LEARNING FOR LIFE

Moral Education
Theory and Practice

Edited by
Andrew Garrod

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Moral education in U.S. public schools has long been a lively topic. From the early discussions of public schooling in the United States (schooling that would be compulsory and supported by taxes), through the philosophies of education promulgated especially by John Dewey and Émile Durkheim, to current laments about the lack of morals of U.S. youth (which cite increases in vandalism in schools, teen pregnancy, delinquency, and drug abuse), moral education has been seen as a vital part of schooling. Moral education takes place whether or not there is a deliberate and formal curriculum in moral education. The inevitable influence of teachers and schooling upon the values of students has been described as the hidden curriculum, mediated by the moral atmosphere of the school. In addition to these unavoidable influences, throughout the history of U.S. public education there has been a great variety of deliberate and formal curriculum programs in moral education, sometimes allied with religious education, sometimes following from the general humanitarian traditions of Western civilization, and sometimes in the service of frankly partisan and parochial ideological indoctrination.

About 20 years ago, Lawrence Kohlberg initiated a new approach to moral education. One novel aspect was the attempt to cast the products and the process of moral education into psychological constructs that could be measured and tracked throughout actual people in programs and that would enable empirical evaluation, exploration, and experimentation. In other words, Kohlberg attempted to bring the methodology of social science into the educator's art. Educators have long had interesting and reasonable ideas for the goals of moral education, the conditions under which teachers might attempt to influence the moral development of their students, and ideas for curriculum materials and classroom

activities; but Kohlberg's innovation was to attempt to conceptualize the features of these activities and processes in psychological and sociological terms amenable to empirical research.

Another new aspect of Kohlberg's approach was his attempt to deal with the problem of indoctrination. The problem of indoctrination arises not only as an abstract concern of educational theory. According to most theorists, education should empower the student by enabling the student to see options and by providing effective strategies for making choices; it is not the role of education to foreclose options and train or otherwise mindlessly condition the student to behave in certain ways chosen by the teachers. So, in abstract educational theory, indoctrination is wrong. Moreover, about 20 years ago, the pluralistic nature of U.S. society was becoming clearer, and political forces were challenging educators who attempted to foist their values upon their students. The Supreme Court, in a series of court cases, interpreted the separation of church and state amendments to the Constitution to mean that teachers in compulsory, tax-supported public schools must not engage in indoctrination of any religious or partisan ideology. Kohlberg's approach to this problem was to emphasize the activities of teachers that empowered students to make informed choices of their own in moral education — in contrast to activities of teachers that might foreclose choice making or impoverish the process of deliberation. Later, Kohlberg emphasized that the teacher's role was not simply that of process facilitator (a value-neutral agent who was there merely to facilitate deliberation) but was also to advocate a vision of an ideal "just community." In other words, the teacher was to portray a possibility that might not otherwise be imagined by the students. But the advocacy was to be through persuasion and appeals to the students' idealism, not through coercion.

Implicit throughout Kohlberg's work was the conviction that moral education was extremely important. Public schooling is the main hope that society has to offset the powerful centrifugal forces that divide our society into different classes, races, religions, and social groups. Public schooling is one of the few chances that society has to prepare people for socially responsible and ennobling lives. While it is true that churches, families, psychotherapists, and other private institutions are important influences in many people's lives, nevertheless more and more of the burden for more and more U.S. youth is falling upon public schools. Moral education must be effective. Kohlberg was really the first to undertake regular, systematic, formal evaluation of his moral education programs. Previous to Kohlberg, evaluation was hit-or-miss if done at all. Taking moral education seriously meant gathering systematic information on the impact of the process — having a bunch of good ideas to start with was not good enough. The educator's job was not

complete by making a good case for a program but he or she also had to demonstrate the program's effects. With such information, the educator, hopefully, would learn from the program, come to understand which activities are effective with whom, and could then redesign a more powerful program the next time.

This book shows that much has happened in moral education in the past 20 years. We are now far beyond the phase where mere possibilities and approaches were sketched out. These chapters report a large array of programs that have been ongoing for years. The rich and diverse initial ideas actually have been tried out and there are experiences and track records to report. Moral education is now deliberately attempted in the context of history and English classes, in sports, and in student participation in school governance. As one reads these accounts, the complexities and opportunities are spelled out. The chapters contain the richness of many specific curricular adaptations. The chapters provide specific reactions of students and quotes from group discussions that come from the many years of experience that these authors provide. The chapters contain analyses of evaluation data generated by the many projects.

In these chapters, one sees another sign that moral education is moving along. This is the concern of educators interested in moral education for interfacing with other people and groups also having a stake in public schools. The chapters discuss interfacing with families, with parent groups and school administrators, with the politics of school boards, with rival public-pressure groups, with the nation's secretary of education, and with Supreme Court rulings.

A third sign of the evolution of moral education over the past 20 years is that conceptualization of the main constructs and variables involved in moral education have become more complicated and inclusive beyond the original set of ideas. The work led by Kohlberg himself on the just community has produced a more complicated picture of moral education, and attention to new variables and new analyses of the process of moral education are called for. Other chapters in the book call attention to other variables besides moral judgment and state that moral development is more than concepts of justice. Several chapters propose ways of integrating Kohlberg's key variables with the ideas coming from other traditions. Beyond the conceptualization of the basic process of moral development itself are concepts about the other roles of teaching, working in the school setting, and working with other professionals.

This book should be of value to those who regard moral education as a very important enterprise and who want an update of the experiences and current thinking of many of those working in the field.

Acknowledgments

Introduction

Andrew Garrod

There is a growing consensus in society that schools and even colleges need to address the issue of moral education, despite arguments over the philosophy and psychology that should guide it and the practice that should characterize it. The familiar litany of juvenile crime, drugs, adolescent pregnancy, the school drop-out rate, and questionable ethics in high places has led to a rekindling of debate. In a period of perceived declining standards, what exactly should educational institutions do about ethical guidance for our youth? How can institutions choose values acceptable to a pluralistic society from among sometimes competing demands from different groups?

The determination to enhance morality, build character, and strengthen ethical standards in the young has found expression in three theoretical models of moral education — values clarification, cognitive development, and character education — that differ radically in their assumptions, methods, and interest in measuring the success of programs derived from the models. These three models have each had a period of ascendancy in the United States in the last 30 years. Values clarification, linked with the names of Rath, Harmin, and Simon and dominant in the 1960s takes as its starting point the philosophy that values are personal things. Given the plurality in our culture of religious, moral, political, and ideological perspectives, values must be a matter of personal concern, reflection, and choice, not of indoctrination or subjugation of the individual to the group in the values domain (Chazan 1985). Through clarifying questions, the teacher must help the students look at alternative values and understand and cherish the values they do choose. Although the model does not appear to be informed by an organic theory and is

criticized for its relativism, it is accessible and has been popular with teachers and students.

The cognitive development model was influential in the later 1960s and in the 1970s; it is associated primarily with Lawrence Kohlberg and his colleagues and focuses on moral reasoning. The newly resurgent character education model is currently linked with Ryan, Wynne, and Bennett and stresses the inculcation of a core set of traits and behaviors. These are the two models of moral education that are currently the most influential (Nucci 1989). Both camps are concerned with the moral malaise in our society and put primary emphasis on the role of schools; each sees the role of the teacher as an advocate in one form or another. Both appeal to the same moral ideals and see the role of public schooling as introducing students to conventional norms. Both emphasize moral achievement, which is seen by character education as a set of moral imperatives and by developmentalists as a set of moral procedural imperatives. Both, too, aim to produce full and productive citizens in a democratic society.

Although the development and the character education approaches share common concerns about disturbing trends in contemporary society, there is ultimately no easy resolution between these two camps because their methods are, in large measure, mutually exclusive. Character education focuses on teaching what is right and wrong and emphasizes the moral achievements of the society and culture as a seedbed for moral education. Exposure to elevating role models is viewed as essential, as is the selection of wholesome curriculum materials to transmit culturally approved values to the young. Learners who will absorb these values are viewed as blank slates, essentially passive; they acquire virtue through instruction, social rewards, and punishments. Indoctrination is seen as a legitimate means of transmitting moral values and traditions to the young. An example of the character education approach is Boston University's Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character that emphasizes, in its moral teaching, core values (respect, integrity, courage, and empathy) and in its didactic teaching, the common philosophical roots of U.S. culture.

Developmental moral education focuses on how to decide what is right and wrong and emphasizes the moral principles that have been established to guide one's moral deliberations in action. It portrays moral education as a process to be developed rather than as truths to be inculcated and views moral knowledge not as transmitted by the culture but as actively constructed by each individual through inter-action with the social world. The developmental model characterizes the teacher as an advocate for his or her position, but this advocacy must fall short of indoctrination (Garrod and Howard 1990).

While acknowledging the strength of the character education school, we are presenting a book whose contents are entirely

reflective of the developmental mode. Much of this book originated in the conference "Old Challenges/New Directions in Moral Education: What Parents, Teachers, and Colleges Can Do" held at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, in 1988. A year after the tragic death of Lawrence Kohlberg, it seemed appropriate for scholars, researchers, and educators aligned with the developmental school to take stock of past thinking and programs and to explore future lines of research and practice that held promise. The conference included recent work in philosophy related to the practice of moral education, theoretical discussions, curriculum presentations, and reports of psychological intervention studies from the elementary school through the college level. Two central foci of the conference were the burgeoning research on moral orientation and girls' development indebted to the theorizing of Carol Gilligan and reports on democratic schools at elementary, junior, and senior high school levels. Research and writing that fell into three interrelated categories — the process of knowing and the connection to moral issues, the process of reasoning about moral choices, and the process of teaching and how particular interventions may aid moral development — have been collected elsewhere (Garrod in press).

The philosophy and theoretical papers and those strongly grounded in curriculum, pedagogy, and democratic schooling have been collected here. Covering a diverse range of topics, this volume's chapters are connected by their singular focus on, and concern with, issues that are central to moral education. Whether addressing different theories of moral education (Part I), different attempts to implement some of these theories into practice (Part II), or the renewed interest in democratic schools (Part III), the authors collected here represent the cutting edge of the moral education debate.

PART I: THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS

Broad in scope, Part I offers an overview of theoretical perspectives on moral education. Its four chapters include a synthesis of current thoughts about moral education, an investigation of educational policy option, an exploration of the conflicts parents and children face when the parents want to educate for the child's own good or growth, and an explanation of the moral orientations of justice and care in the context of the classroom.

Barry Chazan argues the commonly held opinion that the discussion of moral education in the academic community has been characterized by great diversity and great confusion. In Chapter 1, "The State of Moral Education Theory," Chazan presents an overview of current thought about moral education. His specific objective is to delineate the major questions, issues, and directions of the topic. Organizing his discussion around three major questions he asks:

What questions has contemporary moral education theory addressed, and what are some of the answers it has proposed? What are the questions that have been neglected or have been inadequately dealt with by contemporary approaches to moral education? and, finally, What are some of the directions that moral education could take in the coming years and decades? A number of the issues raised by Chazan, such as the goals of moral education and how values can be taught, are addressed in depth in subsequent chapters of this book.

In Chapter 2, "Moral Character Education in the United States: Beyond Socialization versus Development," John Snarey and Thomas Pavkov discuss the recent interest in moral character education as an educational policy option to address a perceived decline of morality in U.S. society. They critique two divergent approaches toward moral character education: the socialization approach, which extends the perspective of Émile Durkheim, and the developmental approach, which extends the perspective of Jean Piaget. Traditionally, Durkheimian and Piagetian perspectives have been regarded as standing in opposition to one another. Analysis of current expressions of both views, however, indicates that they also share areas of agreement regarding moral character education. The chapter outlines this common ground and proposes basic guidelines with which to approach moral character education, suggesting that the classroom be used to teach values anchored in the universal principle of justice as exhibited in our nation's classic documents, especially the U.S. Constitution.

Perhaps the most influential movement in moral development and education in recent years is the feminist critique of existing theories and theorists for inadequately representing the moral reasoning and development of women. Carol Gilligan's psychological research and theorizing on caring as a different moral voice and Nel Noddings' exploration of the ethic of care are widely recognized and cited in psychological, educational, and philosophical journals and forums. In her chapter, "Shaping an Acceptable Child," Noddings offers a powerful philosophical and educational argument for caring as a foundation for moral reasoning and education. In her contribution to this volume, Noddings advocates maternal thinking as a basis for both the moral treatment of children and their moral education. This maternal thinking is not limited to mothers or women, Noddings asserts, but arises out of direct care-taking activities. The maternal perspective is characterized by creating and maintaining relationships through caring. Noddings argues that environments should be created to encourage autonomy and empathy in children. For Noddings, educating acceptable children means preparing them to be acceptable in an inner circle of close familial relationships and to be acceptable in wider circles of relationships with friends, colleagues, members of a political community, and so

forth. Part of the educational process is also preparing students to select and evaluate the groups from which to seek acceptance. In each, caring and relationships should form the basis of the decision.

In Chapter 4, "Two Moral Orientations: How Teachers Think and Act in the Classroom," Kay Johnston brings together theories about moral development and problem solving with a theory about teacher education. Having established her belief in the role of teachers as moral craftspersons, she stresses that the knowledge of moral orientations can help perfect a teacher's craft. Indeed, she argues that successful teachers *must* be able to address an individual student's needs in the greater context of that student's moral orientation toward either the care or justice perspective. In this sense, the ability to react productively to different moral perspectives becomes a very effective strategy in the teacher's interactions with both individual students and the class as a whole. Drawing on her own research with junior high students, Johnston suggests ways in which teachers can develop this strategy.

PART II: MORAL EDUCATION IN PRACTICE

Focusing on the transition from theory into practice, Part II looks at several innovative approaches to the implementation of moral education theory. Chapter topics include the relationship between families and schools as forces in moral education, the use of literature to teach moral reasoning, an educational program that stimulates thought about moral decisions through its examination of the Holocaust, and a discussion of the potential value of competitive team sports in moral development.

In his chapter, "Schools and Families: Partners or Adversaries in Moral Education?" Thomas Lickona explores the reciprocal roles families and schools have as educators of the young. To be effective in their roles as moral educators, schools need the active support of families — support that is often not readily given. Parents are wary of moral lessons in schools that promote moral standards different from those of the home and are upset with activities that undermine respect for parents or invade the family's privacy. By looking at several case studies, Lickona demonstrates that these tensions can be avoided through careful planning and cooperation between sides, whether in the form of parent-teacher peer groups or weekly conferences on moral issues. He asserts not only that parallel forms of moral education can be carried out in both home and the school, but also that deliberate collaboration between schools and families will make significant contributions to the child's moral growth.

In Chapter 6, "Teaching Moral Reasoning in the Standard Curriculum," Robert Swartz focuses on moral education in the classroom. We see how history teacher Michelle Commeyras uses

U.S. literature to teach moral reasoning and decision making. For example, the ways in which dilemmas are faced by characters in *The Hessian* present the opportunity to teach decision-making skills such as considering options, ascertaining relevant facts, and weighing the significance of these facts. Swartz also discusses the difference between teaching moral principles and teaching moral reasoning — "teaching students what is right and wrong versus teaching good thinking about what is right and wrong." Here we see moral education presented from a thinking-skills approach, an approach designed to equip students in this morally complex world to make well-reasoned choices of their own.

In Chapter 7, "Facing History and Ourselves: A Synthesis of History and Ethics in Effective History Education," Margot Stern Strom, Martin Sleeper, and Mary Johnson describe the Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, which is committed to helping teachers and administrators bring education about twentieth-century genocide, specifically the Holocaust, to students in their communities. The authors show how the program has developed a flexible, interdisciplinary unit appropriate for adolescents who are engaged in understanding human behavior, particularly around the themes of peer pressure, conformity, individual and group behavior, and the role of the individual in a complex society. The chapter explores in detail the goals and materials of the program, the responses of the students and teachers to it, and the reasons for its effectiveness.

In Chapter 8, "Athletic Development and Personal Growth," which explores the opportunities for moral development outside the classroom, Jeffrey Pratt Beedy offers a historical perspective of youth sports in the United States and reviews the ongoing debate as to the value of sports in encouraging personal growth in elementary children. Stressing that adults need to understand the ways children experience the social aspects of sports, Beedy highlights both the potential of social and moral development theories to meet this need and the crucial role that coaches must play. With coach-athlete interactions remarkably similar to those between teachers and students in the classroom, sports and group games can do much to facilitate the process of moral growth. At the very least, they can "encourage thinking, discussion, and interaction between people with different roles" — an encouragement that can help prepare children for an adult world that desperately needs thinking, discussion, and interaction.

PART III: MORAL EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY

While the previous sections explored moral education theory and practice, Part III focuses on the role that schools can play in the

development of democratic values and ways of thinking. Its four chapters describe what is generally known about the cognitive, sociomoral, and political development of adolescents; elucidate the just community approach to high school education; examine the possible role of democratic schooling as a solution to such democratic problems as small voter turn-out; and discuss the founding and maintenance of a democratic forum at the Heath School.

In "The Adolescent as a Citizen," Ralph Mosher argues that if we are to educate for democracy we must recognize that democratic understandings and competencies are inextricably linked to the broader cognitive, sociomoral, and political development of U.S. youth. Summarizing the findings of Piaget, Kohlberg, and Adelson, the author examines what we know generally about these developments in adolescents, especially as they bear on adolescents' abilities to think and act democratically.

Arguing that democratically governed schools promote the psychological development of both students and educators, Robert Howard and Robert Kenny examine the relationship between the governance of schools and moral reasoning in Chapter 10, "Education for Democracy: Promoting Citizenship and Critical Reasoning through School Governance." This chapter outlines the issues that any democratic school must address, such as representation, organization, and respecting the rights of minorities. The authors include descriptions of some of the solutions that have been created in existing democratic high schools.

In Chapter 11, "The Just Community Approach to Classroom Participation" (a chapter congruent theoretically with Chapter 10), Clark Power and Ann Higgins describe and elucidate the just community approach to high school education by focusing on the value of participation as a central moral concept. Where Howard and Kenny emphasize representative democratic governance, Power and Higgins examine direct democratically governed school-within-a-school programs. Examples from the Cambridge Cluster School are given that show that one result of valuing participation seems to be an increasingly serious attitude toward academic learning by the students. Examples that highlight the effects of valuing participation on students' self-esteem and social and interpersonal abilities are also given from the ongoing Bronx project. Finally, research results looking at changing attitudes toward attendance by the Bronx just community students and comparison group students in the two schools are presented and discussed as exemplifying the theoretical connection between the moral value of participation and positive but conventional student attitudes and behavior.

In her description of a democratic forum at the Heath School — a kindergarten through eighth grade school in Brookline, Massachusetts — Ethel Sadowsky shows that democratic schools are not

confined to the high school level. Her chapter, entitled "Taking Part: Democracy in the Elementary School," discusses the reasons for starting the Heath Community Meeting and its initial links with the bicentennial of the Constitution. She highlights some of the issues encountered and resolved at the meeting and the "fit" of the Heath Community Meeting into the other structures of the school. The chapter concludes with an enumeration of the positive outcomes this experiment has had on community feelings and on the potential for helping children regard themselves as responsible and able thinkers and doers. Given the burgeoning turn to democracy worldwide, an assessment of the success of our own educational institutions in educating students for citizenship is a worthwhile one indeed.

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