Using the main proponents of contemporary moral philosophical positions,this article examines the fruitfulness of teaching ethnics to children and youth. The major question is whether such study might lead to practical consequences — and indeed if this is a necessary consideration for the study of ethics. The teaching of rational moral decision-making involves probelms of rules of justification and guidance as well as the establishment of principles which would illustrate the relationship between theory and practice.

Cornel M. Hamm*

The Study of Ethics as Moral Education

1. Introduction

To what extent, if any, can a study of ethics (or moral philosophy) play a role in, or constitute a part of a person's moral education? Both moral philosophers and moral educators, it is reasonable to assume, will inevitably be led to consider this question seriously. The moral philosopher's interest in it no doubt arises from his speculations on the over-all purpose of teaching moral philosophy as well as from his concern about how his teaching affects the moral life of his students. He might well wonder whether the point of pursuing moral philosophy is not much more that the intellectual satisfaction it provides and whether the study of ethics does not ultimately have a significant bearing on moral practice.

The moral educator will encounter the same question in his practical concern of rearing the young. He, one could expect, will wonder how it is possible to get others fully to understand moral rules and moral injunctions without also getting them to understand how moral terms such as 'good, 'right', 'ought', and their cognates, function in the language, which presumably it is the business of philosophers to explicate. Then too, he may be puzzled about how it is possible to initiate others into a form of rational morality (which includes inculcating the disposition to act on the basis of well-grounded moral reasons) without also dealing with the problems of the logic of moral reasoning and the justification of moral rules and principles, which problems, again, seem to fall within the domain of the moral philosopher. The concerns of the moral philosopher and the moral teacher, that is to say, seem to overlap; each seems to reach an area of common interest from their respective and apparently distinctive preoccupations giving rise to the question with which I began. An in view of the importance of this question for both, but particularly for the moral educator, it is surprising that so few philosophers have devoted their attention to it.

In this paper I therefore want to examine this question in some detail. I shall argue that there are indeed good reasons to suppose that the study of ethics can play an important role in a wider programme of moral education. I will begin by noting the complexity of the problem, by setting aside irrelevant side issues, and by specifying the aspect of the question with which I am dealing. This will lead me to the root problem upon which most of the paper will focus, vis., what is the relationship between theory and practice in morals? Finally, I shall consider some problems connected with instruction in ethics for purposes of moral education.

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2. Delimitation of the Problem

For present purposes I shall take the term 'the study of ethics' to mean a course of study in moral philosophy. My exemplar will be a course in Ethics in a college or university. These will naturally vary from case to case; but minimally there would presumably be reading and discussion of what moral philosophers have said or written. Additionally one would expect some critical evaluation of the claims made by philosophers. This could be done by examining, comparing and contrasting the claims of one philosopher with those of another by noting contradictions, inconsistencies, unity or disunity, completeness or incompleteness, and so forth. In other words, the literature perused would be not only informative but would function heuristically. An introduction into ethics would be an introduction not merely to philosophers but to moral philosophizing. Both the results of previous philosophizing and whatever skills there are in philosophizing would, ideally at least, be transmitted to the student.

It is important to note that not everything a philosopher does, even if he inspires noble action and sentiment, will have a bearing on our question. We are interested to know only if what he does *qua moral philosopher* has a bearing on moral education. This is worth noting because an examination of the 'evidence' relating to the improved moral judgment and action as a result of having been instructed in ethics, a very difficult claim to establish on empirical grounds, might well show that personal attraction to a philosopher, or a philosopher's personal concern for hs charges, might well have been responsible for the claimed improvement in moral behaviour. This should be kept in mind when we later examine some claims made regarding successes in the moral effect of teaching ethics.

It is necessary now also to elaborate upon what I mean by "moral education." Following W. Frankena in his "Towards a Philosophy of Moral Education."[2] I will distinguish two aspects of moral education: (1) moral education conceived of as the handing on of moral knowledge and the resulting ability to make moral judgments about "right" and "wrong," "good" or "bad," and so on (I shall label this cognitive moral education, or CME) and (2) moral education conceived of as inculcation of attitudes and dispositions ensuring conformity of action to this knowledge (labelled here as affective moral education, or AME). The former picks out the cognitive aspects of moral education which are related to judgments about questions like "What ought I to do?"; the latter emphasizes the conative and commitment aspects of moral training. There is perhaps a third sense of moral education we could entertain. This would be a form of education about the logic and language of morals. It would pick out those aspects of morality that are typically subject to scrutiny by someone skilled in the distinct methods of philosophical investigation. For convenience let us call this Education in Ethics, or EE. This is not usually considered moral education as such, but education in moral philosophy. It is usually held that this study is engaged in for its own sake because it yields the satisfaction that comes from understanding. Few would dispute — and certainly it is not here disputed — that such study would be worth pursuing even if its relevance to practice could not be shown. Moral philosophy, as other theoretical studies, has its own intrinsic value as well as other derivitive values.

Given these distinctions, it is now possible to state the various alternatives and possible interpretations of the original question as follows:

(1) EE contingently contributory to CME.
(2) EE contingently contributory to AME.

(3) EE necessarily contributory to CME.
(4) EE necessarily contributory to AME.

The first two possibilities are clearly to be settled on empirical grounds. Let us begin by considering (2) first, viz., EE as contingently contributory to AME. The little recent investigation done would indicate that ethics given at the late high school level had some positive effect in some cases. Leroy Garrett, in "A Report on the Lilly Endowment — MacMurray College Project in Philosophy at Jacksonville (Illinois) High School,"[3] notes these comments by students in answer to the question, "Did the course help you in deciding questions of right and wrong?":

a. 'Yes, and it also helps me to keep a feeling of assurance that when I have made a decision that I did make a right decision' (p.44)

b. 'The study of ethics was the most helpful in that it has helped me to see what is best for the majority and not just a small minority." (p.42)

c. What was the greatest value of the course to you?

Student answer: 'The sense of awareness that it has given me concerning life and many of its aspects. I feel that I am 'more alive' than before.' (p.42)

d. Garrett himself in the summary of results says: 'Philosophical study gets at the problem of moral insensitivity. If our values are confused, then a serious study of ethics and metaphysics may be as imperative as trigonometry or physics.' (p.39)

e. Willis Moore in 'An Experimental High School Course in Ethics and Logic' reports a student as saying, 'Philosophy is the most broadening tolerance-building subject I can think of.'[4]

These few shreds of evidence notwithstanding, many views to the contrary have been expressed. L.E. Hahn, for example, says that G.H. Palmer, an eminent Harvard philosopher, in 1892 stated: "Youngsters reflecting on how they should act are in even worse shape than a centipede trying to decide which foot to move next."[5] More recently, G.C. Field in *Moral Theory* said: "It would seem that we cannot expect a moral theory to have any direct effect in a way of providing people with a motive to right action, if they have not such a motive already."[6] But these are suppositions. Hard evidence lacking, these claims are not worth much. Furthermore, it is not only conceivable but very likely the case that the attitudes necessary for moral education are incapable of being acquired without the cognitive elements related to conceptual growth and judgmental facility. That is, it is highly questionable that AME can occur without or prior to CME.

The second possibility — (1) above, that EE is contingently contributory to CME — is slightly less inconclusive on the basis of available evidence. The question alternatively stated is: can a study of ethics better equip one in making moral judgments even if this does not yet directly lead to action because the motivation is lacking? The claim that ethics has this effect is different from, although doubtlessly related to, the question of motivation. The evidence needed here is that ethics more so or rather than any other study or set of conditions happens to facilitate moral judgment, although some other activity under other conditions might serve equally well. Although by no means conclusive, the bit of evidence available seems to suggest that ethics has beneficial effect. Students who have studied ethics and have been questioned on the effects of this aspect of moral education have said the following:

a. 'It provides a new vista for examing questions of right and wrong.'[7]

b. 'It gave me a deeper insight into the complexities of moral issues.' (p. 44 of L. Garrett's report).

c. In answer to the question, 'Did the course help you in deciding questions of right and wrong?' a student replied, 'Not decide, but rather question what *is* right and wrong.' (p. 44)

d. 'It (ethics) did not offer 'pat standards', but it left various criteria which I judged and selected to fit my needs.' (p. 44)

e. From the Willis Moore Experiment[8] come this remark: 'The greatest value in the course is that it forces people at least to think about possible alternatives to action rather than appealing blindly to some unquestioned authority for moral decisions.'

It appears then, that a course in ethics assisted some late teenagers to make better moral judgments. It should, however, be noted that what a teenager *claims* to be the effect of ethical studies may not *in fact* be the effect. More reliable would be a detailed examination of the judgments they subsequently made. Suffice it to say that a great deal more solid evidence is required to establish the first two interpretations of our initial question.

A stronger claim, that moral philosophy necessarily contributes to moral knowledge and keener moral judgment, is our third possibility. Above I phrased it as EE necessarily contributory to CME. This claim is philosophically more interesting because it is possible, in theory at least, to provide arguments for it, and it is as a matter of fact the proposition I will attempt to defend below. My case will be established if I can show that some things a moral philosopher necessarily does (and which can be conveyed by instruction in ethics) is also what a morally educated person must do or know in order to make correct moral judgments in practical situations. Three qualifications radically reduce the severity of this claim, which might initially appear totally implausible. First, only some types of moral judgment require elements of philosophical understanding. The obvious objection to the claim that philosophy is a necessary precondition for moral action is to throw up a multiplicity of examples where a kind deed was done spontaneously. Who, for example, would be prepared to claim that a three-year old child had already entertained morally philosophical notions in presenting his mother with a bunch of wild flowers? And yet we want to claim that this same child, if he is to make a full-blown mature moral judgment about, say, joining the military to fight a war he believes to be unjustified, will need a kind of understanding of moral terms, moral rules, and moral principles which can only come from a study of certain aspects of moral philosophy. The area of judgment that required philosophical understanding is perhaps much more concerned with those aspects of morality related to the "regulative" principles of inter-personal morality and much less to the area of the good and the worthwhile. What is true of one area of morality may not necessarily be true of other areas. Secondly, it is sufficient to establish for our purposes that the *potential* for moral action is increased. It is not necessary to show that behaviour will necessarily improve as a result of ethical studies. Hence we should also note the irrelevancy of arguments against my claim to the effect that moral philosophers, or their children, are not better people by and large than others, this itself being a claim which is at least doubtful. Only if I claimed that EE was necessarily contributory to CME *and* AME would such an argument be relevant. To claim that EE necessarily contributes to AME is a very puzzling claim, one that I do not here want to make nor could at this point make. And yet I do not want to say that it is logically impossible to make. A possible line of attack might be to show that the will to act on good judgment could not be acquired without a moral point of view, and further that this point of view was impossible of attainment without gaining an insight into morality that could come only from a theoretical study of ethics. This line of argument, however, is not necessary for the weaker claim made here, that EE is necessary for CME only. Thirdly, I am not saying that everything a moral philosopher does is relevant or contributory to moral judgment; it is sufficient to establish that *some* aspects of ethics are relevant. Two rele-

vant aspects that I will focus upon below are the philosopher's concern with justificatory principles and analyses of moral terms.

An argument that would establish this, our third interpretation of the question, can roughly be outlined as follows: (a) The standard moral act is "doing the (morally) right thing for the (morally) right reason." (b)"Right reason"for action implies the availability and employment of objective standards or rules for determining the "rightness". (c) Using rules to determine rightness or wrongness in a particular situation requires judgment. (d) Judgment implies use of second-order rules. (e) Discovering, explicating, and enunciating second-order rules or principles is the task of ethics. (f) Ethics is therefore necessary for determining right reason for action and in that sense can be a part of moral education. Needless to say, this is a mere skeleton of an argument. To put flesh on it would require several major treatises on the nature of morality, on the nature of moral judgment and moral reasoning, as well as on the nature of philosophy. This of course it is not possible to do in a paper of this kind. In what follows I shall therefore be concerned primarily with establishing the truth of propositions (e) and (f), and hope that (a) to (e) will be accepted as reasonable assumptions.[9] The validity of my claim turns largely on the relationship of moral theory to moral practice.

3. The Relation of Moral Theory to Moral Practice

Numerous philosophers are prepared to, and in fact do, state that the point of ethics is its bearing on moral practice. The presumption is that since philosophical problems in ethics arise from practice, the philosophical understanding is reflected in practice. Hourani, for example, says "If the desire to understand the meaning of right arises in the course of practical difficulties, it must be because such an understanding is thought to have some value for practice."[10] W.D. Lamont, too, states that "unless we (as philosophers) are interested in practical results we are in great danger of becoming little more than trifling sophists."[11]

There are, however, very few philosophers who are prepared to state precisely and explicitly how moral philosophy is related to practice. Some in fact deny that this is the case. The whole question needs detailed examination, and I will begin by examining the view that there is a sharp distinction between the philosophic enterprise which is ethics and practical moral activity.

A Separatist View - R.W. Newell

The view that in ethics theory and practice must be sharply distinquished is advanced by R.W. Newell in Chapter 7 of *The Concept of Philosophy.* He opens his argument by saying:

> The adumbrations of modern moral philosophers are notably deficient in the ethical consolation and advice appropriately issuing from the tracts of a moralist. Yet this is neither an oversight nor a mistake.[12]

For Newell there seems to be no difficulty in accepting that what the *moralist* does is appropriate and relevant for a layman's practice in morality. His focus as a result is on the distinction between the moralist and the practitioner on the one hand and the moral philosopher on the other. Unfortunately he says very little about what the moralists do or who they are. But we can assume they are on the level of the practical, actively engaged in dispensing moral knowledge, advising others, and convincing others of their obligations. Because they are personally interested in the behaviour of others, they assist the practitioner in making moral judgments. The philosopher's activity, in contrast, is detached, theoretical, and removed from practice. Can this distinction be maintained? Or is it perhaps possible for the moral

philosopher in virtue of his being a philosopher more effectively to play the role of the moralist; and conversely, might not the moralist become more effective by engaging in philosophy? Newell, I think mistakenly, argues against such a possibility. He wants to maintain that there are at least three features that separate the moralist from the philosopher.

The first is that the philosopher is concerned with justification while the moralist and practioner are concerned with action and situation - specific judgment. The task of the philosopher, he says

> is to ask whether any ethical judgment could be verified, whether any dispute about the application of an ethical predicate could be settled, whether reasons could be given for judgments of value, or whether there is any test by which their truth or falsehood could be determined.[13]

For the moralist and layman the ethical problem is one of sizing up the circumstances of an ethical problem in order to apply ethical terms correctly. Newell asks:

> What circumstances, then, *are* reasons for saying that something is good? This question *is* peculiar to ethics and perhaps the most difficult one of all, though not one that a philosopher need answer: for it is a question of ethics not ethical philosophy. One of the jobs of philosophical ethics is to show that a person who attempts an answer to this question can have the consolation of knowing that the answer he reaches could be right.[14]

Newell's argument here contains a paradox. On the one hand he is claiming that the philosopher can provide the assurance that a correct judgment can be arrived at by a person confronted with the problem of applying a moral predicate in a difficult practical situation. Philosophical ethics can show that correct judgments can be made in such situations. On the other hand he claims that the practical difficulty is one peculiar to ethics and one that the philosopher need not be concerned with. But if the philosopher can give the formerly mentioned assurance, then he must be able to state in virtue of what he can make this claim, that is, in virtue of what general consideration or general rule he is able to give the warranted assurance. And, further, if he can do that, that is, if he can provide a rule of justification, then he also by the same token can provide a rule of guidance which could help the layman out of his dilemma. And what a happy coincidence if the layman himself were the philosopher! He could then help himself. The crucial question, one which I shall return to later, is, just how rules of guidance and rules of justification are related.

There are for Newell two other features that distinguish the moralist from the philosopher. The one is the philosopher's breadth of scope and the other his stance of logical neutrality. Newell notes that the philosopher to ask questions noted above (questions of justification) is

> to ask these things of all ethical judgments and disputes, not only those of ethical importance. . . From the point of view of an ethical philosopher the seriousness or silliness of an ethical problem is an irrelevant consideration, since both serious and silly ethical problems contain the same philosophically important puzzles.[15]

There is considerable truth in this. It is only to be expected that if a philosopher goes about his task efficiently he must cover a variety of cases, cases both small and large, profound and simple. But to note this truth is not yet an argument for separating sharply the role of the philosopher on the one hand and the role of the moralist and practitioner on the other. The logical requirements for practical judgment are the same for the philosopher and for the practitioner. The difference, surely, is one of degree and professional preoccupation only.

The further claim that the philosopher is neutral but the moralist not, also is only partly true. It is doubtful that Newell is saying much more than that he who has the moral problem has the moral problem. The philosopher's conscience will

not of course plague him if another person does wrong, because each man's acts are his own acts. But only in this trivial sense does the philosopher have a special status of neutrality. There is a very real sense in which the philosopher and the moralist (and the practitioner) are equally neutral. Ideally neither one of them act, advise, or justify rules on personal whims. The very appeal to rules is itself a stance of neutrality.

It is beginning to become clear that the differences, as we shall attempt to show further below, are differences in degree, not in kind.

The Three Tier Model - B. Mayo

In Chapter I of *Ethics and the Moral Life,*[16] Bernard Mayo presents a three-tier model for the purpose of explaining how theory and practice in ethics are related.

On the first level of Mayo's three-tier model are the actors, or performers, who need to make choices as distinct from judgments. In this category belong not so much a group of people or a segment of society (although this might incidentally also be true), but a group of activities people are engaged in. It is the level of habitual, instinctive, and automatic behaviour. On the second level belongs the activity of critical judgment and is thus once removed from the first level. This activity can be divorced from action, although it need not be. It is possible for there to be "considered," "reflective," or "critical" action. This is the area of activity that preoccupies the moralist in advising on what ought to be done. On the third level, twice removed from choice and action, is the philosopher who neither acts nor criticizes, but examines and clarifies the criteria and principles which justify the thinking and doing on the lower two levels.

Mayo recognizes, and rightly so, that "it is a fundamental pont in the philosophy of ethics that they (judgments — as spectator; and choice — as actor) must be capable of being combined.[17] But he does not to the same extent see the necessity of combining levels two and three; that is, the activity of the moralist and the activity of the philosopher. And yet in fairness to him, he does not dismiss this question as settled in favour of sharp demarcation. It is one of those areas on which he is ambivalent. In his opening sentence he says, "Books on moral philosophy, I shall argue, are not written in order to help people to live better lives."[18] Toward the end of the chapter, however, he partially retreats from this position:

> We can, after all, concede something to those who would like to feel that philosophy, especially moral philosophy, may be of some practical benefit to mankind.[19]

The reason for this retreat seems to be his realization that

> Just as the notion of controlled or intelligent action involves a combination of the activities on the two lower levels of our model, so there may well be a combination of the activity of the philosopher with those other activities, particularly the second-level activity, namely (in the case of moral activities) moralizing.[20]

"There may well be," says Mayo; and this he reluctantly accepts because he is not prepared, and rightly so, to explain away the discrepancy between what philosophers in the past have done — Locke championing the right to private property; Mill defending the superiority of refined pleasures over sensual ones; Butler bolstering the Christian moral code with his philosophy — and what they on this model do *qua* philosopher, by ascribing inconsistency to the philosopher. But this argument is rather weak. A much stronger case can be made even on points that Mayo admits. If there is an involvement of philosophy with moralizing, as noted above; and if there is involvement of moralizing with action, which was never in dispute; then it surely follows that philosophy is involved in action. To put it

another way: if Level 2 is improved by combining it with Level 3; and if Level 1 is improved by combining it with Level 2; then Level 3 indirectly improves Level 1.

The problem seems to be that of relating Level 3 to Level 1. This is where the moralist comes in. He seems to act as a middle-man between the two; and a careful investigation of his activity might give us further clues as to how philosophy and moral practice are related.

The moralist is one who simultaneously grasps the essentials of moral concepts and high-level rules of justification as well as commands information about practical affairs, particularly information about particular kinds of problem and specific information about people. Because he has this detailed information about individual people he is able to help them by giving them advice. Giving advice presupposes such specific information, the kind of information a philosopher typically does not have. A philosopher is not a pastor of a flock as a moralist might be. But this is a difference in professional interest and responsibility, not a logical necessity. That is to say, a philosopher might equally well be a moralist had he the necessary personal information. The moralist might equally well be a philosopher should he become more preoccupied with justificatory rules and rules of concept application. The philosopher could be a better moralist if he knew or made it a point to know more about the personal lives of people; the moralist could be a better philosopher if he took philosophy more seriously. And perhaps each could do his own job better if they knew more about each other. The distinction, then, between the moralist and the philosopher is as artificial as the distinction between the moralist and the practitioner. The three levels lose their demarcation line, and it appears very much as if these three activities fall more naturally on a continuum, and that the difference between moral activity and morally philosophical activity is a difference in degree only. The exclusive disjunction between the theoretical and the practical breaks down.

Moral Problems and Problems in Morals — J. Hartland-Swann

J. Hartland-Swann, in *An Analysis of Morals,*[21] takes a view of the relationship between theory and practice which is in some respects not too dissimilar from Newell's, so a full statement of his analysis and criticism of it will not here be necessary. Several suggestions, however, are worth noting giving rise to further problems which need discussion.

He rejects the three-fold distinction (such as Mayo's and in part also Newell's) according to which: (1) the man of action, one who is unreflective and takes his rules second-hand, is distinguished from, (2) the moralist, who reflects, his moral knowledge and wisdom as well as experience to enable him to advise others, who in turn is distinguished from (3) the philosopher, who analyzes sentences embodying moral concepts. He finds these distinctions misleading because in fact all men are men of action, because we all do things sometimes reflectively and at other times not, and because "there is nothing to prevent one individual from doing all three."[22] In this he is essentially corret. But this is no argument to suggest either that some part of moral philosophy is essential for moral practice (the case we wish to establish) nor an argument to show that the moral philosopher's preoccupation is or is not in some other way (i.e., contingently) relevant for practice. In effect, all he has said is that one man can wear three hats. What we want to know is if on the second and third levels (in Mayo's model) the hat worn was one and the same. That is, we want to know if the philosopher's analysis of the logic of morals doesn't amount to the explication of rules usable for the reflective practitioner. Hartland-Swann does say that moral philosophy does mean discussing moral principles:

> Anyone who claims to be doing ethics or moral philosophy, and who regards either title as meaning the study of logic of moral discourse, will thereby and inevitably find himself discussing moral principles, their inter-relationships, and plausibility — if he is treating his subject with any thoroughness at all.[23]

But he thinks it an unjustified demand made on moral philosophers that they settle what moral principles are valid and what ends valuable in themselves. He deplores such statements as G.E. Moore's in *Principia Ethica* (I,i) that "it is undoubtedly the business of ethics. . .to argue what is the true answer when we ask what is right to do, and to give reasons for thinking that our statements about the character of persons or the morality of actions are true or false" and that the primary question which "ethics has to answer (is) what things are good in themselves" (I,18). On the contrary, Harland-Swann argues that philosophers are in no position to assist ordinary people in making judgments in that sense. His reason for dismissing such a role for the philosopher is that he considers principles as generalizations from moral experience, not as high-level rules presupposed in any moral experience.

> Ethical principles and moral ends acquire whatever weight or importance they appear to possess as a result of certain human decisions.[24]

And for such knowledge of principles we look to the sociologists. That this is one legitimate use of the term "principle" is acknowledged. But that there are 'principles' of another kind at work here, or ought to be at work (that is, fundamental moral principles) is a fact he fails to consider, and as such his is a limited analysis. As a consequence of this inadequacy in his account he concludes falsely that the philosopher's role can be of no avial in practice. Thus he distinguishes between the practical man's *moral problems* from the philosopher's *problems in morals.* But at the more fundamental level this distinction cannot be sustained. The principles enunciated by the philosopher, as we shall see below, can be rules of guidance for the practitioner.

The Compatibility View of Theory and Practice — H.D. Aiken

On several occasions I have hinted at the possibility of a position taken by H.D. Aiken in *Reason and Conduct.* It is the view that what a person does in ordinary life in making moral judgments is on a continuum with what the philosopher does *qua* philosopher. The two differ in degree but not in kind. Aiken says:

> (Philosophy's) insistence upon clarity, order, and exactitude is all that has ever distinguished philosophy as a discipline from common-sense speculation concerning the organizing concepts by which we live.[25]

Rather than referring to philosophy and practicaql moral judgment as two distinct modes of activity, Aiken refers to two sorts of levels of entertaining ethical questions. On the first level (what he calls 'substantive' ethics) arise such questions as "How ought I to live?" and "What ought I to do?" These are both practical and speculative questions. He says, "Problems of conduct often require speculation, not only about matters of fact, but also about the validity of moral principles themselves."[26]

On the second level ("analytic" ethics) arise questions of meaning and logic, questions such as "What are the meanings of and correct applications of words such as ought, right and good? Analytic ethics at bottom relates to the meaning of words. But clarification of the meaning of ethical terms is in fact a clarification of the rules for the application of the terms. And such clarity is indispensable to clear thinking. Aiken notes:

> In no domain of human activity is there more linguistic confusion and fallacious thinking than in the domain of morality, and in none therefore can a greater benefit be hoped for from the study of the language in which the activity is clothed.[27]

And he notes further that "enough is already understood concerning the language of conduct to be of use in the education or ordinary men."[28] And there are two respects in which analytic ethics is relevant to the practical concerns of men. First, the findings of philosophers are relevant for practice; and second, the method of analysis employed is relevant. The problem with the first is that the findings of the philosophers themselves are so frequently at variance and inadequate. The relevance of these findings hold true, however, not only when the findings are correct accounts of moral discourse but also when they are faulty. A comparison of correct views with faulty views helps firstly to eliminate false beliefs and secondly to convey the method of analysis that a philosopher employs. Analysis of moral discourse itself makes one aware of the proper uses and limitations of it. How one conceives the appropriate application of moral terms directly affects moral attitudes and moral argument. And since everyone is involved in moral problems, everyone should have an adequate notion of moral logic. On this matter Aiken comments as follows:

> Understanding (moral discourse) is all the more important precisely because, unlike mathematical logic or theory of induction, ethical theory, in one crude form or another, is already part of the public domain. As such it is used to bolster or lend prestige to various substantive prohibitions or demands.[29]

Aiken then goes on to illustrate this by noting the kinds of attitudes and arguments his pupils in an Introductory Course in Ethics hold and notes that "they have fairly well defined views concerning the meanings of ethical terms and the nature of moral principles," before they arrive. "These unhappily, deeply interpenetrate the whole moral consciousness of those afflicted with them."[30] And it is quite understandable that someone who holds that moral goodness is a matter of, say, obeying God's commands as interpreted by the priesthood will not vary from the rules of the church and refuse to engage in an argument which attempts to provide a basis for action on reasons supportable by independent moral principles. Likewise, someone whose moral theory crudely has it that morality is a matter of preference or prejudices is not likely to pay heed to reasons based on moral principles. The philosopher, by focussing on the logic of moral discourse, can thus make a contribution to practice. Aiken puts it this way:

> He makes his contribution (to practice) partly (by) providing us with sharper tools and a clearer notion of the search itself, and partly in a more direct way (by) freeing us from (false beliefs).[31]

We can thus obtain both important positive and negative information as well as knowledge of the procedure of making judgments. As a result we would introduce fewer irrelevant considerations into our practical moral reasoning and proceed with greater clarity and efficiency to our conclusions and judgments. These assertions by Aiken, I think, are correct; but they are rather bold assertions requiring further substantiation. He has not shown, as I argued earlier it must be shown, that what the philosopher necessarily does *qua* philosopher is necessarily a part of what a practitioner does *qua* moral judge.

4. *Rules of Guidance and Rules of Justification*

To demonstrate that moral philosophy is necessarily contributory to practical moral judgment (and this, on the former schema, is EE necessary for CME), it is necessary to establish two propositions which to this point in our argument stand in need of further defense. The first is that philosophers are necessarily engaged in

explicating and enunciating rules of justification; and the second, that rules of justification can and must be used as rules of guidance in making practical moral judgments.

Is it then the case that the moral philosopher's task is to state rules of justification? We noted that moral philosophers were appositely concerned with justification. A view that was found wanting is that the concern with justification is limited to analysis of moral terms and how they are applied. A more acceptable view is the one proposed by Aiken, that such an analysis is tantamount to clarification of the rules governing the application of the moral terms. If such an analysis is to be more than a lexicographer's report, it amount to an explication of the presuppositions in the use of the terms. A philosopher who does his analysis adequately seeks to unearth these presupposed basic principles. It comes to light that such fundamental principles of justice, of respect for persons, of freedom, and so on, are presupposed in the correct application of moral terms such as "right" and "ought."[32] Since these principles are high-level moral rules in virtue of which other rules are considered moral rules, it follows that the task of analysis of moral terms is incomplete until these rules are explicated. Analysis, in other words, implies explication of rules of justification.

It might of course be argued that it is not "analysis" but what Strawson would call "descriptive metaphysics," that is the philosopher's preoccupation at this point. This might well be so, but it does not essentially damage the argument. For it could still be argued that analysis and descriptive metaphysics are both philosophical tasks. That is, even if explicating rules of justification does not directly follow from the nature of *analysis,* it needs only to be shown that the task of the philosopher is not exclusively one of conceptual analysis. While it is impossible here to go into this question in any depth, it is, I believe, reasonable to suggest that philosophy is typically concerned with three sorts of questions: What do you mean? How do you know? What is presupposed? Granted this, it is sufficient to point out that philosophy's scope is larger than a limited version of linguistic analysis; or, to put it another way, linguistic analyses leads one directly into that activity which can be characterised as explication of rules of justification.

Given that it is the philosopher's task to state rules of justification, it would still have to be shown that these rules can and must be used as guides in moral judgment in practical situations. We must now entertain the question that is most problematic of all, a question we earlier promised to return to: how are rules of guidance and rules of justification related? It is the question G. Gottlieb discussed in Chapter VI of his *The Logic of Choice.*[33] Gottlieb is attempting in this book to give an account of the experience of being guided by a rule. In a particular problematic case, one is required to find a correspondence between certain relevant facts and the protasis of a rule. This correspondence between the fact and the rule, he says, is not analytic but arises through a process of reasoning (or drawing an inference) which is based on the material facts on the one hand and warranted by the rule on the other. To permit inference-guidance, a rule must pre-exist a decision or judgment. This pre-existing rule is a rule of guidance and must be distinguished from rules of justification. A rule of guidance must be capable of guiding a judgment before a decision is made. It must be possible to make practical judgments on the basis of it. A rule of justification, however, only enables a judge to cite such a rule as reason for his decision even though it is not relied on in reaching his decision. In a particular case a rule of justification cannot also be a rule of guidance, although this may be possible in a different setting. This at least is Gottlieb's claim.

This needs closer examination. He is saying that when a rule of guidance is used by a person who must make a decision in a new and difficult case, the novelty of the facts in that case requires that person to select relevant facts and in this sense go beyond the existing rule; yet he must go beyond the existing rules only to the extent warranted by that rule. To put it another way, an external observer, say a judge, can note a pre-existing rule authorizes a reformulation of the rule to cover the present case. The reformulation he can *ex post facto* express as the governing principle. This reformulation is the rule of justification for that decision, but is not a rule of guidance for the decision-maker *in that case.* Reformulation is for the purpose of going over or checking the decision, not for making a decision. Others can later use the rule; it sets a precedent. But this is not a valid precedent unless the reformulation is authorized by the pre-existing rule.

What seems so extraordinary, and obviously false, in Gottlieb's account is that the external judge but not the decision-maker is able to determine the warrantability of the reformulation from the existing rule. Can the decision-maker not go over or rehearse the reformulation in his mind? And if he can do this can he not himself enunciate this reformulation and be guided by it? It seems perfectly obvious that if a judge can come to a decision about the authorization and warrantability of a reformulation, then an equally shrewd decision-maker could do the same. In any case, if a correct decision has already been reached on the basis of a pre-existing rule, then why is the reformulation necessary at all. Perhaps the reformulation is merely for the sake of making explicit the fact that a principle is appealed to. If that is so, then the principle appealed to *also* pre-exists the decision. The reformulation, then, serves as a device to show that the pre-existing rules is an instance of a pre-existing principle. It assures the decision-maker that his decision is right *in that case,* and if promulgated, enables others to use that piece of thinking in their decision-making. On Gottlieb's account, however, the reformulation is the principle and stems from and is the *result* of the decision. But on this account he has no basis for establishing that the pre-existing rule authorized the reformulation. He suggests that the wisdom of the judges constitutes this warrantability; that in the legal sphere, common-law rests in the bosom of the judges. He says:

> Every inference made and every rule enunciated must be authorized and required by pre-existing rules and principles, but precedent transforms that which is authorized or required into that which authorizes and requires. The distinction between legal and inferences, rules which warrant them, and rules freshly enunciated, is, therefore, not of logical interest only. It explains the phenomenon of the growth of the law and it refutes the old-fashioned notion that the application of a legal rule merely involves the deduction of inference which it presupposes.[34]

Gottlieb's mistake is his wholesale transposition of arguments perhaps plausible in law, to the case of morality. Whether his above account of the growth of principles in law is correct or not, I am not in a position to answer, and it is fortunately irrelevant. What is plain is that with respect to morality this account is false. Moral principles, or high level rules of justification are not generalizations from past decisions and past moral experience. Perhaps only in one sense of "principle" is this true, the sense in which a general rule such as "Obey your elders" stands as a principle in relation to a lower-order rule such as "Obey your baby-sitter." In another sense of 'principle' this is not so; the sense in which "principle" is a constitutive rule or a presupposition of moral discourse. Principles in the latter sense are guides for interpreting 'principles' in the first sense, guides for making decisions in a particularly difficult case, and guides for reformulation of pre-existing rules should that become necessary. Reformulation of the rule is in fact part of the process of subsuming a low-level rule under a moral general principle. Principles, then, are

not rules of justification formulated *ex post facto,* but are themselves high-level rules pre-existing the decision and function as guides in the making of the decision.

In sum, if rules of justification can thus help one in making a judgment (and this is the same thing as saying that rules of justification are rules of guidance); and if further, the philosopher's task is to provide these rules of justification; then it follows that a study of ethics has a direct bearing on practice by enhancing congnitive skills in moral judgmentr, which is the claim I hoped to establish.

5. Instruction in Ethics

To have argued that a study of ethics is a form of moral education is not yet to have shown that it is possible for the very young nor that it is necessarily the only and best form of moral education. Nor will this be argued in this section. I particularly want it understood that this is no substitute for early inculcation of habit and virtues nor for instruction in simple moral rules at an early age of the child's moral development.[35] I make only the limited claim that the study of ethics is one part of moral education, that this aspect of moral education is an essential part, and that at a certain age level it is possible to achieve. We have assumed all along (and the assumption has not and will not here be examined) that it is possible at some stage in a person's life to instruct him in ethics given certain conditions such as a certain amount of intelligence, some grasp of moral concepts, literary ability, and so on. I do not here wish to focus on these preconditions but merely wish to underline a fact about moral philosophy viz., that it is a discipline amenable to instruction, a fact that few would challenge. The host of questions that relate to the preconditions are largely empirical in character and will not be discussed here. There are, however, some philosophical issues involved which warrant discussion.

The Age Factor

It is not possible by philosophical argument to establish at what age a pupil is able to understand and benefit from instruction in ethics. Experimental evidence is required to settle this question. The little bit of available evidence, as we saw, seems to suggest that perhaps instruction in ethics can begin much earlier than in fact is the practice. The logical point to be made here is that if philosophy is a second-order activity, then it follows that before philosophy is possible, one must have had first-order moral experience. But a paradox now arises. If, as we have attempted to maintain, moral experience is genuine moral experience only if an agent does the right thing for the right reason; and if, further, 'right reason' implies the agent's being able to justify his action on good grounds, which in turn requires appeal to second-order rules and principles, then it would appear that it is impossible for first-order moral experience to occurr. Thus moral activity could never get off the ground. First- and second-order activities appear to presuppose each other. How do we get out of this dilemma? It must be remembered how we got into it. The difficulty is that we distinguished too sharply between first- and second-order activities. In Section 3, however, I showed that this distinction cannot be maintained and the practical judgment and moral philosophizing fall on a continuum; first-order judgment and second-order judgment differ in degree only. If this is granted, then we are already halfway out of the dilemma. To rid ourselves of the problem altogether we need to consider two other possibilities. Either a person's moral experience (in the full sense which we indicated) must be construed as inadequate or second-hand until he has reached an age approaching adulthood when philosophy can be understood and undertaken, or else we must conclude

that philosophizing begins at a very early age in a child's development. The truth probably lies between these two extremes and no doubt varies from person to person. It is worth noting that the very young are already knowledgeable of some fundamental moral notions. The language of "good" and "bad," "right" and "wrong," "ought" and "ought not" are introduced very early in life and when understood in their moral senses presuppose their being used in judgment and in justification of judgment. Understanding these terms from the point of view of morality is commensurate with knowing how to use these terms in judgment. So once again we suggest that the above paradox is created by the artificiality of trying to distinguish between two aspects of one process of thought. But, to repeat a point, exactly at which stage of moral understanding a particular aspect of moral philosophy could be introduced as a course in ethics in order to provide greater understanding of, and increased ability in, moral judgment is an empirical matter we cannot at this point stop to consider.

Sophistry and Moral Attitudes

Another problem which one does well to consider is whether or not, and, if so, to what extent, the argumentative nature of philosophy might lead to sophistry and mental gymnastics, corrupting in its wake genuine moral sentiment to duty. To put it another way, does CME detract from AME? Can one become so pre-occupied with the right thing to do that one never does it? This too it would appear is largely an empirical matter. Perhaps the acquisition of a firm set of moral dispositions is advisable before the disturbing effect of philosophy is undertaken. Perhaps the contrary is the case, so that judgment on good grounds is not vitiated by overpowering tendencies to the contrary. Rather than submitting any positive suggestions, I am merely raising a question and challenging a practice that apparently stems from Aristotle, who proposed that one ought not to study moral philosophy early in life because one might be corrupted by such a study into defending the kind of life one desired to live. This dictum seems to have been adopted, and no doubt with some good reason, ever since. But the reason is perhaps not the one Aristotle gives; namely, that youth will thereby be corrupted. Rather, we suggest it has more to do with the necessary preconditions already hinted at. It is at any rate of interest to note Aristotle's assumptions that philosophy has a direct bearing on action and that youth can study philosophy. But we should note also (if the assumption if true) that if philosophy enables one to defend a course of action, this defence could equally well be one of moral justification. Naturally it is apposite to warn against sophistry; but if the cost of instruction in philosophy is risking sophistry, perhaps that is a risk worth taking to achieve the demands of rational morality.

Furthermore, it is not to be supposed that only *youth* needs moral education. Adults, too, are in a position to benefit from philosophy, either remedially or as a result of changing conditions and massive accumulation of knowledge in many fields. It might very well be that the easiest and most efficient mode of adult *moral* education, an area of education that has rarely if every been touched upon, is through the vehicle or moral philosophy, though this too is an open question awaiting empirical evidence.

The Language of Philosophy and Moral Education

My chief concern in this paper, however, has been the moral education of children and youth. So if it is granted that EE is contributory to CME and that it is both possible and desirable to introduce, say, late teen-agers into a study of ethics, it becomes problematic as to how much of the jargon of the philosopher one ought to use to make such a course both palatable and fruitful. And this question relates

very much to another problem, that of simplifying philosophyl without sacrificing the rigor and difficulty of it. One needs to be on guard against attempts at over-simplification or a "watering-down" that may make philosophy farcical, uninteresting, and even distasteful. But if our arguments have been at all convincing, then it follows that ethics ought to be introduced at a stage when second-order principles are required for judgment, and this may be - very likely is - prior even to the final years of secondary school and not only for the very intelligent as Leroy Garrett recommends. And if this is so, then the problem of a suitable language becomes an acute one. While a course on Kant for kiddies may be inconceivable, it is not inconceivable that certain elements of his moral philosophy are capable of simplification. The concept of "universalizability," for example, can be conveyed by questions such as "What would happen if everybody did so-and-so?" or "Would you be prepared to accept the consequences if everybody did that?" and so on. This at least would begin to make the concept understandable. The actual work "universalizable" need never be mentioned. Nor would such terms as "good will," "universal law," "categorical imperative," "hypothetical imperative," and so on. Regarding the latter two, one can surely point out in a simple way that the term "ought" can be used in contexts other than moral contexts. A discussion of this difference in the use of the word "ought" might be a most suitable way to introduce youngsters into Kant's moral philosophy. The language problem then, though an acute one, is not an impossible obstacle. It is a problem that had its parallel in other areas of philosophy and at many different stages in philosophical thinking. It is a problem in teaching methodology which any teacher in any subject matter will recognize and be concerned about.

Notes

[1] In this paper the terms 'ethics' and 'moral philosophy' are used synonymously.

[2] *Harvard Educational Review* (Fall 1958): 300-313.

[3] Leroy Garrett (ed.), *Philosophy in High School* (Jacksonville, Ill.: MacMurray College, 1960).

[4] Willis Moore, "An Experimental High School Course in Ethics and Logic," *Educational Theory* 17 (1967): 248-259.

[5] L.E. Hahn, "John Dewey on Teaching Philosophy in High School" *Educational Theory* 17 (1967): 220.

[6] (London: Methuen University Paperbacks, 1966), p. 196.

[7] Garrett, p. 44.

[8] Moore, p. 258.

[9] This is not to say that a rational defence of these is not possible. On the contrary; that there are good grounds for holding to them, I have attempted to show elsewhere (C.M. Hamm, "The Logic of Moral Instruction," unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, Institute of Education, 1970) in which also appeared an earlier version of this paper.

[10] George F. Hourani, *Ethical Value* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1956), p. 173.

[11] W.D. Lamont, *The Principles of Moral Judgment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946), p. 8.

[12] (London: Methuen, 1967), p. 118.

[13] Newell, p. 118.

[14] Newell, p. 137.

[15] Newell, p. 118.

[16] (London: Macmillan, 1958).

[17] Mayo, p. 11.

[18] Mayo, p. 3.

[19] Mayo, p. 13.

[20] Mayo, p. 13.

[21] (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1960).

[22] Hartland-Swan, p. 20.

[23] Hartland-Swan, p. 16.

[24] Hartland-Swan, p. 26.

[25] (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), p. 5.

[26] Aiken, p. 7, footnote.

[27] Aiken, p. 10.

[28] Aiken, p. 10.

[29] Aiken, p. 25.

[30] Aiken, p. 25, 26.

[31] Aiken, p. 31.

[32] For this argument see R.S. Peters, *Ethics and Education* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966).

[33] (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1968).

[34] Gottleib, p. 88.

[35] In this connection see C.M. Hamm, "The Content of Moral Education or In Defence of 'The Bag of Virtues'," *The School Review* 85 (February 1977): 218-228.