are implicated in our ideas and actions. Some of these feelings stand in the way of rational thought and liberation. Bengis writes:

What I discovered in the midst of my drive toward emancipation was that sex, love, hurt, and hate were the real stuff I was made of; that fairness, rationality, and the willingness to share or give away what one had never been sure of possessing in the first place, were all secondary characteristics, carefully cultivated to be sure, but capable of collapsing the moment stronger passions reared

110. Bengis, Combat, p. 68.

their heads.¹¹¹

Yet this ability to feel, to respond to others in anger, hurt, resentment and love is part of who we are and must be understood. Persons do not transform themselves radically; they remain the same person as they move to different levels of self- and social awareness. It is a constant struggle to maintain our better image of ourselves and to maintain our morality in the face of situations which give rise to real fears, insecurities, anxieties and jealousies. But personalaity and morality also depend on these capacities to feel. Persons may carry with them the baggage of old emotional repertoires into new relationships, new modes of socia llife, but some of these will be liberating while others will serve as barriers to development. We are historic beings; we are always the same person even as we develop.

Bengis and Mitchell seem to me to capture the image of changing consciousness implicit in the Moral Agent model. The essence of moral action lies in awareness that we have needs, that others are implicated in these needs, and that we satisfy our needs - as well as create new ones - through our social life. There are possibilities and responsibilities for evaluation, for struggle and for change. Awareness of these possibilities grows out of the conditions of moral development - opportunities for egalitarian human relationships

111. Ibid., p. 201

- coupled with an explanatory theory which fleshes out the notion of persons and of injury and gives substance to a critical perspective on one's own society and the possibilities for flourishing within it.

The Moral Agent mode of analysis lends support to actions which promote institutional changes designed to promote egalitarian, reciprocal relationships and expansion of the realm of freedom for women (and other oppressed persons), and establishing community.¹¹² Often Moral Agents will engage in actions proposed by other groups - e.g., child care and abortion reform - but these actions are justified in the broader context of human liberation rather than as a means of simply freeing women from the family so that they may achieve in the professional world.

The Moral Agent cannot be doctrinaire in her defense of liberation. Aware of the ways in which ideas develop,¹¹³ she cannot propose any final solutions. As we end one alienating relationship, we sense a need to end others - demands change in a dialectical process of consciousness-raising, new needs, new demands for social change. Social transformation is a dynamic process. And we cannot predict the outcome of this process since the dialectic moves in a complex manner. To know this lends a hesitancy to the way we

¹¹². Having lived in a relatively small town for over a year now, I have some doubts as to how clear radicals have been in their conception of community. Although it can enrich human relations, it can also be frighteningly intrustive.

¹¹³. I have always been impressed, yet put off by the

propose our strategies, gives us a tremendous sense of responsibility to be constantly re-evaluating, re-formulating our ideas and strategies.

absolute assuredness of my Trotskyite friends that they have found the solution to all the world's woes.

C O N C L U S I O N S

In the past three chapters I have attempted to explore two profoundly different images of human action and the implications of each for our understanding of contemporary American Feminism. If I have not looked at specific actions, this is because I have thought it adequate to investigate possible justifications of these actions and the complicated relationship between explanations of human oppression, moral judgments and the emotions. The next task is obvious - it is to look at the actions of women in the real world of politics and to see how these various justifications are deployed in the process of social change. I have hoped to lay the groundwork for that endeavor.

If, as Peter Winch suggests, the social theorist is an observer who is trying to understand what is going on in the world she sees, she has to inside the conceptual framework of those who are involved in action. She need not act herself on these beliefs, these moral notions, these emotions, but she does have to have them; i.e. she must be able to use them to guide her own action even though she chooses not to. The theorist who is at a different level of cognitive development, who operates from a different conceptual framework, will fail to understand what action is about. Her social theory can point out gaps in the explanatory

theory used by the activists; her theory can even be instrumental in moving them on in their own cognitive development. But the theorist and the activist are at cross-purposes if there is no shared sense of what the action is about. Theory may then perhaps explain failure without sharing concepts in the action framework, but to explain the attempt requires understanding the framework within which the actor moves and thinks.

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