

ETHICAL ADVENTURES:

Topics of Moral Significance

by

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"Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim." - Aristotle

"Experience without theory is blind, but theory without experience is mere intellectual play." - Kant

"In life, you can never do a kindness too soon because you never know how soon it will be too late."
- R. W. Emerson

"Search others for their virtues, and thyself for thy vices."
- Benjamin Franklin

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Preface: In earlier writings, to which links are offered in the following two paragraphs, we have given attention to themes of moral relevance such as the meaning of ethics, moral motivation, how individual ethics differs from social ethics, character, the means-ends relationship, the good life, moral sanctions, conscience, hypocrisy, obligation, honesty, lying, injustice, right and wrong, moral consistency, kinds of guilt, the role of education, how mores are distinct in meaning from morality, and how self-interest may be distinctly different from selfishness..

The topics in this book are meant to fill out the picture: they are intended to supplement the Unified Theory of Ethics (2009), a link to which is here: <http://tinyurl.com/yeneyhv>.

That new paradigm for ethics in turn rests upon a foundation laid earlier in these papers and booklets and essays:

Living The Good Life (2008); <http://tinyurl.com/24swmd>

ETHICS: A College Course (2007), see

<http://tinyurl.com/2mj5b3> ;

Ethics As Science 2006)

http://www.workforworldpeace.org/ethics_as_science.pdf

What the World Needs Now (2002)

<http://www.hartmaninstitute.org/html/WhatWorldNeedsNow.htm>

In this current work in order to enhance readability I will continue to employ the literary technique and the format used in the 2009 book. The characters are fictional. The subject is not.

Here is the setting: A group of professors, instructors, and their guests confer around a large circular table, teaching one another. Taking turns, they call attention to aspects of moral philosophy that require consideration. They do this for everyone to see more of the whole picture of this vast field known as Ethics. They are building, and rounding out, a new theory of Ethics, one that is adequate to our times.

{At the risk of disappointing some readers he writer will not within these pages present interruptions, angry confrontations, suspense, lurid sex, violence or other drama since this is not meant to be a novel.}

What it is meant to be is a search for truth, a way to increase the amount of useful information in the world, offering a frame-of-reference for understanding of the scope of ethics and indicating how useful ethics actually is - and can be even more so - for living a valuable life.

Let us now give attention to the ongoing (fictional) conference of the educators as they discuss related concepts.

The relevant concepts they take up for consideration are, among others, selfishness, greed, principles derived from the theory, applications to business practice, moral beliefs, justice, authenticity, kindness, and moral development throughout the ages.

It is time to set out on the adventure of exploration as we consider these topics and more.

ETHICAL ADVENTURES: Topics of Moral Significance

Harry: Hello everyone and welcome. Have you heard the news story (as reported in Parade Magazine, 5-9-10):

At 9:30 a.m. on a recent Spring day, the doors to the convention center in Atlanta, Georgia opened and in walked 25-year-old Rhynita Reid. Much to her surprise, she was greeted by thunderous applause... Reid happened to be the first patient at the city's free one-day "mega-clinic," and the cheering crowd consisted of 1050 volunteers who'd given up their Saturdays to provide no-cost health care to uninsured Americans.

There's more to the story (which you can read in full here:

<http://www.parade.com/health/2010/05/09-nations-biggest-free-clinic.html>

When I saw that number, I was impressed. It's an awesome and remarkable statistic. One thousand fifty people turned out early that morning on the chance that on that day they might have the opportunity to provide an act of kindness!!

Key: Yes, that is impressive. Though it's not so surprising. Once a person *appreciates* how privileged or fortunate he or she is, if one is normal one wants to share the good fortune. Call it "moral health" or - as the theory would speak of it - a *high degree of morality*.

Mark: Let us here, as well as in the Epilogue where more detail is to be found, strive to be explicit about the thread of reasoning that makes this ethics new and different from previous efforts. We have in other places spelled out the connections from the axiom of value¹ – the contextual definition of the term 'value' - to the author's unique definition of "morality," Having defined value we precede from there to the main types of value, the value dimensions. One of these provided us with the definition of the field

of Ethics. That will lead in the course of the discussion to some standard recognized principles of ethics. This, I confess, is a rudimentary theory - compared to what we would like to see, but it is a paradigm within which new information can be connected in order to round out the picture.

Larry: Our analysis of value led us logically to one sort of value, namely, *moral value*, and hence to the self-concept. What is one's self-concept? It belongs to an individual; say his name is Bill, who is a member of the unit-class bearing the name "Bill." This singular concept named "Bill" has a meaning; *viz.*, it is his accompanying self-image. The relationship between himself and his own identity and set of beliefs is known here in this theory as "morality."² It is a matter of degree. It is his moral value. This is the framework on which the other topics cohere. As noted earlier, in *A Unified Theory of Ethics*, and in other writings, we are in the field of Ethics when individuals are valued intrinsically.

They are valued intrinsically when they are valued empathically and with compassion, when they are treated kindly, and when respect is shown for their human dignity. Now the frame-of-reference has been delineated.

THE INFLUENCE OF MORAL BELIEFS ON ETHICAL CONDUCT

Ken: Many differences between moral beliefs depend on differences between *non-moral* beliefs. Consider the example of a wife – somewhere in the world where cannibalism may be practiced - who eats the brain of her dead husband to "keep his essence inside herself". She wouldn't do that unless she held that belief. But that is not a belief about morality. It is a kind of metaphysical-religious belief. The difference between the wife's morality and our morality

seems to depend entirely on a non-moral belief about the world.

Suppose I killed my wife by giving her poison because I thought (mistakenly) that the poison would cure her. Would you say that I believe it is all right to poison one's wife? Of course not. The same goes for the cannibalistic wife. The difference is not a *moral* difference but is a factual difference. What if she believed in modern science? Would her conduct be different?

Ida: No doubt it would be, Ken. Hence we see the vital importance of a good up-to-date education in the latest findings of contemporary science. As I have often noted, Education is applied Ethics. Eventually, via education, vast multitudes will agree to accept the best definitions -- the ones which work -- work to make our lives better. Jeb, what are your views about ethics?

Jeb: We are social animals. We desire to live together and to pursue things together. Anything that is important to us we often want to do with others, and we then develop structures and institutions for doing that. Nearly all societies develop something that could be called a "state" -- i.e. a structure of laws, with an authority to proclaim and enforce them. Countries, however, are not essential; they can, and are, being replaced by regional authorities. Also, many of us live by the principles that "One good turn deserves another" (reciprocity); and "What goes around comes around."

Larry: And remember the "3 Rs" that we have already derived within the Unified Theory of Ethics. They are: **Respect for self; Respect for others; and Responsibility for all your actions.**

Ida: True. A person of good character assumes responsibility for his own actions.

ON JUSTICE

Ed: I should like to suggest that the concept “justice” is one that coheres to the framework offered in the Unified Theory of Ethics, so at this time I shall proceed to define and analyze the concept "justice."

Many philosophers agree that *justice* is relevant to ethics. As you recall, the concept *morality* was shown to be very basic to ethics. The two concepts – morality and justice - are closely related: “morality without justice is blind, ” to paraphrase what Kant said in another context. First, some preliminary considerations may be helpful here.

To review the *value dimensions*, I shall offer some examples: Confusion, chaos, destruction and incoherence are

Transposed values. They are worth only *a fraction*. In contrast,- and worth more - thoughts are **S-values**; things are **E-values**; persons and involvements are **I-values**. These result when the basic value dimensions are applied.

Here are some further applications: People usually S-Value theories, systems, ideologies, blueprints, plans, zip codes, circuit diagrams, technical language, black-and-white thinking, scientific models, and all the “isms.” They are appropriately valued Systemically.

E-Value is the valuation people usually place upon things of this world, practicalities, empirical matters, know-how, savoir-faire,

social, everyday concerns, functionality, diplomacy, worldly considerations, categories, etc.

You are likely to I-Value the following: your mother, your spouse, your dearest ones, unique persons you love, beloved treasures, masterpieces of art, priceless items, etc. We value those Intrinsically whenever we identify with and bond with them.

Value scientists speak of those three values as “dimensions of value.” We need them all. The three value dimensions form a hierarchy with S-value worth the least; E-value worth infinitely more; and I-value the most precious of all – worth far, far more than any E-value. The correct hierarchy of values, in symbols, is $S < E < I$. And thus to place S above I; or to give more weight to E than to I would be a fallacy.

The highest of the three basic values is Intrinsic Value, or I-value.” **The discipline of “Ethics” arises when persons are Intrinsically valued**, according to value scientists [*i.e.*, Formal Axiologists.]. All of this is explained clearly in detail in the transcript of an informal talk given by Hartman: “The Measurement of Value”: <http://www.hartmaninstitute.org/html/MeasurementOfValue.htm>

Now that the preliminaries are out of the way, my contention here is that Formal Axiology – which, as you recall is the meta-language for Ethics -- has something to say about the concept "Justice" that may be helpful. What do you think: Do the tools of this new science of values when applied to this concept elucidate the subject?

I shall define JUSTICE as meaning: "the restoration and maintenance of a balance."

There are at least four modes of justice, on a continuum from worst to best; this analysis says that justice is a matter

of degree rather than just "black or white."

These dimensions are: Transposed Justice (fragmented value), which is Retribution or Retaliation, an "eye for an eye," which, as wise men have noted, eventually "renders everybody blind....." Here we find instances of revenge, feuds, "getting even," etc.

Next, there is -- when the Systemic Value dimension is applied to "justice" -- Equality or Equal treatment under law. For example, consider the notions "Every one is entitled to his day in court," "All are equal in the eyes of the law." These concepts support the systemic perspective.

When Extrinsic Value is applied to "justice" these examples result: Compensation or Equity: one doesn't trade an apple for an automobile. The concepts of *quid quo pro* - and of a judge taking into consideration the circumstances of the perpetrator's life - are also applied E-value.

When Intrinsic Value is applied, we get: Rehabilitation as well as also Reconciliation.

An illustration of this form of justice may be what was the practice in some African tribe when a murderer's dispensation was that he had to enter into the extended family of his victim, and assume all the responsibilities of the one he is replacing, and in this way he paid his debt to the community. Religious traditions and lore offer many other illustrations of reconciliation.

Recently, in the Western World we find that the practice of "creative sentencing" on the part of some jurists often contributes to rehabilitation of offenders.

Earlier I mentioned “law.” Note that the category, Law, itself can be analyzed by the axiological dimensions into Systemic: Statute Law, Extrinsic: Common Law, and Intrinsic: Moral Law - each one worth more than the last. I’ll explain this in a bit more detail by phrasing it this way:

The notion of Justice results in law, in social contracts. There are three major types of law.

(S) Juridical; written codes; legislation;

(E) the Common Law ...the way people actually do live no matter what the statutes may dictate;

(I) The Moral Law ; also conclusions of Ethical Science. (The term “science” is employed here in the sense of: a *coherent body of accumulative knowledge*; a careful study.)

Each type of law here enumerated outweighs the former in value.

This is the formal axiological analysis of Justice, and perhaps it sheds some light on the topic. I believe it does. I’d like to know about it if someone improves upon or enhances this definition and analysis of the concept “Justice.” I hope this application of the dimension of value makes for a wider understanding. Thanks, all, for your attention.

Ida: Our thanks to you, Ed. Good work.

Carl: Justice is what the strongest grant !

Bill: I see it has quite a different meaning for you. The beauty of formal axiology is that it encourages the ferreting

out of these differences via its understanding of the structure of concepts. {See the End Notes for details.}

Kay: Do I detect a scintilla of cynicism here, Carl?

Are you saying that among the weak no justice ever occurs? Carl, it is up to you to define the terms you use, such as "strongest." Would that include Plato? Or Kant? Would it include Nelson Mandela?

After thinking deeply about it I came to the conclusion that that little guy -- Mohandas K. Gandhi -- was the strongest. He died owning a bowl and a sheet he wore. Yet he would have quickly given them to you if he thought you needed them more. He lived a long, and deeply-meaningful life. He was the greatest and most profound person who I ever experienced during my few days alive on this earth.

You seem very disillusioned, Carl. Yet we must avoid the sickness of *pessimism*. It builds nothing constructive. It throws cold water on the best creativity – creativity that could eventually benefit millions of the planet's most destitute to climb out of their misery.

In contrast, many wise folks recommend optimism as a lifestyle. Try it! We will all feel better as a result, and we will all be in a position to be more effective in changing this world for the better (which is what Hegel, J. S. Mill, Putnam, Rawls, Ortega, and a multitude of other philosophers wanted to do.)

To be realistic is to *hope for the best, to expect the worst, and to work to make the best come to pass, and to avoid the worst.*

Every realist is also an optimist, else he would lack the vision to be realistic. To imagine 'the best' is to have vision.

Jeb: I trust that those who might ever seek justice toward me will apply Intrinsic-justice. I hope the same for all others too.

Frank: To further the cause of universal justice, lets figure out what character traits and habits are most effective for more and more folks to manage attaining *the good life*. Isn't that a worthwhile project for us to work on? The internet itself (our "world brain") already likely has many of the answers. It's merely a matter of bright students aiming to do research in this area.

George: The Unified Theory recommends that we have a sense of direction in life, that we live purposefully, that we simultaneously care about our self-interest as well as the common good, that we cherish our individuality, and differentiate ourselves to be unique, and then express our uniqueness thus making a contribution. It offers the imperative to live meaningfully.

Nick: Let me introduce my young friend, Paul, who just dropped in. His field of interest is to understand the varying degrees of caring.

DEGREES OF CARING

Paul: There is middle ground between being selfish and being loving. Until we think of a better word for it, let's speak of it as "casual-caring." When, for example, I give

some money to a poor person – when I am philanthropic, or exercise benevolence - it often isn't love; yet neither is it selfishness (but I view it as being closer to pure unenlightened self-interest than it is to love, since I have done it for the fine feeling I experience later when I reflect upon what a generous person I am.)

Harry: Perhaps we can view love as on a spectrum, from least to most:

Systemic-love is Philanthropy or donations to charities.

Extrinsic-love is sexual (a love between bodies.)

Intrinsic-love – or at least one sort of it -- is *conjugal affection*, the kind of affection that grows over time like water boils, gradually at first, but then reaches a depth, an intensity as the couple share their lives through the years. Let us call this: true love. Friendship underlies and precedes it. True friends achieve it. It is the ideal married love also.

Three Greek words for these shades of love are: *philia*, *eros*, *agape*. The Greeks had many more words for love, each describing some of its infinite varieties.

What is love? One possible definition of it is this: it is the perceiving of countless possibilities in the loved one, or loved object, possibilities for the enhancement of both the lover and the one loved. If you look at someone and see so many possibilities radiating, you are falling in love. It is a way to love oneself. Love recognizes in others the completion of life. And let's not confuse this with *infatuation*, which is an imagination about the loved one which does not match reality: a state in which the loved

individual is 'put on a pedestal' and may be worshipped as super-divine.

Kay: True love always entails caring. It is giving. One serves the person who one loves, continually doing favors for him or her.

Gerry: Yes, love is giving of oneself.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE

George: The ethical point of view shares a common feature with the anatomical point of view. They both are perspectives. However while the anatomical perspective is *systemic*; the ethical perspective is *intrinsic*. To **Systemically-value**, as most of us do when it comes to the location of bones in the body, is to see the structure, to appreciate the orderliness and systemic aspects. In contrast, to **Intrinsically-value** is to concentrate, focus, get involved with, give yourself to, permeate and be permeated by the richness of it all, to appreciate the opportunity for appreciation, to love. It is to intensely value a human life. Intrinsic Value is the domain of emphasis, emotion, and empathy.

George: What follows from this? Some of the Intrinsic Values (I-values) are justice, life, love, the right to flourish, *to live* fully and meaningfully. These are among the highest values; they take priority before other values.

Ken: Another implication is this: As a general rule the law – a systemic value -- should be obeyed. However under certain circumstances – such as to save a human life – stealing (a form of law-breaking) at first glance may be justified;

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heinz_dilemma

since to save a life (which is an Intrinsic value) is more important than property rights (which are Systemic or Extrinsic values.) Yet, as we learned earlier – when it was thoroughly argued in the Unified Theory treatise -- **means** need to be compatible with **ends** (with the goals in view.) If the goal is life, and its enhancement, then the means used to get to it ought to be life-enhancing, or health-giving.

Nick: It is all well and good to conform to socially-shared norms, to the standards, rights and duties that one's society can agree and consent to; while at the same time recognizing that under certain circumstances disobedience to those conventional standards is the moral and ethical way to live.

Kay: I wholeheartedly agree.

Ida: Yes, why maintain the current social order merely for its own sake if it tends toward tyranny? If it does not permit a wide array of options, of increasing opportunities, of freedom of artistic expression, then it may be time to change it in a more humane direction.

Mark: Jeremy Rifkin, in his marvelous new book THE EMPATHIC CIVILIZATION, (NY: Tarcher/Penguin, 2009) says that if it is human nature to look out for number one, how then do you explain those internet projects: Linux and Wikipedia? He writes, "Let's celebrate the 'digital commons.'"

Bob: The very invention of the worldwide web itself, in 1990, by Dr. Tim Berners-Lee, was a gift freely given to us all. He saw its mutual benefit, its "win/win" quality.

Jerry: In economics and in business today the win/lose game gives way to the win/win scenario. We optimize our self-interest

by collaborating and thus creating additional value. To quote Rifkin, “The classical economic idea that another’s gain is at the expense of one’s own loss is replaced by the idea that enhancing the well-being of others amplifies one’s own well-being.” I am, of course, aware that moral philosophy is not economics and that it has distinct standards and approaches. I am proposing a kind of activism in contrast with pure adventures in thought, but the two are not mutually exclusive. Let’s search together for *truths that can be applied in daily life*.

George: “Adding value” is a concept that unifies academic ethics with business ethics. In the businesses and industries of this world adding value is the thing to do. Now we are aware that in life situations, in our individual moral growth as well as in our social life to add value is the wise course.

Nick: It is indeed the way to go!

Jerry: Learning is problem-driven. People do more and learn faster when they're trying to solve problems. They teach themselves. They will seek out the resources to learn what to do if they really want to solve the problem. This is true when the problem is to construct a coherent and adequate theory of ethics that can aid in solving real-life problems and actual moral dilemmas. As an example, George – and you too, Frank, since you run a business that’s doing rather well -- can you suggest how ethical theory may be applied to business practice?

ON BUSINESS ETHICS AND MORAL PRACTICES

George: Ethics definitely has a large role in the success of a company. They don't call it a "work ethic" for nothing! There is an intimate connection between the two concepts, business and ethics. See <http://www.globalethics.org/services-for-organizations.php> also see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Business_ethics#Why_business_ethics.3F .

I would be remiss if I did not call your attention to Michael H. Annison, "Organizing For Good" Journal of Formal Axiology: Theory and Practice, Vol. 1, (2008), pp. 59-80. This article discusses the challenges organizations face as well as the essentials of effective management. He draws a distinction between *efficiency* and *effectiveness* and explains why effectiveness is a higher value.

Frank: Paul was telling us about degrees of caring. To my mind caring and sharing go together. The **ethical** path for businesses is to share gains. Robert L. Masternak in a paper³ written in 2009 teaches that companies who decide to share their gains with their workers (including managers, executives, and all the staff) are best advised

“to utilize narrow **operational measures** of true gains, such as productivity, quality, customer service, on-time delivery, and spending. Typically Gainsharing plans have multiple measures. In order for a gain to occur, the performance pie must improve.

As the pie expands, the greater the improvement (gain), and the more financial benefit for the company and employees. The key point is that **there must be an improvement before any Gainsharing occurs**. A critical point is that since gains are typically measured in relationship to a historical baseline, employees and the organization must change in order to generate a gain.

The most common goals used as measures are in the areas of Quality, Productivity, Cost-reductions; and Service (reducing customer complaints and/or increasing service satisfaction.).

Although there are always outside factors that will influence the result, it is the case that employees have more control of operational measures than they have of profitability.

Continuing in the words of Masternak:

“However, unlike Profit Sharing and depending on the Gainsharing plan’s design, employee payouts can potentially occur even during periods of profitability decline. Companies with this type of Gainsharing model argue that even though profits may be down, profits would have further declined if not for the savings generated from the Gainsharing measures. In this example the company is sharing “savings” and not necessarily “profits.” [All] employees at a site are generally [eligible for] the plan, including hourly, salaried, and managers. [T]he plan applied to employees “housed under the same roof.”

In contrast with profit-sharing plans, Gainsharing plans “are designed to distribute gains based on an equal percentage of pay or cents per hour worked.” Bonuses are not to be paid out on a hierarchical basis.

Another Gainsharing enhancement is that Gainsharing is always paid in the form of a cash bonus, based on the “pay-for-performance” concept as compared to a “benefit plan” or a “deferred compensation plan.”

Frequency of payout is greater for Gainsharing than Profit Sharing: The Gainsharing plan payout is not restricted to an annual arrangement.

“Unlike group incentives, Gainsharing typically measures across department/units/functions. The concept is to build cooperation and communications between departments instead of building silos.

“The development of a Gainsharing plan often involves employees in many aspects of the plan’s design and implementation. Often a cross-functional Design Team is assembled that mirrors the makeup of the total organization. ...After upper management’s approval, the

Design Team is responsible for conducting all employee kick-off and promotional meetings. The objective is a sense of employee ownership for the plan. ...If the objective is to drive organizational change by influencing attitudes and behaviors, then Gainsharing may be the right answer.”

Under this new plan it is often advisable to ask the design-team members where they see the company’s main vulnerabilities, and to present it to the body of workers as a plan to reduce largely, or even to eliminate if possible, that area of vulnerability; if they contribute toward that end, the gain will be shared. The managers’ task then becomes to continually remind the workers as to the goal or goals in view, and to celebrate with the workers when the goal is achieved.

Ed: Thank you, Frank, for that informative presentation. Caring and sharing are truly relevant to Ethics. Tom and Bob have joined our group and have been listening intently. Tom – like Frank - has lots of business experience. Bob is more the philosopher. Feel free to chip in, gentlemen, if you have any observations on this (or any other) topic.

ON GREED

Tom: I would only make this comment: a business owner needs sufficient capital to stay in business, and striving to make an adequate amount of capital does not make the person greedy. The first responsibility to shareholders is for a business to survive, To survive requires capital.

Bob: No argument there. Note, though, that there is such a thing as being *too greedy*. For example, if you acquired all the money there is in the world, and in the course of doing so you impoverished everyone else and put everyone else

out of business ...would you be able to do much with that money?

Tom: Don't worry. I won't do that. (^_^)

Check this out. It is on the topic of generous giving by businesses: [Club members who give half their money away](#)

Nick: I read that most-intriguing article when it was reprinted in Ode Magazine's online edition. <http://www.odemagazine.com/#>
Good stuff!

Listen to this! As I was telling about our efforts to construct a better theory of Ethics, a critic referred to me as "naïve and ignorant of the evil and corruption prevalent in the cutthroat world of politics and business, and the close collaboration of the two."

Harry: In case anyone gets the impression that we are not aware of what human beings are capable, we can refer them to the diagnostic manual that psychiatrists use. A link is here: [Diagnostic and Statistical Manual](#). There one finds a list of the perversions and perversities, the deviances, and the mental aberrations known to current science. We are keenly aware of the **hypocrisies**, the **arrogance**, and the other varieties of immorality!

Bob: You might also refer them to Dante's Inferno.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inferno_%28Dante%29

Furthermore, on the topic of the moral fallacy known as **rankism**, or *arrogance*, see: [Robert Fuller: Racism and Rankism: We Won't Eradicate the One Until We Take on the Other](#) and for definitions of the key terms, see: [Rankism - P2P Foundation](#)

Charley: We take our prejudices for realities. The shackles of the mind are mind-made. To see this is to begin to dissolve them.

We here around this table are well-aware of unethical conduct and of the presence of immorality by individuals on this planet. We have seen the same miserable, stupid, self-defeating behavior in this world as any critic of our approach has.

It is a question of what do you want to emphasize, how awful everything is, or what is working right and can even be better. A pessimist stresses what is going wrong; an optimist stresses what is good and how to make things better. Take your pick.

Optimism correlates with mental and physical health, with making our own luck, with more success and happiness in life. as experimental evidence in Positive Psychology has demonstrated. A **new** study shows that pessimism can cause heart disease; optimism can lower the risk. See: [Optimists may have lower risk of heart disease - CNN.com](#)

Nick: Yes, of course. Since we believe Ethics is about flourishing, we have mainly presented ideas on how to flourish, how to live a good life. That is the major emphasis. Yet our theory has in no way ignored the seamy side, the immorality.

I would argue at length for the conclusion that the quest for prestige, the inability to admit a mistake, opportunism, arrogance, bigotry, cruelty, adultery, dishonesty, selfishness, greed and hypocrisy are all due to **ignorance** about the value of avoiding them as well as **ignorance** about how to avoid them.

Our Ethical Radius

Frank: Earlier, Paul was telling us about degrees of caring. Let us discuss a related topic: our “ethical radius” and the circle through which it sweeps. Tim Russert, in a memoir he penned, relates to us that his dad used to take half an hour to carefully box up any broken glass before taking it to the trash. Why? Because “The trash guy might cut his hands.”

David Wong, commenting on this wrote that “this is most unusual.” Why?

“None of us .” he says

. “spend much time worrying about the garbage man's welfare even though he performs a crucial role in not forcing us to live in a cave carved from a mountain of our own filth. We don't usually consider his safety or comfort at all and if we do, it's not in the same way we would worry over our best friend or wife or girlfriend or even *our dog*.”

People toss half-full bottles of drain cleaner right into the barrel, without a second thought of what would happen if the trash man got it splattered into his eyes. Why? Because the trash guy exists **outside the radius of those we care about,**”

He refers to it as the “**Monkey-sphere**.” That **sphere** is the group of people who each of us are able to conceptualize as people. If some unnamed scientists he fails to cite are right, it's physically impossible for this to be a number much larger than **150**. We inherit our brain from monkeys he claims.

According to Wong, most of us do not have room in **our Monkey-sphere** for our friendly neighborhood sanitation worker. So, we don't think of him as a person. We think of him as The Thing That Makes The Trash Go Away.

And even if you happen to know and like your particular garbage man, at one point or another we all have limits to our sphere of concern.”

Wong claims (mistakenly – according to more-recent research) “it is the way our brains are built. We each have a certain circle of people who we think of as people, usually our own friends and family and neighbors, and then maybe some classmates or coworkers or church or suicide cult.”

To Kevin Federline, it seems that one death is a tragedy, but a million deaths is a statistic. That’s what he is quoted as saying. It was, we trust, his way of expressing his disappointment with the currently-existing lack of compassion. Ethical awareness can change all this.

Wong continues:

“Those who exist outside that core group of a few dozen people *are not people to us*. They're sort of one-dimensional bit characters.

This is why most of us wouldn't dream of stealing money from the pocket of the old lady next door, but don't mind stealing cable, adding a shady exemption on our tax return, or quietly celebrating when they forget to charge us for something at the restaurant.

You may have a list of rationalizations long enough to circle the Earth, but the truth is that in our monkey brains the old woman next door is a human being while the cable company is a big, cold, faceless machine. That the company is, in reality, nothing but a group of people every bit as human as the old lady, or that some kind old ladies actually work there and would *lose their jobs* if enough cable were stolen, rarely occurs to us.... Once you grasp the concept, you can see examples all around you.

Jeb: I would respond to Mr. Wong by saying that a big difference that I see between monkeys and humans is that humans are able to get past some of the animal ignorance in us.

Harry: True. The wise extend their 'ethical radius' and sweep in more, and ever more, as part of their family. Each of us may ask ourselves the question: How large is my in-group, my circle? Why limit it?

Jerry: By implication, Mr. Wong raises the question: "Is there a physical limit to the size of the circle, or can we treat 1000 different people each as well as Ethics indicates we ought to?"
While I realize that I may never have the same emotional response with others as I have for my mother, who I cherish, I try to give everyone the respect I would give to my own mother. I think this should be our ultimate goal.

Paul: Very well said, Jerry!! You really do have empathic sensitivity and are a true citizen of the 21st Century.

I admire you for your ethical insight. You are a model for all those in future generations. Eventually the majority of humans will catch up with the fine example you set. I find there is no problem in identifying with the planet, Saturn, or with a family in Siberia I have yet to meet; they are part of my web of life. I feel at home in the universe.

Ken: You identify with a planet? How do you do that? You don't think you are a planet, do you?

Paul: I feel at one with it. The meaning of 'to identify with' that is relevant here is this one that I found in a good online

dictionary: *Identify* (verb used with an object): to associate in name, feeling, interest, action, etc. (usually fol. by with). Example: "He preferred not to identify himself with that group." See <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/identify>

That planet and I are in the same universe, one in which I feel at home. The observation I made of the planet once through a telescope is a part of my personal experience,

and is thus, in a sense, a part of my life. Of course not everything I identify with is *identical* with me; that should be obvious.

The closest dictionary meaning here would be: "...to associate in interest...". What I give my focused attention to I am starting to identify with, starting to bond with, in a sense. The process was designated by Husserl as "Intentionality." Robert S. Hartman dubbed it: Intrinsic valuation.

What I intrinsically value I form a continuum with; and in a sense I am giving myself to it.

I value Saturn as a beautiful segment of nature to behold. "Beauty" may be defined as: "the Intrinsic valuation of things." Some of us value the moon for its beauty and will associate themselves with the moon; some with the planet Venus for the same reason. What we value intensely we associate ourselves with.

At this point I'll ask my friend, Larry: Do you have a more hopeful analysis to share with us? What does the unified theory indicate with regard to cultural evolution in the story of mankind's progress?

STAGES OF EVOLUTION IN ETHICAL INSIGHT

Larry: We can analyze ethical development through the ages into three major stages by means of employing the three basic dimensions of value known to Value Theory, namely S, E, and I::

S-value (Systemic Value): a selfish, self-centered concern with my own survival and my own welfare;

E-value (Extrinsic Value): a favoring of the welfare of my kin and/or my in-group members - my tribe;

I-value (Intrinsic Value): favoring the harmony of my human species, and eventually perhaps even compassion toward most mammals, and caring about the Earth's environment. (Ecological harmony.)

We know our true self-interest when we have reached the stage where we Intrinsically value both ourselves (Self-respect) and other persons (Empathy and Kindness - or at least courtesy and respect).. Then we are wise and enlightened..

Humans have evolved: in the Pleistocene Era they were at the S-value stage.

Ten thousand years ago we had evolved to the E-value level of development.

In the 21st Century we are evolving to an Intrinsic level of development. We are coming to appreciate that the harmony of the entire human species is in our best self-interest.

Seek wisdom and enlightenment in order to ***flourish***.

When asked for the evidence for this schema, I explain that I got the idea from a research study by several researchers, some of who are Neurologists, some Geneticists, and some Moral Psychologists. They were responding to a theory put forth by Johnathan Haidt. A link to it is here:

[www.sciencemag.org/cgi/eletters/316/5827/998#10 251](http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/eletters/316/5827/998#10_251)

This is not to say that that altruism and community haven't been important to humans from the beginning but this model of cultural evolution I presented serves to emphasize the prevailing consciousness of each era. We have witnessed an evolution of ideas even in our own time

Ken: Thanks for that trip through human history, Larry. Okay, while I acknowledge that altruism and community have been important to humans from the beginning, in a sense, it seems as if "favoring the harmony of the human species" is just "favoring the welfare of my kin" extended. With reference to Wong's position on the ethical radius, it has been often said that we only have the biology to strongly care about a close group of people. Yet isn't it true that we've had ideas for a while, such as patriotism, that allow us to care about larger groups of people.

Some moral philosophers hold that we have a base level of innate morality that hasn't changed, and that there is instead the evolution of ideas.

Harry: More accurately stated, our moral development is a result of the *interaction between* the human phenotype and the environment (which includes the cultural environment.)

We are liable to pick up some of our moral notions from popular songs, from a remark an uncle or aunt made, from a teacher or parent serving as a role model, from another kid our age we encountered once, or from most anywhere. Those who have

lived in more than one country as they were growing up have experienced more than a single cultural perspective. .

Carl: Larry, you say that a higher stage of ethical insight - the one into which we are currently evolving – the Intrinsic value stage - would be the " favoring the harmony of my human species..." I would like to add to that this comment. In this stage of development *there are no strangers* !!

We are becoming a global village; we are networking; we are increasingly aware of our interdependence; we share ideas over the internet. At many an internet forum or blog site we find people from all over the planet.

Jerry: There is more evidence for that This generation volunteers aid and lend 'a helping hand' more than any previous one did. According to a two-page article in the Parade Magazine (supplement syndicated in many Sunday newspapers throughout the U.S.A.), dated March 7, 2010, a new poll reveals "COMPASSION COUNTS MORE THAN EVER." It tells us there is a boom in volunteering. Many friends have been made from all over the globe, due to technology. This could not have occurred in the 17th century. What are the implications of this for Ethics?

Ida: It is a fact that we hold any single one of our close relatives as more valuable than multiple strangers, say when we had to choose who to rescue in the Trolley Dilemma. Your girlfriend, your daughter, or your granddaughter is tied to track in the train's path. And, say, if 5, 7, 11, or 15, *or more* people were tied to the other (sideline) track. A train is approaching rapidly. You hold the switch in your hands. You are asked who you will likely rescue: her or them.

The vast majority elect to rescue her. They regard her as highly precious. Ask them if there is an upper limit on the number of

strangers on the sideline track that would be sacrificed. They can't name one. If this girl's preciousness has no upper limit, we say that the number is indefinitely high. It is a (practical) infinity. If one individual can be that precious, then - from the perspective of *their* grandfather, or parent - why not the next? And the next? Why not you, or I? To the moral philosopher, why not anyone alive?Yes, you're right, Larry, and you too, Jerry, today, there are no strangers.

From the viewpoint of Ethics we are all highly valuable; we are all precious. How valuable? No upper limit. *The conclusion* is that each person is worth (at least the equivalent of) 100 persons. Why stop there? Why not a 1000? Why not a million?. Logically, *each individual has infinite worth.* That's the bottom line of this reasoning. And that is the starting point for the new Ethics.

Jeb: This appears to be counter-intuitive. Maybe it is. But so what?!

Ed: So far, religion has been the major teacher of ethics. To that I would like to add a 'science', in the sense of '*a cumulative body of reliable knowledge*'. The new discipline would inform, with regard to theory, but also with regard to practice, that is, it would provide "how-to" information -- such as how to break one's bad habits, how to most-efficiently engage in self-improvement, how to speed up one's moral growth, and thus advance to a higher stage on the Kohlberg scale, how to develop empathy, and so forth.

Ida: Perhaps the booklets and the essay listed at the outset, in the preface, provide a start in the process, with the new paradigm, the new frame of reference which they offer.

Harry: If that framework is expanded, built on, made more exact and more comprehensive, and new sub-models are added, thanks not just to our efforts but to those of many others all around this planet, the growth in ethical knowledge will be truly phenomenal.

Kay: We will then have a direct route to moral wellness just as we now have seen the spread of knowledge in the area of physical wellness. We know the ingredients of physical health; now it would be preferable to learn about moral health.

SELFISHNESS, SELFLESSNESS, AND SELF-INTEREST

Ken: Let us be aware that ignoring one's self-interest can be dangerous by leading to people sacrificing other people's interests for the supposed *greater good*.

Those who are most compassionate think less about their own desires and more (than most) about their values and goals.

Jeb: Have you heard of Dorothy Day? She started the Catholic Workers movement, a radical response to the homeless, the hungry, the drunk, and the mad. This was in the 1930s. She died in the 1980s. She writes extensively about how difficult it is to practice compassion and selflessness. It was very tough indeed. But, it can be done, since she, among others, did it.

Ida: However, it seems that those who are committed to “selfless” compassion are also very much in possession of themselves. They engage themselves in this struggle to be good.

Charley: Yes, it's true. Charitable acts are also forms of self-achievement. Let's bring my colleague, Scott, a professional moral philosopher, in on the discussion.

Scott: When we drop the dogma from prescriptive morality supporting so-called selfishness (Ayn Rand) and prescriptive morality supporting so-called selflessness (Auguste Comte), I think we can then not only see the compatibility of self-interest and kindness, but also understand why we want to interact in mutually beneficial ways because it is in our own interest to do so.

Kay: There is no reason that I can see why being kind to others would be incompatible with pursuing one's own happiness.

Frank: One good thing about Comte's system is it apparently emphasizes feeling (emotions) more than Rand's does, and emotions play a huge role in behavior. Yes, I think we like to be around other happy people, and we generally like making other people happy - a mutually beneficial situation. I've noticed in my own experience that when I donate a loaf of home-made bread to a neighbor who visibly enjoys eating it, that makes both of us happy. Both self-interests are served by altruistic behavior.

George: Emile Durkheim stated "altruism is merely a concealed egoism." On that premise kindness does not exist, there is only self-interest,

Mark: People have been known to set aside long-standing animosity and actually help people they dislike intensely, just because the person needs help. And they felt good about it later!

Still, let's not forget that It can be counter-productive for a person to help others so much that the person weakens his or herself into being unable to provide more help to others.

Harry: While everyone is 'self-interested' – in the sense that they pursue desires and goals that enhance their self-image and self-identity - the label 'selfish' is usually reserved only for people whose interests are more greedy, uncompassionate, or narcissistic. Let's be careful not confuse the two terms: *selfish* and *self-interested*. They have two distinct meanings.

Nick: Yes, people make their decisions in an attempt to most fulfill their desires, values, and goals. Even the most compassionate do that: they are pursuing the goal that they have set for themselves to be a good person. After a while it may become a habit, and they find that they are spontaneously kind, without thought beforehand.

They then are likely to dispute that they are behaving from self-interest, but rather they would contend that "I'm just that kind of person...". Or they may just feel loving toward others and believe that is their inherent nature. They may feel uncomfortable in being told that they are self-interested.

I've invited my friends, Dan and Carl, to sit in on these proceedings. Do you fellows have any comments on these topics?

Dan: Talking about isms such as "altruism" or "egoism" considered without reference to behavior makes for a rather sterile discussion. Let's emphasize good character instead; and how it gets that way. Part of what we do is learned and part of what we do is genetic. The issue is how to improve what we have, how to make something valuable of ourselves. In what

ways can we add value, both to ourselves and to the situations in which we find ourselves. That could be the guiding question for our lives.

WHY STUDY ETHICS?

Ed: To return to the question, Why study or teach Ethics? As the world becomes more and more interconnected, as the planet becomes a global village, if we don't soon renounce war and really mean it, it will finish us off -- or send us back to an earlier stage, say, the Stone Age. Einstein foresaw this. He was very wise.

We also need to give up 'dissing' one another. We need to show respect. We are in a very delicate balance; our society has reached a stage of intricate complexity and strong interdependence. Climate Change extremes are paying us back for years of neglect. We must seek an Ethics of sustainability, and live it. Practice it. I am not saying we'll become extinct to the last individual, but advanced civilization as we know it, civil society, will die if we don't soon shape up.

Starting a big push for a Green Energy economy is one way to shape up.

George: There is enormous value to be gained in studying Ethics. Why? For many good reasons that have been mentioned earlier, such as in the Introduction to the paper, Living The Good Life. Here is another reason: we are on the verge now of a war in space, where drones and robots shoot things down. These robots do not discriminate innocents from guilty; nor an old woman in a wheelchair from a combatant. We can't

win people to our side, to the advantages of our way of life, if we run up “collateral damage,” as it is called by the military. If we ‘accidentally’ kill the children of civilians *we make enemies*, often at a faster rate than we make friends.

Nick: And the debris from spent missiles is liable to fall down upon *anyone’s* head – including our troops - thereby inflicting injury. All this is done in the name of saving lives (those of “our boys.”) Meanwhile climate change, and the environment, is being neglected. I agree with both of you, Ed and George. All this, the wars in space, the climate extremes, point toward a practical extinction of the human species. We've got to get out act together soon! We – the human race -- need to learn some Ethics.

Frank: It makes sense to me, Nick. I believe intelligent people will grant that that it is in our self-interest to have an ethical world. Many folks that I know already agree that a “simple” teachable ethics theory, to take its place beside (or maybe even to incorporate and include) the theory of evolution, is a worthwhile theory to have.

Carl: We also ought to strive to live authentically.

Dan: I thoroughly agree, but what shall we mean by that? Have any of you here given thought to that topic? If so, please speak up.

THE STRUCTURE OF AUTHENTICITY

Larry: Your true Self is authentic.

Kay; Authenticity entails transparency (or non-posing: not being an imposter.) An authentic person's motives are transparent.

Frank: Such a person lives her principles. Let us refer to that idea as: congruence. It's the very opposite of hypocrisy.

Kay: Yes. Many highschool-age individuals today believe that to be authentic "is cool." I think we can all agree here that one way to be highly moral is to be both congruent and authentic. If your actual self increasingly is in correspondence with your Self (your self-identity, your self-ideal, your self-image), and your Self is moving in the direction of greater empathy, compassion, kindness, emotional intelligence, moral sensitivity, etc. your chances of becoming authentic are good. Then you'll be, ethically-speaking, "a cool cat."

George: Yes, I believe that we can all agree here that the meaning of the term authenticity is just what you said, Kay, namely: *the quality possessed by a highly-moral person , committed to honesty, whose motives are transparent, out in the open. You know where such a person stands; s/he puts her "cards on the table" at the outset.*

Harry: I'll go along with that. How do the rest of you feel about that? Do I hear any reservations or objections? (Silence.)All right. We'll name that concept "authenticity." It fits right into the Unified Theory. {As you

recall, *honesty* was discussed in Living The Good Life, pages 41-43, There we explained how one could live *a life of honesty* and thus add value to one's life. Such a life, therefore, is in a person's self-interest. Now we know the same is true of congruence and of authenticity.} While the good person strives to be authentic s/he also strives for a life of **justice**. I think when it comes to this, Ed can enlighten us

As to the question, What is the good life? It's a life with some responsibilities, some service, and lots of kindness. Mark, can you tell us more about the concept "kindness"?

ON KINDNESS

Mark: I'd be glad to. Scott earlier (in a previous roundtable forum we were in) raised the topic of kindness and showed its compatibility with self-interestedness. Let us delve into the fine-structure of this quality possessed by those of good character.

With regard to the topic, Nancy Girard, Ph.D. writes:

"A spontaneous act of kindness was touchingly illustrated for me in an incident that happened recently. I was in a long checkout line at a large superstore. In front of me was a young man and behind me was a beautiful lady about 80 years of age. She was looking closely at her few items of aspirin, cat food, and macaroni and cheese and then counting her money repeatedly. She looked at us and grinned, saying, "I have to be sure I have enough money for the aspirin."

The man in front of me eventually moved ahead to check out, and as he left, he whispered something to the checkout clerk. I paid for my purchases and was gathering them when I heard the salesclerk tell the woman that her purchases had been paid for, and she would get her change back in the form of a card with \$10 on it for future purchases. "The person said to tell you," the clerk told the woman, "to pass on this act of kindness to someone else."

This story illustrates an exceptional act of kindness. Not everyone, however, thinks spontaneous acts of kindness are a good thing. Isn't that so, Ida?

Ida: With regard to “random acts of kindness” E. Braverman writes: If a charitable foundation announced that it was giving away its money randomly we'd be shocked and appalled. Why should we treat our kindnesses any differently?”

An act of kindness, she writes, “is a precious gift -- with potential to change a life. But only when it's carefully thought out with the particularly needs and sensitivities of the beneficiary in mind; not when it's random.”

She warns that some people might take offense at receiving specific acts of kindness, so practitioners of acts of kindness need to keep in mind the individual needs and potential sensitivities of the beneficiaries. We should be aware that kindness should be offered in a thoughtful and appropriate way.

Here is how she expresses the concept: “A trivial example may lie in gift giving. Are you taking into account the wishes of the recipient and what gives him or her pleasure; or is it all about you? [A] more significant example may be visiting the sick. Does the patient really want visitors? Are you trying to make yourself feel better by making a hospital visit, or your ill friend? If it's about you, stay home. And whatever you do, don't make it random. There's nothing like an unwanted visitor when you're feeling miserable.”

Ed: In Book two, Chapter 7 of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* it is claimed that kindness is one of the emotions. Its description there: "helpfulness towards some one in need, not in return for anything, nor for the advantage of the helper himself, but for that of the person helped".

Tom: Did you know that kindness is good for your health? Evidence is presented at this link: <http://www.actsofkindness.org/benefits>

Carl: Yes, that's true. For bright ideas on kindness we can practice to make life richer, see “ <http://www.helpothers.org/ideas.php>

Frank: In one study on kindness, 122 people spontaneously were given a flower, and their reactions were recorded. See: "Reactions to random acts of kindness," in [The Social Science Journal](#) [Volume 37, Issue 2](#), Pages 293-298

Bob: Be sure to check out these sources to learn more about kindness:

<http://www.helpothers.org/story.php>

<http://www.dailycelebrations.com/kind.htm>

<http://www.values.com/free-inspirational-stories>

See this web-page: "Experiments in anonymous kindness," HelpOthers.org,

<http://www.helpothers.org/pif/home.html>

This page tells how the expression "random acts of senseless kindness" originated:

http://www.jameshuggins.com/h/mot1/random_acts_of_kindness.htm

http://www.tv.com/the-oprah-winfrey-show/oprahs-favorite-giveaway-ever---the-results/episode/1242158/cast.html?tag=episode_header;cast

CONFLICT AND HARMONY

Bill: I would recommend for consideration a couple of ethical principles. They are: Give people more than they expect and do it cheerfully. When you realize you've made a mistake take immediate steps to correct it.

Harry: Based on what I learned from the models for a coherent unified theory of Ethics, these are the questions I ask myself: How can I improve in all areas? How can I serve others more effectively? Is there a better way? I aim to live on purpose.

Frank: Yes. And I also ask myself: Am I, on my part, aiming for harmony and social responsibility? Do I realize that life is about **giving**, more than it is about getting? Do I work on being able to give?

Charley: A biologist named Elisabet Sahtouris, Ph.D. , in an article published in the journal **Perspectives in Business and Social Change**, tells us of a Systems Theory concept which holds as follows. It says that "Unity becomes diversification which results in tension. Then, after negotiation there is a resolution resulting in cooperation and unity. Then the entire cycle repeats." She contends that this process goes on between the sub-components of **every living organism** - not just on the human individual level, and not merely on the cultural level, but within everything alive.

Ida: Tell us, Charley, how does all this relate to Ethics?

Charley: The autonomous individual who has individuality, and is unique, is at times in conflict with the community; just as in even the *best* of marriages there are at times some tension, some disagreements, and yet the couple lives harmoniously.

If we can achieve harmony in a married couple it shows we can achieve it in a family. If we can achieve it in a family perhaps we can achieve it in our state, in our nation, in our region, in our species, as well as with our environment on the planet. True, there is a high rate of divorce currently in the USA which tells us there is much disharmony. But let's emphasize the affirmative. There are plenty of happy marriages! Let's generalize the result by learning what the secrets are that made them so happy. These "secrets" – such as affirming “we are **partners** who **will work things out**” - shall suggest the principles of, the data of Ethics.

Of course in the short time since this new paradigm has been proposed we haven't here worked out every detail to explain ethics or its concerns. After more than 400 years in existence has Physics worked out every detail about the physical, chemical and astronomical world? It hasn't even come up with a definition of gravity which covers every case!! No, getting every detail is not our project.

George: Perhaps our work here provides a start in the process of producing new results that are coherent with the new frame of reference which it offers.

If this framework (the paradigm) is expanded, built upon, made more exact and more comprehensive, and new sub-models are added - thanks to the efforts, not only of those assembled here

but also of anyone who is aware and who cares about a good, sound theory of ethics - the growth in ethical knowledge will be truly phenomenal.

We will then have a direct route to *moral wellness* just as we now have seen the spread of knowledge in the area of physical wellness. We know some of the essential ingredients of bodily health. Now, for all the reasons given earlier, it's imperative to learn about moral health and to make this new knowledge available to the people of the Earth.

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## Epilogue

Let us now very briefly **summarize the logic that binds together** the coherent frame of reference which the author has earlier named A Unified Theory of Ethics. To do this we must get a bit technical. The theory starts with R. S. Hartman's definition of value. {He spoke of it as the Axiom of Value.} It explains that something has value to the degree that it exemplifies the meaning of its concept. (If it's an individual of which we speak, then she has *moral value* to the extent she exemplifies her self-concept.) To illustrate the definition of value, let us here at first use as an example of a concept, a **chair**, since it is a familiar concept.

According to this definition of value, if a specific chair partially fulfills the image you have of a *chair* you call it a "*valuable*" one; and – here is another important definition -- if it completely fulfills the picture you will say it's a "*good*" one.

Before I make a value judgment about a chair which I now perceive, the implied questions are: Does **this** actual chair match my conception of what a "chair" should be? Does it exemplify its meaning? Does it match up to the ideal for a chair I have in mind? (These - possibly subconscious - considerations can occur in a fraction of an instant in the case of snap judgments.)

The good-making features I have in my mind may differ from those you think of when you say 'chair.' I may care whether it is made of a certain type of wood, or whether it is ecologically sustainable, etc. You may well pay attention to other qualities. That is understood. But whatever a chair means to me, this chair has to measure up before I will prize it as "good."

Note that it falls into a category; it is a member of the class named "chair." Hartman coined the phrase "**The name sets the norm.**" By this he meant: the word designated to name the concept has a meaning

associated with it; and thus value is a function of meaning.<sup>1</sup> Hence the name “chair” directs us to the meaning of the concept, chair; and this actual chair is valuable to the degree it fulfills its meaning, that is to say, to the degree that its properties correspond to the meaning the valuer (the judge) has in mind.

When the concept is a person, say her name is “Jan,” then if Jan fulfills her meaning – and I will soon explain how – Jan is good. Everyone, it is postulated, has a self-image and a physical self (a body.) Furthermore, it is assumed, one or more features in the self-image (the Self) matches the actual self. [If none match the person (who is not normal) has what psychiatrists would speak of as disassociation.]

Moral value (or morality) is the measure of how closely Jan’s self-image matches her observable self. Morality was earlier defined (as a technical term) in the unified theory as: an increasing correspondence between self and Self -- wherein ‘self’ is the body, and its behavior, its conduct, or the self that an observer can describe; and ‘Self’ refers to the improving self-concept. [It improves as it gains in insight and in moral development. Moral growth entails increasing empathy and compassion, in other words an increasing capacity to intrinsically value. ] The Self-image is what Jan is aware of if she were to describe her beliefs, her values, and her own identity. (She may lack such awareness and that fact too becomes part of her identity.)

A central concept in the paradigm is the definition of “morality.” It is understood as the fulfillment of a self-concept. This definition, a contribution by the current author, follows from the Axiom when it is applied within Ethics.

Robert S. Hartman also gave us the basic **dimensions of value** and named them Systemic Value, Extrinsic Value, and Intrinsic Value -- abbreviated **S**, **E**, and **I**. Each is richer in meaning than the previous one. They are on a spectrum. Each has a size, or measure. **S**-Value is finite but elastic. **E**-

Value is countable but indefinitely large. (Its set may contain as many predicates as there are *integers*.) I-Value presents us with a dense continuum of meaning; as many predicates as there are *real numbers*. Each dimension is a singular perspective on the world. When one I-values, though, that perspective is unique. It is very personal to the valuer. I-value is the domain of emphasis, empathy, intense focus, and emotion.

We said in the Unified Theory essay that a person could define himself in at least three ways, systemically, extrinsically, and intrinsically – or any combination of the three.

The **Intrinsic perspective** when applied to individuals is the ethical perspective. Hence the basic dimensions of value have aided us in defining our field of interest, namely Ethics. The process of conducting oneself ethically serves to add value to a situation. A person who knows his ethics and who has enlightened self-interest, who knows keenly what is truly in his self-interest, wants to add value.

What we deduce from the models of a Unified Theory are moral principles. Of course this theory needs vastly-more development before it can account for more of the many data of ethics, and before it can cope with the dilemmas that arise in various professions, such as bioethics, for example. This is a work in progress. As we go along let's keep that in mind.

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NOTES

1) Every concept has these components: a name, a meaning, and an application. (something to which it applies.) The name (designator, sign, label, handle), has associated with it a meaning (set of descriptive adjectives, attributes, predicates.) These attributes which comprise the meaning are the names of properties. In this theory the term "qualities" will be used to mean either attributes or properties. A member of the class of application shall be known as an exemplar, an example, or a *referent*. [A subset of meaning is a definition It is a finite meaning, a set of attributes (property names.)]

When the referent is perceived as having properties which match the mental image the valuer has for things of that sort then s/he will say the object being evaluated is *valuable*, or *good*. This is the Axiom of Value.

Since meanings, which are sets of attributes, can have sizes, we are able to derive the Dimensions of value – based on the possible sizes: fractional, limited, countable, and uncountable.

Other topics alluded to in this book, or the previous books, connect to this framework.

2) The morality concept was outlined and explained on page 6 of A Unified Theory of Ethics. Note that *morality* and *hypocrisy* vary inversely: more of one means less of the other.

***Adding value* is another central concept in this new paradigm for ethics. [Refer to pages 28-35 of that earlier document for a discussion of this important concept.]**

3) "The Right Tool for the Right Organization" [by Robert L. Masternak](#) Copyright © 2009; Masternak & Associates; All rights reserved. Reprinted here with permission. Emphasis added.

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