

Modulation of Memory

See MEMORY STORAGE, MODULATION OF

Monism

See ANOMALOUS MONISM; MIND-BODY PROBLEM

Monte Carlo Simulation

See GREEDY LOCAL SEARCH; RECURRENT NETWORKS

Morality

See CULTURAL RELATIVISM; ETHICS AND EVOLUTION; MORAL PSYCHOLOGY

Moral Psychology

Moral psychology is a branch of ethics. It concerns the features of human psychology whose study is necessary to the examination of the main questions of ethics, questions about what is inherently valuable, what constitutes human well-being, and what justice and decency toward others demand. Adequate examination of these questions requires an understanding of the primary motives of human behavior, the sources of pleasure and pain in human life, the capacity humans have for voluntary action, and the nature of such psychological states and processes as desire, emotion, conscience, deliberation, choice, character or personality, and volition. The study of these phenomena in relation to the main questions of ethics defines the field of moral psychology.

At the heart of this study are questions about the intellectual and emotional capacities in virtue of which human beings qualify as moral agents. Humans, in being capable of moral agency, differ from all other animals. This difference explains why human action, unlike the actions of other animals, is subject to moral assessment and why humans, unlike other animals, are morally responsible for their actions. At the same time, not every human being is morally responsible for his or her actions. Some like the very young and the utterly demented are not. They lack the capacities that a person must have to be morally responsible, capacities that equip people for understanding the moral quality of their actions and for being motivated to act accordingly. Full possession of these capacities is what qualifies a person as a moral agent, and it is the business of moral psychology to specify what they are and to determine what full possession of them consists in.

In modern ethics the study of these questions has largely concentrated on the role and importance of reason in moral thought and moral motivation. The overarching issue is whether reason alone, if fully developed and unimpaired, is sufficient for moral agency, and the field divides into affirmative and negative positions on this issue. Rationalist phi-

losophers, among whom KANT is foremost in the modern period, defend the former. On their view, reason works not only to instruct one about the moral quality of one's actions but also to produce motivation to act morally. Human beings, on this view, are moved by two fundamental kinds of desire, rational and nonrational. Rational desires have their source in the operations of reason, nonrational in animal appetite and passion. Accordingly, moral motivation, on this position, is a species of rational desire, and reason not only produces such desire but is also capable of investing it with enough strength to suppress the conflicting impulses of appetite and passion. Moral agency in human beings thus consists in the governance of appetite and passion by reason, and the possession of reason is therefore alone ordinarily sufficient to make one responsible for one's actions.

The chief opposition to this view comes from philosophers such as HUME and Mill. They deny that reason is ever the source of moral motivation and restrict its role in moral agency to instructing one about the moral quality of one's actions. On this view, all desires originate in animal appetite and passion, and reason works in the service of these desires to produce intelligent action, action that is well aimed for attaining the objects of the desires it serves. Consequently, the primary forms of moral motivation, on this position, the desire to act rightly, the aversion to acting wrongly, are not products of reason but are instead acquired through some mechanical process of socialization by which their objects become associated with the objects of natural desires and aversions. Moral agency in human beings thus consists in cooperation among several forces, including reason, but also including a desire to act rightly and an aversion to acting wrongly that originate in natural desires and aversions. Hence, because the acquisition of these desires and aversions is not guaranteed by the maturation of reason, the possession of reason is never alone sufficient to make one responsible for one's actions.

This anti-rationalist view is typically inspired by, when not grounded in, the methods and theories of natural science as applied to human psychology. In this regard, the most influential elaboration of the view in twentieth century thought is Freud's. Applying the general principles of personality development central to his mature theory, FREUD gave an account of the child's development of a conscience and a sense of guilt that explained the independence and seeming authority of these phenomena consistently with their originating in emotions and drives that humans like other animals possess innately. His account in this way speaks directly to the challenge that the rationalist view represents, for rationalists, such as Kant, make the independence and seeming authority of conscience the basis for attributing the phenomena of conscience, including their motivational force, to the operations of reason.

A second dispute between rationalists and their opponents concerns the nature of moral thought. Rationalists hold that moral thought at its foundations is intelligible independently of all sensory and affective experiences. It is, in this respect, like arithmetic thought at its foundations. Kant's view again sets the standard. In brief, it is that the concepts and principles constitutive of moral thought are

formal and universal, that their application defines an attitude of impartiality toward oneself and others, and that through their realization in action, that is, by following the judgments one makes in applying them, one achieves a certain kind of freedom, which Kant called autonomy. This view, unlike Kant's view about moral motivation, which has little currency outside of philosophy, deeply informs various programs in contemporary developmental psychology, notably those of PIAGET and his followers, whose work on moral judgment and its development draws heavily on the formalist and universalist elements in Kant's ethics.

Opponents of this view maintain that some moral thought is embodied by or founded on certain affective experiences. In this respect they follow common opinion. Sympathy, compassion, love, humanity, and attitudes of caring and friendship are commonly regarded as moral responses, and in the views of leading anti-rationalist thinkers one or another of these responses is treated as fundamental to ethics. Accordingly, the cognitions that each embodies or the beliefs about human needs and well-being (or the needs and well-being of other animals) that each presupposes and to which each gives force count on these views as forms of foundational moral thought. Such thought, in contrast to the rationalist conception, is not resolvable into formal concepts and principles, does not necessarily reflect an attitude of impartiality toward oneself and others, and brings through its realization, not autonomy, but connection with others. In contemporary developmental psychology, this view finds support in work on gender differences in moral thinking and on the origins of such thinking in the child's capacity for empathy.

—John Deigh

References

- Eisenberg, N., and J. Strayer, Eds. (1987). *Empathy and Its Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Freud, S. (1923). *The Ego and the Id*. New York: Norton.
- Freud, S. (1931). *Civilization and Its Discontents*. New York: Norton.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hume, D. (1751). *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Kant, I. (1788). *Critique of Practical Reason*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.
- Kohlberg, L. (1981). *Essays on Moral Development*, vol. 1. San Francisco: Harper and Row.
- Mill, J. S. (1861). *Utilitarianism*. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Nagel, T. (1970). *The Possibility of Altruism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Piaget, J. (1932). *The Moral Judgment of the Child*. New York: Free Press.
- Dillon, R. S., Ed. (1995). *Dignity, Character, and Self-Respect*. New York: Routledge.
- Flanagan, O. (1991). *Varieties of Moral Personality: Ethics and Psychological Realism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Flanagan, O., and A. Rorty, Eds. (1990). *Identity Character and Morality: Essays in Moral Psychology*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Hoffman, M. L. (1982). Development of prosocial motivation: Empathy and guilt. In N. Eisenberg, Ed., *The Development of Prosocial Behavior*. New York: Academic Press, pp. 281–313.
- Johnson, M. (1993). *Moral Imagination: Implications of Cognitive Science for Ethics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- May, L., M. Friedman, and A. Clark, Eds. (1996). *Mind and Morals: Essays on Ethics and Cognitive Science*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Morris, H. (1976). *On Guilt and Innocence: Essays in Legal Theory and Moral Psychology*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Rawls, J. (1971). *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Rorty, A. (1988). *Mind in Action: Essays in the Philosophy of Mind*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Rousseau, J.-J. (1763). *Émile*. New York: Basic Books.
- Schoeman, F., Ed. (1988). *Responsibility, Character, and the Emotions: New Essays in Moral Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stocker, M. (1990). *Plural and Conflicting Values*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stocker, M. (1996). *Valuing Emotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Strawson, P. F. (1962). Freedom and resentment. *Proceedings of the British Academy* 48: 1–25.
- Taylor, G. (1985). *Pride, Shame and Guilt: Emotions of Self-Assessment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Thomas, L. (1989). *Living Morally: A Psychology of Moral Character*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Williams, B. (1981). *Moral Luck*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Williams, B. (1993). *Shame and Necessity*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Wollheim, R. (1984). *The Thread of Life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wollheim, R. (1993). *The Mind and its Depths*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Morphology

Morphology is the branch of linguistics that deals with the internal structure of those words that can be broken down further into meaningful parts. Morphology is concerned centrally with how speakers of language understand complex words and how they create new ones. Compare the two English words *marry* and *remarry*. There is no way to break the word *marry* down further into parts whose meanings contribute to the meaning of the whole word, but *remarry* consists of two meaningful parts and therefore lies within the domain of morphology. It is important to stress that we are dealing with meaningful parts. If we look only at sound, then *marry* consists of two syllables and four or five phonemes, but this analysis is purely a matter of PHONOLOGY