Psychology, Ethics and Sports: Back to an Aristotelian “museum of normalcy”

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[Received March 4, 2003; accepted March 4, 2003]

In this paper we critically evaluate a range of scientific research that attempts to explore the issues of moral development and education in and through sport. We trace historically the theoretical roots of the research in the work of mainstream developmental psychologists Piaget, Kohlberg and Haan and articulate their attachments to different moral theories in a way that is not made clear in the sports related research. We show how their theoretical and methodological commitments necessarily alter the efficacy of the data and conclusions of the subsequent sports psychological research. In contrast, we set out an alternative moral developmental picture based on Aristotelian thought. We argue that it offers a richer picture of moral agency based on the capacities of perception, emotion and deliberation and an accommodation of the importance of the ethos or moral atmosphere of particular sporting contexts.

Keywords: Aristotle, ethics, moral atmosphere, moral development, sport

[International Journal of Sport and Health Science Vol.1 (1) 61–75]

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to critically evaluate some recent sport scientific research that attempts to explore the age-old conundrum of sport's moral status. In order to evaluate that research properly it is necessary to speak historically to the theoretical background which gives rise to the current paradigm and to set out what has been ignored as an alternative theoretical basis for scholarship in the ethics of sport. To do this we consider the potential of Aristotelian virtue-theory to provide a framework better to consider moral development in and through sport. Certain philosophers [Carr (1998); Gough (1998)] have argued for the impossibility in principle of a science of moral development. Our position is more empathetic, stressing the agreement on the idea of moral development, but merely suggesting the factors that would contribute to a richer appreciation of the ethical aspect of sports. Of course, the translation of theoretical frameworks and conceptual revisions is an hazardous affair. We are mindful of the particular pitfalls of operationalisation when researchers attempt to go out into the field and assess carefully a range of controversial and complex

issues such as are involved in the moral dimensions of sporting participation and performance. This essay, then, is a speculative one which attempts to challenge sports psychologists to consider both theoretical and methodological revisions to their work. We hope to join them on that difficult quest. But our present task is simply to chart the logical geography of ethics more carefully in respect of the arenas of moral development and theory, the museums of normalcy as they have been called¹, that relate to sports.

2. Moral Personality and the Emergence of the Moral Development Tradition

In current psychological research into sport and morality, cognitive developmentalism is unquestionably the dominant paradigm. To understand this dominance it is necessary to appreciate how early researchers in psychology, notably Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg and Norma Haan committed themselves to various theoretical positions regarding human agency and morality itself. Their commitments have framed the subsequent current research design and analysis in sports

¹ See Hampshire loc cit.

in more or less direct ways.

Although Ethics, has a long and rich tradition in philosophy, moral psychology (or at least empirically-based moral psychology) has much more recent 20th century roots. Hartshorne and May (1928) were the first to investigate the link between personality traits and moral action. They compared hundreds of children's behaviour in certain contexts with their self-attribution of moral traits including dishonesty and deceit. In keeping with the dominant behaviourist zeitgeist the findings pointed towards situational factors rather than personality traits of the children as the primary causal explanation for behavior². These early findings raised a number of questions about the nature of moral character and personality, and more specifically about which psychological theories, concepts and methods have the most heuristic force and predictive potential. In particular, the "thought - action" problem identified by Hartshorne and May, the unreliable relations between what people believe is right and what in fact they do, is a ubiquitous and perplexing conundrum for moral psychology and as we will show, bedevils much research in the area of moral psychology in sport.

In an important book in moral psychology, Flanagan (1991) argues that Hartshorne and May's results are mistakenly taken as evidence against the existence of moral personality seen as a collection of traits. Rather than abandon the idea of moral traits altogether, Flanagan (1991: 291) argues that the results can be read as evidence for the existence of traits "albeit not traits of unrestricted globality or totally context - independent ones." Reports, therefore, of the death of traits was premature. Rather, it is a particular conception of a character trait - the idea that it was a simple disposition enacted every time a person found himself or herself in a given situation - that should be rejected. The development of a more sophisticated account of moral traits and their role in moral character is our response to this research, (and other studies such as Stanley Milgram's (1964) (in) famous research into obedience to perceived authority, which lends weight to the plasticity - though not complete malleability - of moral character and traits³. What is important to recognise in the non-trait globality issue from the perspective of current sport related research, is the primary influence of Hartshorne and May's studies on alterna-

tive theoretical and methodological foci.

The next significant contributor to the cognitive developmental paradigm was Piaget (1932) whose extensive studies focused on moral aspects of children's interactions. Describing himself as a genetic epistemologist he was interested in the growth of knowledge or cognition and conceptions of ethics based solely upon powers of reason. In keeping with the times he largely ignored the development of emotion that was thought to be antithetical both to reason and ethics⁴. Piaget believed that rationality was the normative end point of cognitive development since rationality was seen as the primary adaptive capacity of human agency. He argued that the development of human rational powers occurred in stages, each of which represented a particular logical-cognitive structure. The stages were progressive; each subsequent stage accommodated its predecessor in a more complex cognitive structure. The development of cognitive powers was therefore linear and uni-directional. His studies of morality, therefore, groundbreaking as they were, are necessarily a hostage to a fairly narrowly focused conception of human rationality. As a hostage to the spirit of the new scientific age he writes:

Readers will find in this book no direct analysis of child morality as it is practiced in home and school life or in children's societies. It is the moral judgment that we propose to investigate, not moral behaviour or sentiments. [Piaget (1932: 8)]

Piaget makes it clear that his interest is narrowly focused on the moral judgment - its structure and form, since it is this, which is a scientific indicator of the child's stage of development. The focus on moral judgment and its evaluation on grounds of developmental maturity takes explanatory priority over affective and behavioural considerations. Although Piaget explicitly denies the reduction of moral development to the development of moral judgment, there has been a de facto, and we believe problematic, reduction of moral development to the development of moral cognition (moral judgment) in subsequent moral psychology. Another important feature of Piaget's groundbreaking work was the introduction of explicit normative criteria for the stages of cognitive and, therefore, moral development. The child's develop-

² In psychology, and sport psychology per se, a consideration that individual difference variables may interplay with situational factors has been a prevailing approach since Mischel's seminal work in the 1960's. It is unlikely that Hartshorne and May explored this interactional effect.

³ In contemporary (sport) psychology, we refer to personality traits (which are considered quite fixed over time and context), omnibus dispositions (which are pronenesses that are more malleable), and situationally-specific traits or dispositions. Thus, we would refer to trait anxiety and competitive sport trait anxiety or sport goal orientations, reflecting a context-specific proneness or tendency.

⁴ For a contrast see Williams (1973) who better understands the role of the emotions in ethics in a way which prefigured the rise of neo-Aristotelian scholarship in moral philosophy and which informs section 4 below.

ment is seen in the adaptation to the natural and social environment. The development of moral judgment, therefore, is an adaptation to the moral world. Given Piaget's elevation of rationality, it is no surprise to philosophers that the Kant's moral theory provides the normative criteria to evaluate these moral judgments. Kant also provides the conception of the moral world in the Piagetian scheme of thought:

All morality consists in a system of rules, and the essence of morality is to be sought for in the respect which the individual acquires for these rules. [Piaget (1932: 9)]

In order to study the moral development of the child Piaget focused on their understanding of rules in games. Notwithstanding methodological criticism, Piaget concluded that there were two stages to the development of the child's understanding of the obligatory (i.e. prescriptive) nature of rules. The first is a heteronomous understanding of morally right action wherein the child believes that it is subject to an external law that ought universally to be followed. The second stage is characterised by an autonomous understanding of the obligatory nature of rules. Following Kant, rules are obligatory if they are the result of rational deliberation. All moral rules, being at the same time rational rules, have such weight as they compel all rational beings to comply with them. It is worth reiterating that Piaget did not study rule compliance, but rather examined the ways in which children understood the rules. The form of the judgement, whether it is heteronomous or autonomous, rather than its content, is more important than the content. Two children may follow the same rule thus visibly performing the same action, however only one may have an autonomous understanding of the rules' obligatory requirement. The context and the content of moral rules, therefore, became largely unimportant for his project compared to the understanding of the source and grounds of legitimate obligation. In light of these factors Piaget's work marks the beginning of the methodological focus on what people say rather than what people do that came to dominate much moral psychology in general and the moral psychology of sport in particular. No other method will suffice if such information is necessary for moral evaluation.

Kohlberg (1981) embraced Piaget's central theoretical commitments, namely the importance of moral

judgment and its traceable sequence of development from heteronomous form to an autonomous form. Kohlberg identified a more variegated six stage developmental sequence. His research design utilised a dilemma-based questionnaire to gather data on moral reasoning and judgment. Crucially he argued that people reason consistently according to their stage of moral development. This identifiable and purportedly consistent element restores some faith in the idea of consistency of moral agency that was seemingly undermined by Hartshorne and May's (1928) studies. Although sharing significant common ground, Kohlberg made significant philosophical and psychological revisions to Piaget's work. First, he further embraced Kantian moral theory and argued that the moral world was governed by universal moral principles. Kohlberg (1981) believed that "justice" was the overarching moral principle and the end point of moral development, or "moral maturity" which itself was characterised by consistent judgments that embodied this principle. Secondly, in a departure from Piaget, he explicitly advocated the causal role cognition played in moral agency and action. So although cognition, and its embodiment in judgment remains central, Kohlberg believed that moral cognition and moral action are more or less synonymous⁵. Kohlberg (1981: 30) argued that virtue is one meaning that mature moral character was unified and consistent as are the moral rules in a moral theory. In its ideal form moral reasoning, and by definition, moral action is always in accord with principles of justice. This rationalist picture of morality, driven very much by both ancient Greek (Plato) and modern European (Kant) thought, holds that those who know the good choose the good. Therefore, those who are said truly to know the right thing to do will always do it. The guiding belief here then is one of a normative account of morality grounded in rational and universal moral principles. The impartial application of principles, not situations dictate correct moral action. Moral agents reason and act according to their developmental stage, which in turn can be accessed through their judgments.

Within this theorised picture of morality, moral judgments based on moral rules ought to be consistent and not contextually variable. The right thing to do is always the right thing to do; the wrong thing to do is always the wrong thing to do. The fact that other features of the situation (oneself, one's close relations or

⁵ Although Kohlberg (1981) was initially adamant about the strong, if not perfect correlation, between thought and action, his confidence was not borne out by empirical evidence. Kohlberg (1984) and Power, Higgins and Kohlberg (1989) attempted to explain the possible reasons for a less than perfect correlation. The idea of personal responsibility and the prevailing moral atmosphere came to be thought of mediating influences in moral action.

one's friends) might find their way into some children's reasoning was a sign of moral immaturity since these features necessarily compromise the impartial character of morality. Based upon such apparently secure foundations children can therefore be classified and ranked according to the stage of their moral maturity; their ability to reason about the right thing to do which was to follow moral rules that were universal in scope, prescriptive in nature and impartial in application.

Kohlberg's theory is reductive in a number of problematic ways. First, (im)moral action is reduced to (un)principled action and moral agency or moral character is reduced to a mature grasp of moral duty⁶. The emotions and other character traits⁷ are devoid of intrinsic moral worth. They are morally significant only insofar as they function in the impartial application of universal moral principles. Critics of Kohlberg's theory are legion⁸ despite the continued propagation of his theory and method in education and sport research. Gilligan (1982) objected to the reduction of moral concerns to those of justice. Kohlbergian findings typically placed girls and women on a lower rating than boys and men who reasoned more impartially. Gilligan argued convincingly that this picture of the moral reasoner as an independent rational chooser ignored the complex of rationality and affect in our estimations of moral judgements. She argued, classically, that moral concepts such as care, which was relegated because of its emotional character, might be equally important in evaluating moral maturity irrespective of whether it was more frequently evidenced in girls than boys.

From a psychological perspective, the main weakness of Kohlberg's theory is the extent to which moral maturity is predictive of action across different settings. Paradoxically, situation, or context variation, was the very criticism aimed at Hartshorne and May (1928) and the very issue his theory aimed to avoid. Kohlberg (1984) himself recognised this problem and argued that people did not always take responsibility for moral action even though they might know what ought to be done. Moreover, he also thought that the prevailing moral atmosphere of the context might inhibit moral reasoning [Power, Higgins and Kohlberg (1989)]. Flanagan (1991) argued that a defence of Hartshorne and May's (1928) findings could be con-

structed on similar grounds.

In light of some of the problems with the theory, a former research collaborator of Kohlberg, Norma Haan developed a revision to the Kohlbergian tradition that attempted to move away from his rationalistic preconceptions both of human agency and morality. Haan (1978) argued that morality was not to be characterised as a set of universal principles to be followed but rather a socially constructed set of norms, values, rules and solutions. Solutions to moral problems were, therefore, not to be exclusively deduced from the principle of justice, rather they were to be constructed in a process called "moral dialogue". Moral dialogues, according to Haan, can result in moral balance and/or moral truth. The former refers to a mutually acceptable agreement in dialogue. The latter, moral truth, refers to solutions achieved under the procedural conditions of fairness. Moral truth is most likely to occur, therefore, in dialogues between those most capable of fair negotiation, or in dialogues heavily influenced by those who possess such egalitarian instincts. Haan assesses the maturity of moral agents based on the legitimacy of their strategies in moral dialogue. Most importantly, she proposes five stages that although similar to Kohlberg's do not represent a developmental sequence but rather provide normative criteria for evaluating the quality of moral interaction. This entails the rejection of a uni-linear model of moral development; where one matures morally as one's cognitive mastery evolves.

Haan partly avoids the "thought-action" problem by observing moral interaction rather than merely evaluating moral judgments. Scores are then assigned to individuals based on the conduct of the subjects observed. This combination of a humanistic conception of morality and the observation of actual behavior (rather than reported hypothetical behavior) is supposed to deliver greater ecological validity. Some of the purported methodological advantage is lost, however, because the moral dialogues are constructed role-play situations that are themselves "unreal".

That factors extraneous to a person's cognitive capacities often influence the way one behaves may not come as a great surprise to those of a less cognitive persuasion. In addition to her important advances in methodology and operationalisation of the concept of morality, Haan looks to the psychoanalytic concept of

6 Though, as Peters (1974: 303-35) famously observed, ought one not to *care* about duty? And if one agrees with the proposition, one ought immediately to be attuned both to the necessity of certain emotions in the appreciation and execution of one's moral duties.

7 See Pincoffs (1986) for an extended list.

8 It should be noted that Kohlberg's theory was not a unified matter. He made several revisions to his position but in this section we are merely sketching his theory in order to show its influence in sport psychological research. For more detailed exegesis see Jones and McNamee (2000).

ego-processing to explain these inter-test inconsistencies in moral action. Many children and adults as they play sport know that breaking the rules is wrong, they simply fail to carry that understanding through to action for a variety of personal (e.g. contingent self worth [Duda (2001), Duda & Hall (2001)] egoism, the too-strong desire to win) and environmental (e.g. the motivational climate, [Duda (2001); Roberts (2001)] coach-induced norms [Stornes, (2001)] reasons. Haan argues that consistent moral engagement requires that a person remains "coping". A person who is coping remains rational and in control. If a person is suffering stress in the situation and fails to cope effectively, or employs defending processes, inconsistent moral action is likely to ensue [Roth & Cohen, (1986); Weinberger, Schwartz, & Davidson, (1979)]. Although Haan refers to the importance of coping processes, her perspective does not readily account for spontaneous, or "heat of the moment", rule violations.

What most of us know through our own experience in and out of sport is what is referred to by Aristotle as *akrasia* or the weakness of the will. We do not always and everywhere exhibit the consistency of belief and action that a moral theory - when conceived of as a scientific theory - exhibits. Thus in Haan's scheme there is an expectation that systematic discrepancies will sometimes occur among the moral levels that people use when they think about what a hypothetical person should do, what they should do, and when they act. Further, it is assumed that these discrepancies will not only be associated with people's moral capacity but also with their more general ability to cope with the complexity, intensity and content of particular situations [Haan (1975: 256)]. Having charted the normative development of the cognitive-moral developmental psychology we are now in a position to critically situate our evaluation of more recent sport psychological research into the ethics of sports.

3. Sport Psychological Research in Sports Ethics

Early studies of morality in sport seemingly confirmed what Kohlberg himself wrestled with, namely that moral judgments were contextually sensitive and that the "moral atmosphere" of given contexts had a role to play [Power et al, (1989)]. Bredemeier and Shields (1984a) found

that individual moral judgment gravitated towards the prevailing level of moral judgment in the researched context. They introduced the term "game frame" to refer to the particular "atmosphere" of sports contests. In philosophical literatures this concept is often referred to as the "ethos of sports"⁹. Sports contests are rule governed instrumental activities hived off from other aspects of life by their peculiar logic and their temporal and spatial boundaries. As such participants are characteristically instrumentally orientated. Bredemeier and Shields (1984a) suggests that this collective instrumental orientation or the "game frame" is usually detrimental to optimal moral functioning. It frequently promotes and rewards moral judgments of a lesser maturity than one might expect to find in non-athletic situations. Bredemeier and Shields (1986a) argued that "game reasoning" is characteristically more egocentric and suggested that the structure of competitive games locate moral responsibility with the official or the rules consequently encouraging the abdication of responsibility by the competitors. More recent studies, for example Guivernau and Duda (2002), provide further empirical support for the important influence of the "moral atmosphere". They found that the players' beliefs regarding their team, coaches and parents significantly shaped the moral atmosphere. Moral atmosphere (as perceived to be manifested on the team and at home) predicted self-reported moral behaviour of individuals.

Irrespective of gender and the particular scenario involved, the athletes perceived the coach as the most influential figure. We will pick up the salience of this latter finding in our section on habituation and role modelling in our Aristotelian account in section 4 below. Another closely related and significant early finding was that moral reasoning correlated significantly with other moral indicators. Bredemeier and Shields (1984b) found a significant inverse relationship between high moral reasoning scores and aggression¹⁰. Bredemeier (1994) argued that moral reasoning is predictive of both aggressive and assertive tendencies in sport. In addition Bredemeier (1985) found an inverse relationship between the numbers of potentially injurious acts respondents found acceptable, and their level of moral maturity. These findings offer empirical endorsement of the Kohlbergian belief that moral reasoning is a significant determinant of moral action. Moral action in sport is no longer conceived in a one-dimensional and reductive way. Moral reasoning is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for morally mature action.

⁹ What the term is taken to mean precisely is open to alternative accounts. Contrast, for example, D'Agostino (1981) and Loland and McNamee (2000).

¹⁰ It has been argued, with effect, that the kind of definition commonly used in sport psychological research is itself problematic - failing clearly and adequately to delineate assertion, aggression and violence - as it stands far apart from common linguistic usage and moral philosophical accounts. See Parry (1998).

The prolonged and sustained research programmes suggested that other important factors demanded consideration. Consequently, a model of moral action [Shields and Bredemeier (1995)] and a measure of moral functioning [Stephens, Bredemeier and Shields (1997)] that integrate their main conclusions was formulated¹¹. Informed by Piaget (1932), Kohlberg (1981, 1984) and Haan (1978, 1983), and their own discoveries (Bredemeier and Shields (1984a, 1984b, 1986a, 1986b), Bredemeier (1985, 1994), Bredemeier et al. (1986), Bredemeier et al. (1987), Shields et al. (1995), and other research, Duda et al. (1991), their model represents a more complex and holistic account of moral agency or moral functioning. In a similar vein, the research instrument JAMBYSQ¹² that was employed in a number of studies attempted to provide an empirical measure of a much more complex set of interrelated capacities and values that come together in moral functioning.

Drawing on Rest (1984) they argue that moral action is rooted not just through judgment but also through three additional processes¹³. These four processes form the foundation of the model of moral action. The first process is interpretative consisting in the identification and recognition of situational cues. The second process consists in the making of a moral judgment, which coheres with Kohlberg's account. The third process is the choice of a value that will guide moral action. The fourth and final process is the actual implementation of action (howsoever conceived). In a further development they offer a brief account of the virtues that might operationalise their model. We will first discuss the model, inserting into the third process, value-choice, the pertinent sport psychological literature produced by other research teams.

At first sight, the model distances itself from the excessive reductionism of Kohlberg's original formula. The model offers moral agents more than stage specific moral judgments in which to conduct their affairs and be evaluated. Their values, attitudes, beliefs and motivational orientation are important constituents of their moral agency. Again, we will amplify these concepts

in section 4 below in our Aristotelian account of the development of virtuous character. The model seems to be an improvement on Kohlberg's exclusively judgment-orientated account. The import of the additional processes, however, gives rise to some related problems. For Kohlberg, moral maturity was considered significantly, if not exclusively, predictive of moral action "He (sic) who knows the good chooses the good". Yet folk psychology and common sense tell us that those who know the good also need to interpret well, choose the right value and implement appropriate action in conjunction with formulating a mature moral judgement.

The recognition that moral functioning involves more than moral reasoning is borne out in the sport psychology literature. The construct that has received the most recent attention is achievement goal theory. In sport in particular, research suggests that an over-emphasis on winning, conceived as concerns relating to the demonstration of superiority¹⁴, leads to poor moral functioning. Achievement goal theory focuses on the manner in which individuals define success and judge their competence. Nicholls (1984, 1989) contends that there are two different ways of defining success and construing one's level of competence. When task goal focused, perceptions of competence are self-referenced and subjective success ensues when one feels that he/she has witnessed personal improvement, task mastery, and/or exerted effort. If someone is ego (goal)-involved, perceived ability is normatively-referenced. In this case, improvement and mastery are not enough. The goal here is to demonstrate superior competence by either out-performing others or performing similarly with less effort. Achievement goal theory [Duda, (2001); Nicholls, (1989)] presumes that whether an athlete is more or less likely to centre on task or ego goals during a competition is a function of several factors including dispositional tendencies regarding the criteria used to define success (i.e., the

11 It is clear that the many and various research publications constitute an extremely significant research programme in its totality. In order to find a shorthand for our critique we will simply refer to the corpus of work as Bredemeier and Shields while intending no disrespect to their colleagues. Secondly, it is extremely important to note that we hold this research in very high regard. Our critique of it relates exclusively to philosophical considerations and the methodological implications that flow from the alternative theoretical conceptualisations of ethics, virtue and character that we set out here and elsewhere see Jones and McNamee, 2000, and McNamee and Jones, 2000.

12 There are a number of different methods and instruments which have been variously employed to obtain a 'dependent variable' or 'moral score' against which other independent variables such as age, gender, sport, level of participation, aggression, sportpersonship have been compared and correlated. We focus on the JAMBYSQ (Judgments about moral behaviour in youth sport questionnaire) because it recognises the complexity of the moral domain and is therefore designed to measure several dimensions of moral functioning. JAMBYSQ (consisting of three soccer scenarios about advantageous but unfair behaviours) tapped self-reported (a) fair play action tendencies, (b) legitimacy judgements, (c) moral motives, and (d) perceptions of team norms regarding the behaviours depicted. Information regarding the validity and reliability of this instrument is limited (Bredemeier and Shields, 1998). Questions also remain about its utility in other sport settings.

13 The sequence is an analytical one and not therefore a description of a necessary temporal sequence of psychological processes. Gibbons, Ebbeck, and Weiss, (1995) employed this framework for research into moral judgement, moral reason, and moral intention in sport. Bredemeier and Shields (1998), however, have questioned the validity of the instrument.

14 Charles Bailey argued that there was a logical connection between winning and the demonstration of superiority over an opponent. As such he argued that competitive games in particular were incompatible with moral education.

athlete's task and ego goal orientations) and the motivational climate(s) surrounding the athlete which are created by significant others such as the coach, parents, and peers. With respect to the latter, it is presumed that these psychological environments are more or less task- and/or ego-involving in their structures and content. Recent sport research has revealed a positive link between perceptions of an ego-involving atmosphere on one's team and a reported greater likelihood to aggress in sport as well as sportspersonship attitudes (see Duda, 2001, for a review).

Nicholls (1989) argued specifically that there is an association between achievement goal orientations and the perceived legitimacy of certain behaviours employed in pursuit of those goals. He proposed that "a preoccupation with outplaying others and demonstrating superiority is likely to lead to a lack of concern about fairness and the welfare of the opponent", and to the belief that cheating and aggression are justifiable means to achieve success in competitive settings. Duda, Olson and Templin (1991) found that high school basketball players with high task orientation were less likely to perceive cheating as legitimate and were more likely to endorse sportspersonship¹⁵ behaviour than those high in ego orientation. The latter group reported a greater endorsement of intentionally aggressive acts and a greater agreement with cheating behaviours. Research by Dunn and Dunn (1999) similarly found that athletes with low task orientation/high ego orientation profile reported the lowest levels of sportspersonship and the highest level of aggression; in contrast, the athletes who were high task/low ego orientation exhibited the highest levels of sportspersonship. Ommundsen, Roberts, Lemyre, & Treasure (2003) in a study of young Norwegian soccer players (12-14 years) found that a perceived task-involving motivational climate (created by the coach) corresponded to more mature social-moral functioning and better self-reported sportspersonship behaviours. In such a climate, players were less likely to report engagement in amoral behaviours and they perceived their team norms as strongly disapproving of aggressive actions. The opposite was true for a perceived ego-involving team climate. Similarly Kavussanu, Roberts, & Ntoumanis (2002) reported that a perceived

ego-involving motivational climate corresponded to anti-social moral atmosphere (norms of coach and teammates). It is noteworthy that the moral atmosphere, what is commonly referred to by philosophers as the *ethos*, emerged as a significant predictor of judgement, intention, and behaviour.

Processes involved in moral action discussed above, Kavussanu and Roberts (2001) suggest that during the value-choosing phase, a persons' goal orientation is crucial. Kavussanu and Roberts (2001: 39) argue that:

When winning is at stake, the ego orientated athlete will be tempted to choose a behaviour that helps accomplish this goal, even if the behaviour is not congruent with his or her moral ideals.

Lee (1995) identified a similar value conflict in relation to sport. Although respondents valued both winning and sportspersonship, when the two came into conflict, often winning became the value priority thus resulting in unfair play. The value orientation of individuals, therefore, is thought to be a particularly important aspect of moral functioning and one that requires consideration in any educational programme¹⁶. Given the important influence of the moral atmosphere embodied in the values and attitudes of coaches and parents on moral functioning, it can be argued that a "task orientated atmosphere" or an atmosphere where success is self referenced will be beneficial in tempering win at all cost attitude that seemingly leads to cheating.

Notwithstanding the complexity of Shields and Bredeemeier's model and the subsequent attempts to investigate the value-dominance problem for athletes, two problems persist. First, the methods only measure cognitive components of morality: what people say rather than what people do is what counts¹⁷. This problem is rooted in the belief that moral behaviour is intentional and that intention must be characterised, and driven by, appropriate moral motives. Moral motives cannot be seen or inferred; they must therefore be accessed in speech acts¹⁸.

One difficulty with direct behavioural observation, however, is that the meaning of specific behaviors is never transparent and the researcher who observes a

15 Individuals' level of sportspersonship was obtained by asking them to indicate their degree of approval, using a Likert - type scale, of 22 sporting and unsporting behaviours.

16 For a critical discussion of this particular approach, see McNamee and Jones (2000).

17 Specifically there are two methodological challenges here; first to develop a contextually and/or culturally sensitive valid and reliable assessment of moral action in sport, and secondly to construct a psychometrically sound method of accessing the intentions of those actors. On their own, neither provides a complete account.

18 Another issue with contemporary models like the one discussed is that they don't account for reactive, "in the heat of the moment" aggressive and/or immoral action. In sport contests, there is not always the time to think through the situation and then act in an intentional manner. There is an issue therefore about what is being predicted; one-off behaviours or patterns of responses?

behavior must invariably interpret the meaning of that behavior if the observation is to be meaningful. [Stephens, Bredemeier and Shields (1997: 374)]

Within this paradigm then, researchers must therefore interrogate the motivating values and principles in order to make a judgment about the moral status vis a vis their reflective values or moral maturity. A morally praiseworthy action in this scheme requires that the intentions and motives behind it are themselves morally praiseworthy¹⁹. Still, as we shall show below, the model remains at best a thin account of how (sports)persons come to act qua moral agents. Although the idea of moral functioning is an expanded one, it lacks what we consider to be a substantive account of the qualities (and their development), above and beyond moral reasoning, that a person requires to function. Moral rules still dominate the picture, but are supplanted by certain virtues that are highly selective, and without an extensive rationale²⁰. In their posturing towards virtue-theory Shields and Bredemeier (1995) briefly present four qualities of character, or virtues, that are important for the model. They define character as "the possession of those personal qualities or virtues that facilitate the consistent display of moral action" [Shields and Bredemeier (1995: 193)]. The four virtues, considered sufficient for this task, in Bredemeier and Shields' model are (i) Compassion; (ii) Fairness; (iii) Sportpersonship; and (iv) Integrity.

Each of these virtues supports an allegedly specific component of the model of moral action. First, compassion it is argued facilitates interpretation of the situation in order to decide upon a course of moral action. Secondly, having interpreted a situation compassionately, fairness facilitates the right judgment and, thirdly sportpersonship facilitates choosing values. Finally, the virtue of integrity is necessary to facilitate implementation of action. The four virtues selected appear, however, to raise more questions than they answer. Why should compassion merely drive interpretation and not action? Why could a perception of the fair thing to do not move us straight to action? We should keep in mind the most significant lesson of Kohlberg's

research programme, from a meta-ethical viewpoint, that sometimes compassion and fairness clash violently. Is sportpersonship really a singular virtue or rather an internally complex amalgam of values, attitudes and beliefs that hang together in a more or less loose way? Is integrity a singular virtue or does it suffuse all other virtues in order that the moral agent comes to the right choice?

This, in particular, is a classic problem in Aristotelian and Platonic scholarship. Is virtue one or many? Do the virtues combine to form a mutually supportive network in an integrated character or are they at times in conflict? Rorty (1988: 314-29) offers an elaboration of this thorny issue and a proposed resolution (we subscribe to) in favour of a conflict-model where the more-or-less integrated character seeks to hold itself together while always in tension. Two points need to be made here. First, one could not reasonably expect a group of psychological researchers to have final answers to problems that have dogged moral philosophers since Plato. The absolute necessity for multi-disciplinary scholarship (between philosophy and the social sciences) should be clear. Secondly, meta-ethical questions are present from the start in all such research whether it is theoretically (e.g. philosophical and/or grounded in a conceptualisation of moral motivation or moral functioning) or empirically (i.e. data) driven. A point of the deepest import attaches to whether indeed morality is to be seen as a quasi-scientific theory of rules and axioms or whether it is both more piecemeal and conflict-ridden from the beginning. It should be clear that we favour the latter, but this is not the space for an elaboration of such²¹.

A further and more general criticism attaches to their conception not of individual virtues per se but of the idea of virtue in itself. In the model, virtues, following Erikson (1964) are described as strengths that animate moral ideals. This picture of virtue is found most famously in the writings of Immanuel Kant, whom many consider to be the founding father of modern deontological (duty theory) ethics that has underwritten most modern moral developmentalism²². For Kant, the virtues are subordinate to the concept of duty

19 Again, it is important to remind ourselves that their use of the term "moral" here is theoretically guided (whether the researchers are aware of it or not) and can be traced specifically to its use in the cognitive development tradition, namely that morality is simply right action in accordance with moral principles. Likewise, morally mature agents are those who consistently and autonomously apply these moral principles. We have already shown that this is not a given, but rather a reflection of theoretical preference for one picture from a highly contested terrain.

20 This criticism might seem particularly harsh. It is important to note, however, that in their excellent, densely-researched, book "Character development and physical activity" limited space (pp.192-5) is given over to the elaboration of character and the four component virtues.

21 For suggestions of such a positions see Hampshire (1983: 152): "My claim is that morality has its sources in conflict, in the divided soul and between contrary claims, and that there is no rational path that leads from these conflicts to harmony and to an assured solution, and to the normal and natural conclusion". More generally against the theoretical systematisation of ethics see Clarke, S. G. and Simpson, G (1989).

22 We say "most" since psychoanalytical accounts stand out in the sharpest of contrasts. See for example Wollheim (1984: 197-225) "The growth of moral sense" and also "The good self and the bad self (1993:39-63).

and were important only insofar as they facilitated the exercise of duty. The virtues are defined primarily, therefore, in terms of their executive function, which in this case is the achievement of mature and consistent moral action. The deontological commitment to rationally grounded moral principles, initially taken by Piaget (1932) and adopted by Kohlberg (1981) and Haan (1978), remains a cornerstone of Shields and Bredemeier's (1995) model. The adjective "moral" is exclusive and is reserved for the cognitive capacities of the agent, namely their moral reasoning ability. As for Kant, other capacities are only moral in an instrumental sense if they are exercised in the service, and facilitate the achievement, of an *a priori* standard of morality. Concepts such as care, consequence, courage and duty must play a role in any adequate moral theory. The precise shape that they play must be subject to coherence of course. One cannot just add and stir components. As Hampshire remarks:

Ways of life are sharply coherent and have their own unity in the trained dispositions that support them, and in the manners and observances and prescriptions which as children we are taught to see as normal. (c) At some time we may be introduced to a museum of normalcies which have accumulated in history. But still we cannot pick and choose bits of one picture to put besides bits of another: the coherence of the pictures comes from their distinct histories: this may be called the no shopping principle. (1983:148)

There are a number of reasons why Bredemeier and Shields' model is problematic. Before we proceed to the critique of the model it is important to stress again, that their model represents an important advance of previous research attempting to accommodate a more complex and multi-dimensional model of moral action than had been present in previous research. Part of our critique rests upon theoretical controversies in moral philosophy that do not appear in the operation of the model while others pertain to the robustness of individual stages of the model while others relate to the internal coherence of those features.

The ongoing debate between various forms of virtue or (agent) person-centred ethics, and rule- or act-centred ethics is clearly important in the evaluation of the model. Shields and Bredemeier's model seems to be a psychological hybrid that attempts to draw on the strengths from both camps. The firm footing of universality that deontology purportedly provides gives the model a concrete evaluative framework. From vir-

tue ethics comes the ability to explain contextual variation and a sense of embodied agency. In one sense the model is a concerted attempt to rectify a particular criticism made of Kohlberg's work concerning its inflation of the cognitive capacities of reasoning. Flanagan (1991) argues that any moral theory must be more than an abstract philosophical or psychological model and must adhere to a principle of minimal psychological realism. It must be "possible, or perceived to be possible, for creatures like us" [Flanagan (1991: 32)].

Although there are some reservations about the normative commitments and the methodological strategy of much of the psychological research, what emerges is a body of empirical evidence that point toward a more complex picture of moral development and education. The Piaget/Kohlbergian account of development prioritised the reorganisation and increasing adaptation of cognitive capacities. Cognitive dissonance or disequilibria drives development. The primary goal of the educator is to provide the stimulus, the disequilibria, that necessitate the re-organisation and adaptation of perception, emotion, and judgement. Given that empirical research in sport undermines the exclusively cognitive antecedents of moral functioning, a different account of moral education is also required. Evidence suggests that the moral atmosphere is a strong mediating factor, and the influence of the coach, as a "moral exemplar" seems crucial²³. Moral education should therefore take into account the moral climate of sport, particularly the example set by the coach, if the moral behaviour of individuals in sport are to improve. The qualities at which education aims must also be wider in scope than the exclusively cognitive capacities that Piaget and Kohlberg focused upon. Haan's (1978) ego processes, and Shields and Bredemeier's (1995) four virtues, point towards the need for a more expansive focus. Although we welcome a move towards concepts of virtue and character a more faithful approach is required. We shall now consider the contours of an Aristotelian account that, while being developmental in character, gives a greater emphasis on the emotions, a more considered view of deliberation, and exalts the necessary non-cognitively saturated account of moral training that is the basis of morally praiseworthy conduct and character.

23 See Guivernau and Duda (2002) for a full account of the empirical support for this point.

4. Back to Aristotle: Virtue Theory and Its Emphasis on Character, Emotion, Judgment and Its Implications for Sport and Sports Ethics Research

Baechler (1992; p.25) describes how, nearly thirty years ago, the French Academy (Academie Francaise) ceased the performance of its annual ritual wherein one of its established members gave a public lecture on virtue. It was indeed a sign of the times. On the one hand, as we have observed above, the scientific academy had apparently debunked its folk psychology, while on the other, as Baechler observed, the sixties were in full swing and the idea that good and bad could not be objective but were rather relative to each and every culture became ever more fashionable. Both trends worked against the middle, each assaulting the very idea of virtue. One group of scholars (usually sociologists and historians) thought it too fixed and insufficiently attentive to cultural differences, the other (usually psychologists) thought it too loose and yearned for a scientifically valid measure based on a single more concrete concept: justice.

In contrast to the moral reasoning model of Kohlberg an Aristotelian model appears antiquated to psychologists. To social scientists and historians, Aristotelian thought represents a "brave" leap back to antiquity. What merits then might there still be in a scheme of Aristotelian moral development? Recently, and perhaps especially in applied ethics, there has been a move back towards a virtue-theoretical approach to moral philosophical thinking and practice inspired by (though not hostage to) the seminal work by the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre. A decade after his book *After Virtue* was published it became a key text in the then emerging sub-discipline of sports ethics²⁴. MacIntyre sought to resuscitate an Aristotelian scheme of thought and living which celebrated the virtues as essential travelling companions in our search for a good life.

What then would an Aristotelian theory of moral development look like? In the first instance we should say that it would be aretaic. This concept derives from the ancient Greek word *Arete* (usually translated as virtue but denoting any form of personal excellence and not merely those that are widely recognised as moral). So an aretaic conception of ethics focuses first and foremost on excellent character; on being a certain

kind of person. This picture is essentially distinct from the deontological picture of the rational moral agent disposed to follow certain kinds of rules and performing correspondingly obligatory acts. This focus is often captured philosophically in the idea that virtue ethics is more concerned with being rather than doing, with goodness rather than simply rightness. The right kind of person (i.e. a good one, a virtuous one), is one who does the right thing, for the right reason, at the right time, feeling the right way about it as they do it. Having said that explanatory primacy must go to personal character rather than rules, we must acknowledge the situated nature of character and of virtue²⁵.

Kohlberg's famous jibe, that the problem with the virtue approach to ethics was everyone had his or her own bag of virtues, contained an important truth. The kinds of persons that are celebrated as paradigms of human excellence do change somewhat over time and between cultures. It does not follow, however, that goodness is merely a hostage to relativism. There are certain human excellences that span time and place. MacIntyre cites justice, courage and honesty as key among the virtues of any civilised community. And in addition to that we might also cite respectfulness, responsibility, integrity and a host of others. Are humans not all better for these traits as opposed to disrespectfulness, irresponsibility, and wantonness? Of course, precisely which actions these virtues issue in, and when, will be a thorny problem. But that does not mean we should throw the baby out with the bath water.

If we agree then upon the importance of character some other things will follow. First, we should eschew simple reductionism²⁶. Whether in philosophical accounts like MacIntyre's or psychological ones like Bredemeier and Shields, we must be careful to give robust psychological accounts of human being and action so that our experiments into sports ethics are not predicated upon diaphanous apparitions, thinly operationalised human agency, in order merely to facilitate empirical research²⁷. Secondly, as noted above, we have to acknowledge the important contribution of context, for as Rorty observes, "community is the context of character" (1988: 324). This is one place where Bredemeier and Shields have notably made ground in describing the role and influence of the moral atmosphere of sports and how these alter according to age,

24 For applications of a MacIntyrean scheme see among several others McNamee, 1995.

25 For an extended discussion of which see MacKinnon (1999: 57-90).

26 An extension of this criticism in relation to MacIntyre's reductionism is found in McNamee (1995) but is derived in large part from Pincoffs (1986).

27 Note the witty remark that scientists should on principle treat subjects *as if* they were human beings. Thanks to Graham McFee for suggesting this.

gender, playing level, sport-type, and so on.

One of the ways in which our accounts of (moral) action in sport can become more robust is by attending to the tri-partite account offered by Aristotle. Moral action (like any action) issues from relatively settled dispositions to see, feel and think that, are the product of our habituation. This requires an emphasis on the concept and importance of childhood learning, imitation, emulation, and so on that is rather more powerful than is commonly acknowledged. This means of course, examining patterns of normalcy as a complex of perception, emotion and deliberation. Of course, reasoning and judgement are critical to our moral development but crucially they will be a product of a habituation into modes of perception and feeling that are not simply precursors to, but rather constitutive of, mature moral action and reflection.

In the Golden Age as Freud referred to it, "hooked up securely to the sources of nourishment and comfort, the infant is indeed in a state of blissful totality" [Nussbaum, (2001:185)]. Then, of course, the child is born into the world of objects and beings and things start to get more complex and confounding. Birth through infancy can be called the initial stage of Aristotelian moral development²⁸. As Nussbaum (2001: 174-236) argues, psychoanalysts typically focus on the gratification of physical needs and basic desires while ignoring how the world is itself an object of interest and pleasure, fear and anxiety. Notwithstanding this, emotions and proto-cognitive mastery are there pretty much from the beginning. It is the centrality of these features of early experience that are frequently ignored or diminished in cognitivist accounts of moral development. It is as if childhood can be thought of as a necessary evil rather than a complex and emotionally-charged view of the world. A crucial part of that world is the connectedness of the infant and the carer. It is precisely this essential connectedness that the Kohlbergian picture eschews in its desire to put an autonomous judger at the apex of moral development. And we must note that it is gendered too from the beginning;

Taught that dependence on the mother is bad and that maturity requires separation and self sufficiency, males frequently learn to have shame about their own human capacities for receptivity and play, whereas females are more likely to get the message from their parents that maturity involves a continued relation of

interdependence, and that emotionally expressing need are appropriate. [Nussbaum, (2001: 219-20)]²⁹

Along with the growing awareness of language, the inchoate emotions emerge, and with them the growth of moral sense, however limited through infancy. Even at this stage, there is means-ends reasoning related to wants and needs (ice cream is preferable to fruit) but also to relations (jealousy arises at the carer's attention to siblings; a sense of unfairness is felt when deprived of what was before given without qualification).

In the intermediate stage, habit formation is critical to the development of moral sense. Practice does not make perfect, as sports psychologists are fond of telling us. Rather, it makes things permanent, as Aristotle (1980) observed long before the psychologist's remark became a commonplace:

It makes no small difference then, whether we form habits of one kind or of another from our very youth; it makes a very great difference, or rather all the difference. (BKII.I; 1103b22-5)

It is therefore, the acquisition of good habits that we are crucially after in general and in particular in sport. The moral educational potential rests precariously on sports as a moral laboratory in which habituation can be first enlisted and only later reflected upon and, if necessary, problematised. In the intermediate stage the character is in transition. Children and youths learn to adopt attitudes less egoistically driven and come to care as well as to reason for others interests and needs. But crucially it is also a time for the formation of reflexive emotional attitudes that are cognitively grounded. In this stage, moral emotions such as regret, shame, guilt as well as pride and loyalty come to be conceived of as appropriate responses to situations and acts. Typically, these responses come to form patterns of more or less stable perception, emotion and deliberation. But they must be struck upon the right reasons of course. To act virtuously is indeed to act from a settled character that sees and feels things properly.

Moral instruction, in its various forms, will be critical in this stage in addition to the more informal modes of learning. Two are particularly noteworthy. The first relates to the powerful, though old-fashioned, notion of a role model. In Aristotelian thought, under-

²⁸ We take the terms of stages ("initial", "intermediary", and "final") and more general inspiration from Tobin (1989).

²⁹ Although the quotation is Nussbaum's, she is setting out an idea from Nancy Chodorow. It is important to note, and not merely contingent, that the philosophers and social scientists most helpful in drawing our attention to the depth and salience of the emotions in ethics are women. Moreover, this maternal aspect is not tied to the female gender in a necessary way, but merely reflects the empirical dominance of women in the care-giving, care-taking, role.

standing the right thing to do, feel, and see is a product of our learning from wiser souls than ourselves:

Actions, then, are called just and temperate when they are such as the just or the temperate man would do; but it is not the man who does these that is just and temperate, but the man who also does them as just and temperate men do. It is well said, then, that it is by doing just acts that the just man is produced, and by doing temperate acts the temperate man; without doing these no-one would have a prospect of becoming good.

But most people do not do these, but take refuge in theory and think they are being philosophers and will become good in this way, behaving somewhat like patients who listen attentively to their doctors, but do none of the things they are ordered to do. As the latter will not be made well in body by such a course of treatment, the former will not be made well in soul by such a course of philosophy. (Bk. II.V; 1105-21)

Several points need to be made here. First, we must acknowledge the situatedness of Aristotelian thought. It is clear that the practices of ancient Greece would be misogynistic by modern lights. Indeed, Aristotle talks of the good and wise "man" and often of the "great-souled man" when he is referring to acts of manly courage and nobility. Of course, our interpretation needs to be revisionist in this regard. Nonetheless, this notion of habituated action is still apposite. Aristotle's beautiful remark that we will come to the palace of reason only through the courtyard of habit and tradition is well made. For in times of uncertainty, we literally act according to our early habituation and only thereafter according to our appreciation of what good people would do in such situations. This is how we learn to perceive the rule (how properly to proceed when faced with competing claims on our motivations) and to follow it with cognisance. Merely blind rule-following observance is in a clear sense not the same thing as following a rule wholeheartedly, where one's actions are predicated on a conception and dedication to do the right thing by being the right kind of person. Nonetheless, this stage is characterised by uncertainty and unreliability. True, one comes to begin to resist one's motivations and values that belong to and persist from the earlier more egoistic stage, but developing mature reflexive attitudes and developing these self-

critical attitudes in relation to their evolving value-scheme is still an undertaking in the process of becoming.

Character training³⁰ in the intermediate phase helps our evolving moral agent in reliably (re) producing the right acts at the right times while coming to feel appropriately about them. It is a mistake, however, to think of this habituation as mere rote learning in the way that early skill-psychologists believed. It is as if we need, in moral learning, to replace this arcane way of thinking (cf closed-loop theory) with a more open-ended framework (cf schema theory) to understand and explain action. One learns the generalised responses and then one must refine them coming ever more sensible to the particularities of each situation.

This stage is often summed up by the phrase that one has learnt "the that" of moral action. One appreciates that one must act according to the dictates of virtue. In order fully to mature, to reach the final stage of Aristotelian moral development, moral agents must also comprehend "the why". As puts it:

Acquiring the why in ethics will help [those in the intermediate stage] to overcome the gaps, unclarities, and straightforward mistakes in his moral awareness c. (1989:203)

Fully, to act virtuously, which as always at the same time to act wisely, is a matter of hitting a mean between acts that are lacking in some regard, or excessive in others. It is here that Aristotle's celebrated "Doctrine of the Mean" gives guidance as to how moral training and education, with appropriate exemplars, gives rise to our feeling, judging and acting virtuously. Here again we have a critical point of contrast with both Kohlbergian and Haanian thinking. On the one hand, doing the right thing and being the right kind of person in a Kantian-inspired Kohlbergian scheme is about deducing action-guiding conclusions from general principles. On a Haanian scheme it is about coming to uncoerced and fair agreements that we can simply be comfortable with. So the operationalisations of these ideas in sports psychology has meant one of two problematic methodological and theoretical paths are followed. First, we can use a universal measure of morality (as in Kohlberg's universal principle of reasoned justice) and then we see the extent to which our

30 According to Ryle (1972) we speak better of learning than teaching here. The point is also made by Spiecker (1999) who reminds us that character traits are better thought of as complex multi-track dispositions than simple ones. Other things being equal, glass will smash when we drop it. Persons being much more complex do not simply respond with a given act in relation to any given circumstance when they are in this intermediate stage. Notoriously, with adolescents whose value-structures are in flux, their re-actions are not reliable. Equally, responses from those in the final stage of moral development are not simple, triggered, responses. Often it takes a good deal of moral maturity to see the potential clash of interests that are commonly called dilemmas.

sportspersons can approximate it in action. Or alternatively, (in Haanian fashion) we measure the extent to which the moral balance that has been struck between competitors' clashes of interests (I want to win, ok so do you) has been fairly made. There are correspondingly two points of theoretical contrast we wish to make here. On the one hand one can come to fair agreements that are not ethically defensible. It seems in professional North American ice hockey that "everyone" agrees to be violent. No problem of unfairness there then. Equally, for the Kohlbergians, there is no appreciation that ethics is to a certain extent situational. And the appreciation of this point - that morality is not some special sphere of universal obligations but a matter of trying to live good lives - is central to an Aristotelian scheme. In our guidance as moral educators whether as pedagogues, coaches or parents, we must hit the mean between vices of cowardice (a deficiency) and rashness (an excess) if we are to act courageously in the face of danger or things that we are properly afraid of. Consider those who overconform to violent norms of sports sub-cultures. This is not courage as a virtue, but rashness, a failure to see what dangers are properly to be faced; failure to emotionally attach significance to the health and well-being of an opponent. As Sherman (1989: 35) puts it:

Action which hits the mean is directed towards the right persons, for the right reasons, on the right occasions, and in the right manner. The overwhelming sense is that virtue must fit the case. But, as Aristotle insists above, the formula of the mean itself seems to offer little concrete guidance.

This last point, that ethical perception, affection and decision are open-ended is critical to the final stage of moral development. We can only go so far in our moral training in sports as elsewhere. There will be no formulaic application of principles which are necessarily to be adapted to circumstance and context. This philosophical point, crucially, must be amplified by political strictures. Which of us will operate in Kohlberg's level six or Haan's level five? Which of us will be the perfect practical and moral reasoners? None of us that are humans; that much is for sure. While the final stage is what we aim at we commonly fail and we can do so just as easily by failures of perception (or moral blindness we might say), of emotion (we become unfeeling automata, conditioned to blot out our affectivity) or of judgement (we simply apply the rule wrongly, select an inappropriate value) and of course we may do all things right, but fail to move ourselves to action in one or all of these ways.

Thus, after good and critical habituation, there will always be the matter of institutionally and politically

creating the strong and supportive structures that will incentivise and punish those whose perception is blinded, whose affections have disappeared under the calluses of indifference and whose reasoning thwarted by robotic observance to their tribal attachments whether as team, or school, or college or nation.

5. Concluding Remarks

In this essay we have tried to show how a critical appreciation of the historical and theoretical antecedents of moral philosophy and moral psychology place us in a stronger position to present a critique of current sports psychological research into the ethics of sporting participation and performance. It has enabled us to reach back to a richer tradition of moral thought, itself arising from a competitive social culture, that offers a better "museum of normalcy" from which to situate moral character and conduct in sport.

Whether such a scheme can offer anything that would yield a moral barometer with which to test the atmosphere of sport is yet to be revealed. While Carr (1998) and Gough (1998) argue that it cannot do this in principle, we prefer to leave the door ajar. What Carr and Gough properly object to, and what we have illustrated and amplified here, is that a positivistic science in the area of ethics is a logical non-starter. Science proceeds by observation and experiment. And as we have seen, our observations of sports ethics are already saturated with normative commitments in the concepts of "duty", "respect", "rule-following", "virtue" and so on. Secondly, any empirical research in these fields must itself make theoretical assumptions about the very nature of morality, which is then presented as the standard against which behaviors are described and evaluated. What we do know is that moral learning, development and maturing can occur. We have attempted to set out a richer conceptual scheme in which to consider such learning and development. We have shown how that must take childhood patterns of perception, emotion, and deliberation more seriously along with modes of increasingly critical habituation in a strongly supportive community. Whether this can yield anything approximating a scientific programme must itself be the object of further research.

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